

KERRISDALE COMMUNITY CENTRE
REPORT ON FORMER MEMBERS PILOT SURVEY FOR BOARD MEMBERS

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REPORT ON FORMER MEMBERS PILOT SURVEY FOR BOARD MEMBERS

OBJECTIVE: To help KCCS board members in making decision on undertaking telephone survey of former KCC members.

BACKGROUND: At June 22nd, 2016 KCCS Board meeting a motion was put forward to provide budget for a project to outsource telephone calls survey of the former KCC members. The objective of the survey would have been to find out the reasons of discontinuation of membership. This motion was not approved by the board. During the discussion on the motion, I had suggested an alternative approach that such survey could be done by board members themselves. There were some comments from the board members about this approach but a decision was not taken to go ahead with it.

On June 23rd 2016 Chairperson of Needs Assessment Committee, Don Munton, sent me an email asking me to implement my suggestion of doing the survey by involving the board members. However, before asking the board members to participate in phone survey, I decided to conduct a pilot survey myself to provide more concrete information to board members to decide if they would like to participate in conducting this survey.

AVAILABLE DATA:

A list of 581 former members was provided to me by Heather Cochrane. This list was prepared by comparing KCC membership of 2011-12 with the membership of 2014-15.

Heather had selected 811 names of the members from 2011-12 of 19 + years age and last names starting from A through K. They were checked in the membership list of 2014-15. 581 out these 811 names did not appear in the membership list of 2014-15. The list of these 581 names became the base data for my work.

In the process of data cleansing 7 members were deleted due to incomplete records, hence the final data was 574 members.

METHODOLOGY: Before proceeding to conduct the telephone survey, some preparatory tasks were under taken.

- 1) Questionnaire:** I created a draft one page questionnaire and finalized it by incorporating the relevant comments from Needs Assessment Committee members.

2) Strategy for calls:

- a. Call from the KCC boardroom as it would show KCC caller ID and ensure that members feel safe responding to the call.
- b. Introduce myself as KCCS board member and talk only to adults for the survey.
- c. Clearly explain in the introduction that the objective of the survey is to get their help to continue improving KCC programs and services by learning about their experiences and suggestions. No personal information will be collected.
- d. Explain in the beginning of the survey that it will take about 5 minutes.
- e. Timing of calls was selected between 2 pm and 6 pm in consultation with a few staff members.
- f. Only home phone numbers to be called.

Sample selection: I selected 20% of 574 former members to call. These were selected randomly by using a Random Integer Generator. This gave me a list of 114 former members to call.

Telephone Survey:

I conducted the phone survey on July 5th, July 6th and July 7th 2016.

It took 9 hours to make these calls. If the member's number was busy or was ringing for long time, I called back a few times. Thus I made about 150 calls in total.

73 members (64% of the sample of 114) were uncontactable even after multiple attempts for the following reasons:

- 43: Calls kept going to answering machine despite multiple attempts.
- 11: Wrong phone numbers, now in use by new customer.
- 10: Telephone numbers are not in use any more.
- 2: Someone answered but relevant person was not at home despite multiple attempts.
- 7: Busy tone or bell kept ringing despite multiple attempts.

I was able to talk to 41 "former" members. Conversation was generally pleasant and positive.

7 respondents out of 41 told me that they are currently members of KCC. Though with this information they were not directly relevant to former member survey but I still used this call as an opportunity to ask them about their experience and suggestions on how we can improve programs and services.

Only 4 members declined to participate in the survey due to lack of time or lack of willingness. I thanked them and concluded the call.

30 former members of KCC participated in the survey, which is 26.3% of my sample. 14 of these were women and 16 were men. 7 were 20-30 years of age, 10 were 31-45 years and 13 were 46 years plus. Detailed profile of the respondents is in Appendix 1.

FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY:

Below is the summary of the key findings of the telephone survey of 30 respondents

Reasons for discontinuing:

- 1) **Relocation:** 40% of respondents relocated their residence to another neighborhood of the city. In 2 cases relocation of the workplace resulted in discontinuing their membership.
- 2) **Lack of suitable programs:** 27% of respondents mentioned lack of interest in the programs offered at KCC as the reason for discontinuing membership. Majority of these respondents were parents who felt that their children had no interest in what was offered at KCC as they grew up. One respondent complained about a narrow 24 hour swimming sign-up processes which was always full.

Amongst adult users, either timing of program per se or class cancelation was the reason for losing interest in KCC.

- 3) **Change in member's need:** 17% of respondents reported change in their needs as reason for discontinuing their membership. These included situations such as schedule conflict with other activities, kids too busy at school or member too busy with other obligations.
- 4) **Dissatisfaction with facility:** 13% respondents were dissatisfied with facility. These were gym users and mentioned that gym is too busy, overcrowded and its users are unfriendly. Gym equipment is old.
- 5) **Joined another Community Centre:** 3% respondents have left KCC to join another community centre.

IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS:

Suggestions were solicited about improvements in KCC programs and services during the phone calls. Responses ranged from specific suggestions to very brief general comments. Specific suggestions are divided in main groups as below:

- 1) **Facility:** Couple of respondents suggested that city should invest in general improvements of KCC facility as it looks tired and dated. Cleanliness should be improved specially in the toilets and shower stalls.
- 2) **Gym:** It should be renovated and expanded. The weight room is too small for stretching because it is crowded. Need for new and bigger lockers and more benches were mentioned. Comments were made that new equipment is needed in the gym.
- 3) **Pool:** Shower curtains should be installed. There were no shower curtains, a concern for girls growing-up as they are shy and become uncomfortable.
- 4) **Program related suggestions:** Need for more program variety to keep kids from kindergarten to grade 7 engaged. Gymnastics is very limited for kids in Vancouver and that would be a popular program to start at KCC. Also lack of variety of summer sport activities for children was mentioned by two parents.
One respondent explained at length the difficulty in getting registration for swimming every three months for his two kids, because there are not enough spots.
- 5) **Information Related Suggestions:** Suggestion was made that it would help if reminder email is sent to renew membership. Another member found it hard to get information to volunteer as a young sports coach, there was no interest shown at the front desk.

Brief general comments were made by 63% of respondents, grouped as under:

Positive: 33% of the respondents either said the experience at KCC was good or they enjoyed using it. A couple of respondents mentioned that they found it a welcoming place or gym was well run and broken machines were fixed quickly. Two respondents mentioned that front desk was well attended.

Neutral: 30% of respondents primarily had nothing to say with one saying he actually does not remember KCC well.

CONCLUSION:

I hope this report of the pilot survey provides sufficient information for KCCS board members in making a decision about doing a phone survey of the former members on a larger scale with them actually making the calls.

They should be aware that lots of patience and investment in time is needed which is demonstrated by the fact that I started with a list of 114 “former” members and in the end could actually get only 30 people to respond to the questionnaire. One needs a high level of enthusiasm, energy and motivation throughout hours of the phone calls. Unless list of the former members is 100% accurate, one will also need to be ready to deal with the awkwardness that person one is calling turns out to be a current member. One should be prepared to take correct notes specially in situations when a person you are calling asks you to call again on a given date and time. However do not be too disappointed when you call next time and call goes to a voice mail.

However, people who agreed to respond to survey had amazingly enthusiastic and embracing attitude and a real pleasure to talk to.

Reviewing the survey responses for the reasons of discontinuing membership, I cannot conclude that I discovered any one particular reason which has not been earlier discussed either in the Needs Assessment Committee or KCCS Board meetings. However, we need to keep in mind that it was a pilot survey based on a truncated data of the membership which was limited to particular age and select alphabets of the last names.

It is not my intention in this report to recommend whether to proceed with further telephone survey or not. It should be a point for discussion in a future board meeting.

As it happens most of the times in such exercises, there are many other ways of analyzing the available data but that is outside the scope of the objective of this report. I plan to write another report in future when I will have some time.

In that end I would like to thank those people who helped me in conducting this survey, especially Susan Mele and Lee Tarrant. This work could not be done without their support.

APPENDIX 1

PROFILE OF FORMER MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

Average age of former member I called was 47.7yrs, ranging between 21-86yrs.

Family Membership vs Individual Membership: Of these 30 respondents, 11 had Family membership and 16 had individual membership with KCC. Among the respondents with individual memberships, 14 were adults, one senior member and 1 case of individual child member.

Three members could not recall the type of membership with KCC.

Annual Membership VS Summer Membership: In these 30 cases, 21 had Annual Memberships, 2 had Summer Memberships, 2 were Punch passes users for the gym and 5 could not remember the type of membership they used at KCC.

Length of Membership at KCC: 4 were KCC members for 4+ yrs, 7 were members for 3yrs, 5 were KCC members for 2yrs, 10 members were KCC member for only 1 year while 3 male members could not remember length of their KCC membership.

Reason for using KCC: 13 joined KCC for gym and other physical activities. 4 joined for group fitness and 2 for basketball. 3 joined KCC for either ballet or belly dancing or ballroom dancing, 1 for senior lunch and 1 did not remember why joined.

Only 8 joined KCC with interest in children's programs (of which 2 for pre-schoolers).

Activities/ Programs participation at KCC: In context of children, 2 members used preschool programs, 4 members used variety of children programs such as swimming, ballet, art, martial arts, basketball, hockey, or skating.

Amongst the adults, 5 members participated in group fitness (aerobics, Zumba, etc.), 3 in dance (ballet, ballroom, belly dancing) and 10 primarily used gym and sometimes swimming.

APPENDIX 2

Interviewer: _____

Date of interview: _____

Name of lapsed member: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORMER MEMBER TELEPHONE SURVEY

When did you become a member of Kerrisdale Community Centre (year) _____

- Type of membership Family/ Individual (adult/ child)
- Annual/ Summer

Why did you join the Centre? _____

What activities / program or services did you or your family participate in?

Type (Art/ Music/ Martial Arts/)

- Pre-school programs : _____
- Children's programs : _____
- Adult program : _____
- Senior's programs : _____
- Exercise/ fitness program: _____
- Senior's lunch : _____
- Others : _____

REASONS FOR DISCONTINUING MEMBERSHIP:

When did you stop your membership (year)? : _____

Why did you decide to stop your membership?

- Related to program or lack _____
- Related to facility _____
- Change of member's need _____
- Joined another community centre/ clubs/ facility _____
- Other _____

Any suggestions about how we can improve our programs, services to our community?

From data:		
Gender: M / F	Age _____	Area _____