



Kootenay Boundary
COMMUNITY SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE

2024-2025 **ANNUAL REPORT**

WWW.THEKOOP.CA

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Members,

It's been a meaningful and impactful year, and I'm pleased to share a few highlights from the 2024–2025 fiscal year on behalf of the Board.

One of our most significant undertakings was the strategic planning process. With the support of Warren Helfrich, who facilitated thoughtful conversations with both staff and board, we developed a strategic plan that clearly defines our values, goals, and direction for the years ahead. This process brought renewed clarity to our purpose and fresh energy to our work. I want to especially acknowledge Hannah, who skillfully translated the strategic vision into tangible, operational steps that have already begun to shape our day-to-day work and guide our long-term planning.

Another major milestone was our move to a new physical location—an exciting change that has better supported the organization's growth and evolving needs.

The HR Committee had an active and productive year. I'd like to thank Gent Harrison for his leadership as Chair, and the full committee for their thoughtful guidance through staff transitions and broader organizational strengthening. Our Policy Committee, chaired by Phyllis Nash, worked diligently this year to develop and update several key policies that support both compliance and a culture of care—ensuring our internal practices remain rooted in our values and aligned with our mission.

I also want to recognize the contributions of our Finance Committee, chaired by Cindy Strukoff and supported by Jane Ballantyne, who play a crucial role in ensuring the financial health and sustainability of the Koop. Their diligence and care do not go unnoticed.

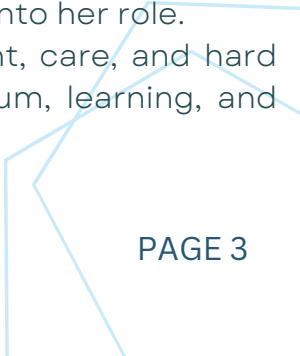
We also saw changes within the SKY Program team, and we were fortunate to benefit from Krysta Castellano's steady leadership during her time as Interim Executive Director.

The Koop Foundry continued to build momentum, with the addition of a Youth and Family Engagement Coordinator position and the delivery of several regionally significant initiatives.

A heartfelt thank-you to Myriam Zbinden, our Executive Assistant, who truly keeps us all supported and on track. Her behind-the-scenes work is deeply valued and absolutely essential to the functioning of both the board and the organization.

Although technically outside of this reporting year, I also want to note two important staffing transitions: Hannah's departure for maternity leave, and the welcome of Heather into her role. Finally, thank you to our dedicated staff and board members. Your commitment, care, and hard work continue to move this organization forward. It's been a year of momentum, learning, and alignment—and I look forward to what comes next.

With gratitude,
Alisha Stubbs
Board Chair





VISION AND MISSION

Vision

Our vision is to foster a community of thriving social service agencies improving the lives of people in the Kootenay Boundary region.

Mission

The Kootenay Boundary Community Services Cooperative's mission is to work together to strengthen the capacity of each member agency through cooperation and collaboration nurtured in a spirit of mutual support and respect.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

This year included several exciting developments including:

- The Koop **MOVED** to a new office location on Baker Street in Nelson to accommodate its growing team
- Utilized CBT's Nonprofit Advisory program to undergo a **STRATEGIC REVIEW** which provided direction for the Koop's next 3 year strategic plan
- Completed its Employee **WELLNESS PROJECT** Grant through the Red Cross
- Hosted its second **CHILD, YOUTH & FAMILY GATHERING**, bringing together members with child and youth programs and Ministry employees
- Koop employees enjoyed **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** by attending the International Association for Youth Mental Health and International Courthouse Dogs conferences
- Released a series of **RESOURCES** for members related to **CYBERSECURITY**
- SKY team participated in Dr. Dustin Louie's **TRANSFORMATIVE RECONCILIATION PROJECT**

FINANCIAL REPORT

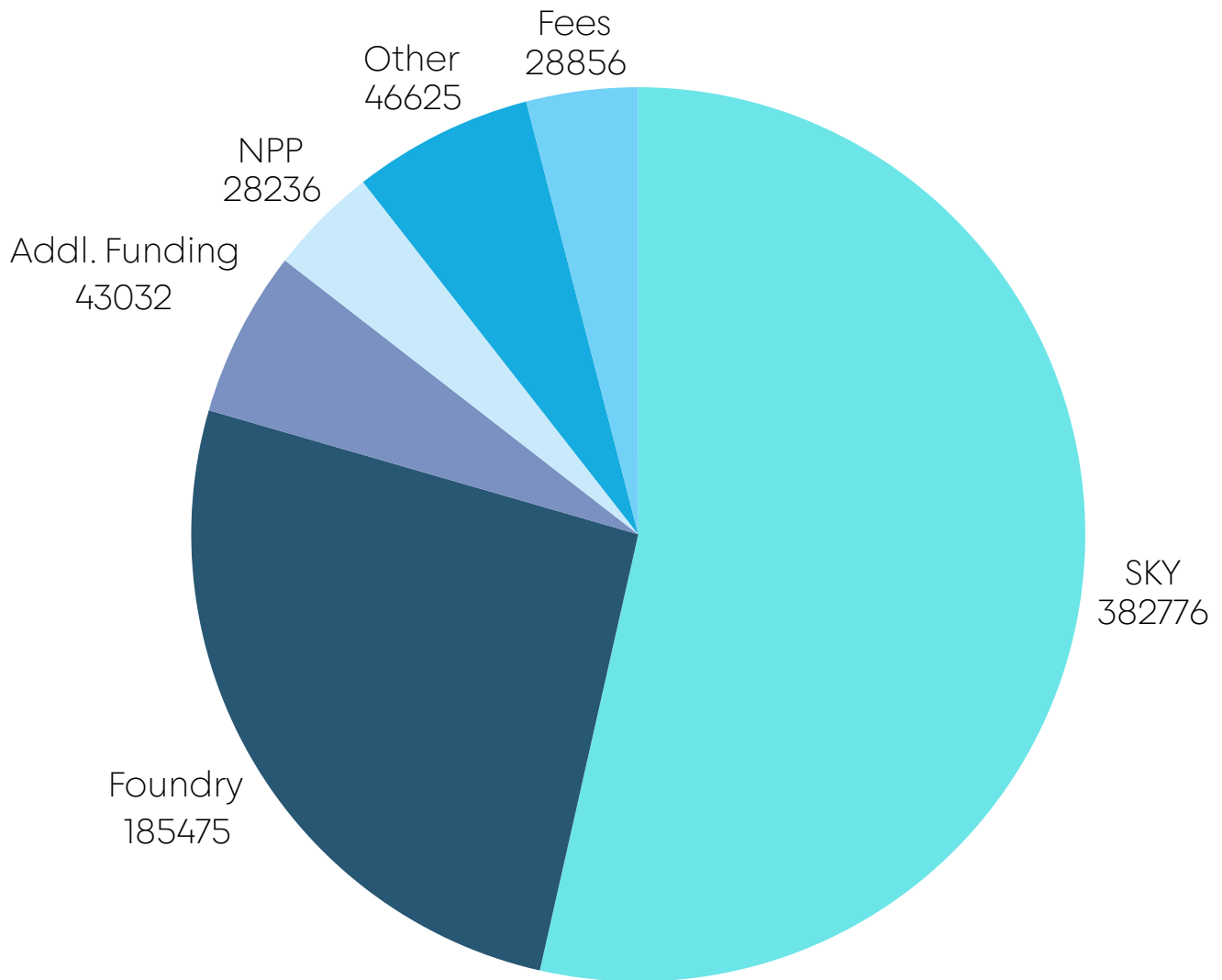
Overall revenue (\$715,000) was up considerably compared to 2023-2024 (\$528,132), and overall expenses increased correspondingly (\$676,472 versus \$481,566), despite the end to the Columbia Basin Trust's longtime core funding.

This growth arose from increased program expenses, including the Koop's first year as Foundry Kootenay Boundary's lead agency, and additional SKY funding via Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General.

We ended the year with an excess of \$38,528 in revenue over expenditures. These funds are being allocated to their respective programs and increased administrative hours to enable our strategic priorities ahead.

Revenues

Year Ended March 31, 2025



Sources

SKY: MPSSG & DOJ

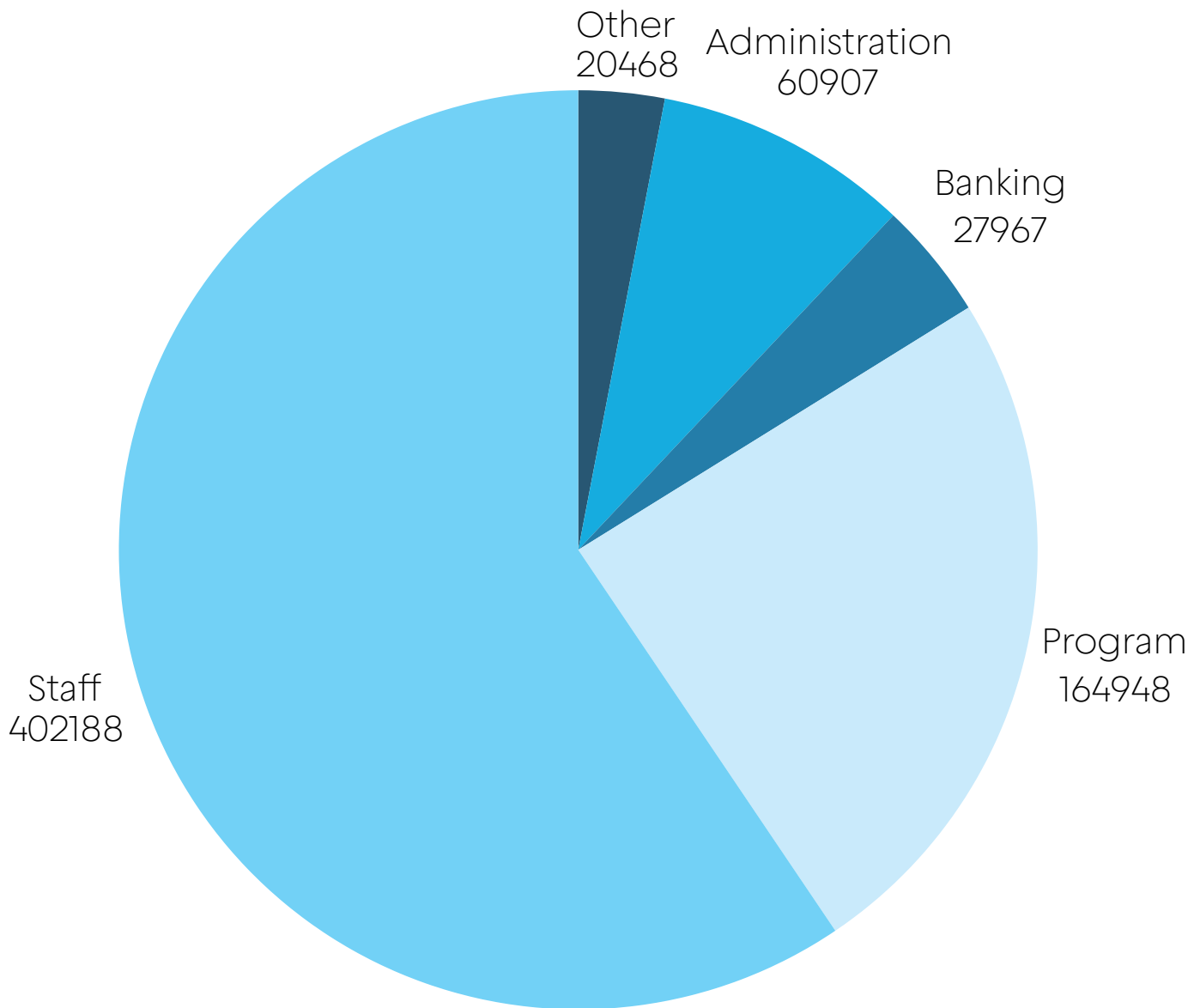
Addl. Funding: CBT, Other grants and revenue

Misc. Fees: Membership fees, registration and fees for services

Other: Interest and miscellaneous, other agencies, amortization of deferred contributions

Expenses

Year Ended March 31, 2025



Sources

Staff: Staff training, travel, wages and benefits

Program: Direct program expenses, development costs, promotion and subcontracts

Administration: Insurance, licenses, memberships, office, rent, utilities and professional fees

Banking: Amortization, bank charges and interest

Other: Conference and meeting expenses

PROJECTS

Child, Youth & Family Gathering

- On June 26th in Castlegar, over 75 service providers came together for a meaningful day of connection and learning.
- The event opened with a warm welcome from the Circle of Indigenous Nations Society, followed by an engaging networking activity that encouraged participants to reflect on both their personal and organizational approaches to trauma-informed practice.
- Dr. Sean Larsen, Director of Operations for Child and Youth Mental Health, delivered a compelling presentation on trauma-informed practice, setting the tone for the day's learning.
- In the afternoon, attendees received a brief update from MCFD EDS before joining three of five available World Café-style discussion sessions, promoting rich dialogue and shared insights across diverse service areas.
- Special thanks to The Federation of Community Social Services of BC for generously funding this valuable opportunity.

Cooperative Development Fund

- The Co-operators Foundation's Cooperative Development Fund has successfully wrapped up its activities.
- As part of the initiative, Koop Board videos were showcased at the Civic Theatre over a six-week period, helping to raise awareness and engagement.
- Additionally, in partnership with Pathwise Solutions, the Executive Director and Executive Assistant collaborated to refresh and update the Koop website, enhancing its functionality and user experience.

Community Services Grant

- The Community Services Grant—funded through the Red Cross as part of the Mental Health Evaluation and Pilot Project Grant—supported important work focused on staff wellness.
- A Project Coordinator led the development and implementation of an employee wellness survey across community services. The findings were compiled into a comprehensive report, complete with recommendations to strengthen workplace culture and support staff mental health.
- Based on these insights, a series of educational sessions were delivered to both staff and leadership, aimed at fostering a healthier, more supportive work environment.

Executive Salary Report

- Executive Salary report from community services and nonprofit sectors was made available to members.

Towards Truth & Reconciliation

- In September, 2024 the Koop collaborated with COINS and offered the opportunity to member organizations to join an engaging Truth and Reconciliation Learning Circle hosted by COINS.

PROGRAMS



The Safe Kids and Youth program was created through collaboration between police, child protection, crown counsel, victim services, schools, healthcare, and community services to provide a more seamless response to child and youth abuse, helping reduce system-induced trauma.

Files

Over the past fiscal year, the SKY program coordinated 26 cases involving child and youth victims and three cases involving witnesses of abuse. There was an increase in the number of referrals made by SKY to community service agencies, reflecting strengthened collaboration and a more proactive approach in establishing long-term, comprehensive support networks for victims and their families.

Trusty

Trusty continues to be an asset to the success of the SKY Program. This year, Trusty's role in supporting the emotional well-being of children and youth remained essential. With a calm and compassionate presence, he has helped reduce anxiety, build trust, and create a safe and supportive environment.





Interview Rooms

Remote Testimony equipment was installed in Castlegar and Nakusp, allowing victims to testify remotely, rather than in a courtroom. This ensured children and youth could testify in a safe and comfortable environment, while securing the necessary testimony for Crown and Counsel.

Projects

SKY facilitated a comprehensive Child Forensic Interview Training in response to a shortage of trained officers in the West Kootenays. This equipped RCMP officers with the knowledge and techniques necessary for conducting trauma-informed interviews with child victims.

Interior Health and Shared Care collaborated with SKY to work on the development of medical support for children and youth who have disclosed abuse: The SKY team collaborated with several local and regional health providers to find ways to provide long-term care to victims with no family doctor and is approved to prioritize unconnected child and youth patients who have been abused to receive a family doctor from IH. This has resulted in tangible benefits for SKY program users who received health care upon our referral.

In response to interest in developing a rural service model CYAC in the East Kootenay like the SKY program in the West Kootenay, the Department of Justice (DOJ) awarded funding to conduct a feasibility study. This was conducted through December 2024 to April of 2025, with 6 communities and five First Nations, these included: Columbia Lake First Nation, Cranbrook, Creston, Fernie, Invermere, Kimberley, Radium Hot Springs, St. Mary's First Nation, Shuswap Indian Band, Sparwood, Tobacco Plains First Nation and Windermere. A full report can be read on the Koop's website.

Foundry offers free and confidential supports for young people ages 12 to 24, and their caregivers including mental health care, substance use services, physical & sexual healthcare, youth and family peer supports, and social services. The services can be accessed both online and in-person in communities across BC. Foundry service centres aim to provide safe, welcoming, and judgment-free spaces where youth can access the supports they need to navigate various challenges.

In June 2024, the Koop was awarded a contract to be part of the Foundry's Phase 5 Expansion Project to bring Integrated Youth Services (IYS) to the West Kootenay and Boundary regions. In a first for Foundry's service history, Foundry Central Office (FCO) agreed to establish and support the implementation of a "hub and spoke" service model to meet needs of rural and remote communities. Meaning that instead of one Foundry location to service our region, there will be multiple smaller locations dispersed throughout multiple communities.

The official name of our project is Foundry Kootenay Boundary, which was co-created with FCO, and covers the West Kootenay and Boundary regions and stretches north-south from Nakusp to Trail, and east-west from Rock Creek to Kaslo.

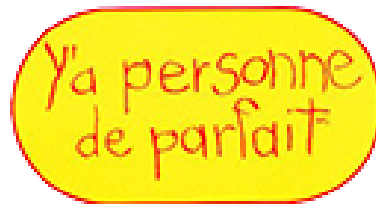


The project lead, Michelle Oakley, was hired in the second half of Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 and has since built and strengthened relationships with service providers and potential Foundry partners throughout the Kootenay Boundary region. Working closely with the Koop's Executive Director and the Koop's Foundry co-applicants (Freedom Quest, Boundary Family Services, Kootenay Boundary Division of Family Practice, and Castlegar Community Services), the first year has consisted of onboarding into the provincial Foundry community network and proactively engaging with community service providers throughout Kootenay Boundary.

In addition to this foundational engagement work, the Koop's Foundry staff has focused on Foundry's required deliverables (as per our FCO funding agreement) which includes, but is not limited to: project charter, project workplan and timeline, project budgets, website landing page, asset mapping, and community communications.

The Koop works closely with FCO and collaborates during our monthly calls and on an as-needed basis. In addition, the Koop participates in a monthly cohort meeting for all the Phase 5 Foundry communities in development. The Koop's Foundry team members also visited multiple Foundry centres in BC and collaborates with operating Foundry centres for information sharing and collective enrichment.

During the last few months of FY 2024-2025, the Koop team prepared to hire a Youth and Family Engagement Coordinator and purchased promotional supplies and equipment for large-scale engagement activities.



Nobody's Perfect is a facilitated parenting program for parents of children from birth to age five and is designed to meet the needs of parents who are young, single, socially or geographically isolated, or have low income or limited formal education. The program teaches positive parenting techniques and provides community connection.

Across the Kootenay-Boundary region, 6 Nobody's Perfect Parenting series were held, despite experiencing challenges with limited facilitators.

The managing partners delivering the Nobody's Perfect Parenting series are:

- Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services
- Boundary Family Services
- Kootenay Family Place
- Kaslo Community Services
- Kootenay Kids Society
- Salmo Community Resource Society
- Trail Fair Society



What makes the Koop unique?

The Koop stands out from other associations through its cooperative model, which prioritizes collective decision-making, member ownership, and shared resources, setting it apart from traditional organizations. Its specialized focus may align closely with a specific industry, ethical framework, or niche area that resonates with your agency's mission. Additionally, membership in the Koop offers unique benefits such as shared funding opportunities, specialized training, advocacy, and a strong networking foundation that other associations may not provide. More than just a network, the Koop fosters a deeper sense of community and collaboration, encouraging meaningful partnerships and cooperative growth among its members. It is important for us to work collaboratively in our region. We learn from each other and that strengthens our collective impact. We support one another and don't compete for funding. We each bring our varied knowledge and experience to help inform the direction of the KOOP. That's unique.

What Koop Members value:

- Integration and ED support
- The direct and personal connection they provide. If we have a need or question, it's one person we're communicating with and maintaining that communication. Helps build a personal rapport and saves time down the road as we don't have to re-establish that every time.
- We belong to a few, related to different service areas. The benefit for me from the Koop is higher level administrative supports and resources for local nonprofits.
- Local and specific for community services agencies.
- Provides links to the Federation of Community Services, engaged with other organizations at the appropriate level and facilitates access to trends and best practices throughout the region in a systemic way.
- Local solutions for local issues.

OUR MEMBERS

- Arrow & Slocan Lakes Community Services Society
- Boundary Family Services Society
- Castlegar & District Community Services Society
- Circle of Indigenous Nations
- Columbia Basin Family Resource Society
- Family Action Network
- Freedom Quest Youth Services Society
- Kaslo Community Services
- Kootenay Career Development Society

STRENGTH
THROUGH
CONNECTION

- Kootenay Family Place
- Kootenay Kids Society
- Nelson CARES Society
- Nelson Community Services
- West Kootenay Women's Association
- Robson Valley Community Services
- Salmo Community Resource Society
- Trail FAIR Society
- W.E. Graham Community Service Society



AVAILABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS AND GROUP DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS:

- CIRA
- Grant Advance
- HR Covered
- Relias
- PathWise Solutions Shared Web Services

The Koop has completed and released a series of resources for members related to Cybersecurity, including a KBCSC Online Security Handbook, a subscription to Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) which members can opt into at a reduced cost, and an upgraded Shared Web Services (SWS or 'Swoosh') program with monthly IT Lunch and Learns for members.

LIST OF MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS:

- Upper Columbia Cooperative Council
- The Federation of Community Social Services BC
- BC Coop Association
- Board Voice
- Vantage Point



BOARD & COUNCIL UPDATES

The Board met 5 times throughout the 2024-2025 fiscal year including an in-person holiday celebration in November. The Council met 5 times throughout the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Members: Cindy Strukoff (Chair and Board Treasurer, BFSS), Jane Ballantyne (KCS). Met 5 times in 2024-2025; the committee oversaw KBCSC's financial review.

POLICY COMMITTEE:

Members: Phyllis Nash (Chair, NCARES), Patricia Malcomson (NCS), and Jana Gmür (KCS).

Met once in 2024-2025, making recommendations for updated mileage, vehicle for work, statutory holiday, travel reimbursements and sick time policies.

HR COMMITTEE:

Members: Members: Gent Harrison (Chair, KFP), Lena Horswill (member-at-large) and Reidun Rosi (CCS).

Met 6 times in 2024-2025. The committee supported leadership and SKY team transitions and the recruitment for Foundry team members.

ED NETWORK MEETINGS – Were held online for accessibility and on a casual drop-in basis. Topics covered over the year included agency updates, recruitment challenges, shared administrative services opportunities, performance management, policy reviews and more.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Alisha Stubbs, Chair (KKS)
- Reidun Rosi, Vice-Chair (CCS)
- Cindy Strukoff, Treasurer (BFSS)
- Phyllis Nash, Secretary (NCARES)
- Lena Horswill (Member-at-Large)
- Tim Payne (ASLCS)
- Gent Harrison (KFP)
- Jane Ballantyne (KCS)



KOOP TEAM

- Hannah Smith, Executive Director
- Krysta Castellano, Interim Executive Director & Safe Kids and Youth Regional Manager
- Myriam Zbinden, Executive Assistant
- Vivian Smith, Finance Administrator
- Nathanael Hewitt, Safe Kids and Youth Coordinator and Regional Manager
- Tory Johnston, Safe Kids and Youth Coordinator
- Michelle Oakley, Foundry Kootenay Boundary Project Lead
- Trusty, the SKY dog