

# SICAMOUS CHILD CARE CENTRE

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# How our vision came to be.

- As someone who grew up and raised her children in Sicamous, I knew there had always been a need for child care in our community and spoke at great lengths with Council about this challenge for the community.
- When UBCM funding streams were announced we created a child care committee of interested parties who wanted to see child care in our community. These folks did the research and assisted in preparing the application for the Child Care Action Plan in 2018. In 2019 the District of Sicamous hired the firm Urban Matters to prepare the Child Care Action Plan for Sicamous and Area E.
- The Action Plan allowed us to gather information about families in our area. Points covered were family size, care requirements, financial assessments of the community, and what fee structures could be supported.
- They conducted surveys, one-on-one meetings and gathered other information that allowed us to apply confidently for the Community Child Care Space Creation program based on their findings.

# What came next?

- Knowing the Child Care Action Plan was being created; and that there was 2 funding streams being offered by the province, Councillor Bob Evans came to Council about the opportunity to purchase the local Jehovah Witness Hall that had just come on the market.
- Staffed toured the building in late fall 2019 and agreed to take a leap of faith and provide a deposit in hopes that we would receive the Community Child Care Space Creation grant.
- To prepare for the grant application we invited contractors to provide us with quotes for the renovations based on renderings created by a local interior designer and the District of Sicamous staff.
- Below is a link for a 5 minute video with more about how that come to light.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR3Wv4bMeXttQg4Q5-YNlefBIEHqvxzMxX9EftUz5VePIQj2fBsiT-DKrMA&v=YRtYK47hIT8&feature=youtu.be>

# Grant Funding Announcement



- We were notified that we received the grant of \$848,000 February 18, 2020. I was on holidays in Mexico and our Operations Manager Joe McCulloch messaged me instantly to let me know!  
😊
- Shortly after the community announcement on February 26 2020 regarding the funding COVID-19 hit, overshadowing the excitement in the community.
- COVID-19 restrictions from the province created its own challenges as most staff members were working from home; but being a small community we were able to make it work better than most communities..

# What we were working with

- Once all the research on the Child Care Centre requirements were completed we then put out a RFP for builders to take on the renovation project. We had 4 companies submit proposals.
- Knowing none of us were experts in child care centres, we collaborated with other child care providers to help us design the building once the contract was awarded. This was a request of our contractor.



# Who would run the Centre?

- Now that we had the funds and the renovation contractor had been chosen, the next challenge was to decide how to best run the Centre.
- Staff prepared an RFQ and provided the opportunity for non-profit and for-profit groups to bid on the Centre's operation. The RFQ included a lease amount of \$2000 per month for rent plus utilities. The response was zero submissions.
- After speaking with neighbouring community centres, staff chose to amend the RFQ and removed the lease amount and opened it to non-profit organizations only.
- We hired a consultant to prepare a business plan for the Child Care Centre, to ensure we captured all the moving parts as again, we are not child care experts.
- We received a joint application from the Eagle Valley Community Support Society and Sicamous Preschool, who were awarded the contract.

# Lease Agreement

- To ensure that the Child Care Centre would be sustainable our Mayor and Council offered the following to the Eagle Valley Community Support Society.
  - Lease rate of \$1.00 per year for 3 years
  - No charge for taxes, water and sewer for 3 years
  - The utilities, snow removal, lawn care and building maintenance would be covered by the District for 2 years
  - This will be reviewed at 18 months with the option to fund 1 additional year
  - The Society must prepare a report each year and present it to Council
  - The society would be given first option to renew the contract

# Let the renovations begin!

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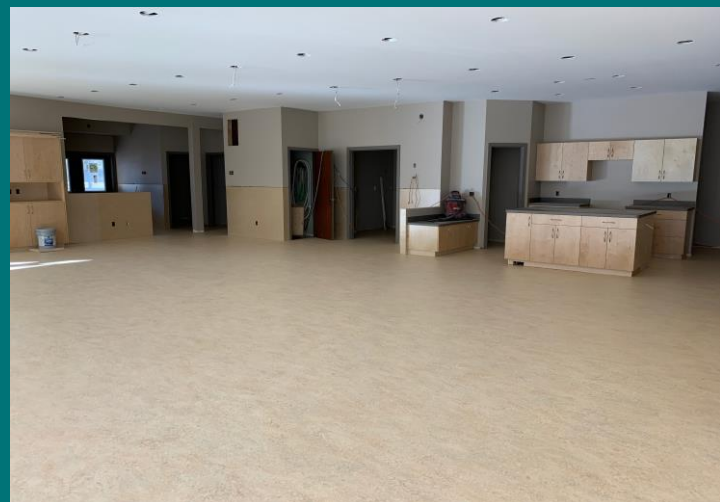




# The project was not stalled by COVID-19!



# Our designer did an amazing job!



# Lots of fun was had buying furniture!



# We had our challenges

- Some words of advice is to make sure you read all of the regulations closely. We had a few mistakes along the way but, thankfully, they were very minor. I.E. certain certification for dishwashers, playground heights.
- We strongly recommend reaching out to other child care providers for advice, before and during the creation of the space. We couldn't have completed this project without the help and knowledge of the Enderby Pre-School and Shuswap Family Day Care Societies. We can't thank them enough for their assistance throughout this project.

# Where are we now?

- Our Centre officially opened its doors Tuesday February 16, 2021, 363 days after being awarded the Community Child Care Space Creation Grant.
- We are happy to report we have 14 full-time and 2 part-time children currently enrolled.
- The Society decided on the name “Little Bear Child Care” and will have their website up and running by the end of the month.
- The Executive Director is working with the Splatsin Child Care Centre in Enderby on partnerships to ensure we include First Nations programming in our Centre.
- Our Directors goal is to also become a teaching centre where those needing practicums can gain hours at our Centre ensuring we always have qualified ECE’s in our community.

# Questions?

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