

**Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 23rd, 2026, 7:30 AM
Regional District of Central Okanagan, Woodhaven Boardroom
1450 K.L.O. Road, Kelowna**

✓ = attended X = Absent * Not required A = Alternate Attended

Advisory Committee Executive:

✓	Quinn, Paula, Chair
✓	Hughes-Geekie, Sharon, Past Chair
✓	Malcolm, Ryan, Vice-Chair

✓	Nagy, Angela
✓	Burleigh, Mark

Advisory Committee:

X	Alluri, Rama
X	Balkwill, Katie
✓	Berrie, Carla
A	Bobyn, Patrick
✓	Bowles, Ron
X	Brophy, Randey
X	Byron, Josh
✓	Cannan, Ron
X	Carnio, Alex
✓	Coble, Jordan
X	Dawn, Jeremy
✓	DeVeer, Cassidy
X	Douglas, Laurel
X	Dyas, Tom

X	Farr, Brandon
X	Ferreira, Christina
X	Friesen, Jason
X	Gatzke, Alan
A	Harper, Shauna
X	Ireland, Blair
X	Jones, Garrett
✓	Kam, Michelle
X	Labrecque, Cory
✓	Lake, Brea
X	Metvedt, David
✓	Molina, Tonja
✓	Mullings, Dale
✓	Rezania, Sepideh

✓	Robinson, Heather
✓	Rubadeau, Devin
X	Schlosser, Joanna
X	Selby, Robert
✓	Sheehan, Amanda
✓	Sulentich, Ruth
X	Threlfall, Rich
X	Walker-Matthews, Ellen
X	Wall, Jonathan
✓	Wang, Bill
X	Wong, Roger
X	Wylie, Taylor

Staff and Consultants:

✓	Haley, Oliver
✓	Lesack, Sascha
X	Rambe, Mohana

X	Ververda, Brianne
✓	Walraven, Jen
X	Ginter, Sally

✓	Griffiths, Corie
✓	Crocker, Kathy
X	Stark Leader, Myrna

Guests:

Brown, Betty
Dr. Taylor, Deanne
Whalley, Beth

Oakes, Amanda
Muncey, Tara

1. Call to Order

Chair Paula Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:33 am. She thanked Haley and the Executive for their leadership, Krista, for her past contributions and the steadfast COEDC team.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair acknowledged our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded $\text{tr}\dot{\text{n}}\text{x}^{\text{w}}\dot{\text{u}}\text{l}\text{a}^{\text{w}}$ (land) of the syilx / Okanagan people who have resided here since time immemorial. We recognize, honour, and respect the syilx / Okanagan lands upon which we live, work, and play.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Minutes of April 15, 2026, unanimously approved.

4. Introduction

Haley Oliver, Associate Director of Communications & EDC, RDCO

Haley Oliver introduced herself in her new role as Associate Director of Communications & Economic Development with the RDCO.

The Committee was advised that Ryan Malcom will serve as Chair and Angela Nagy as Vice-Chair in 2027.

The Committee was advised that Nji Mbitaownu will join the COEDC as an Economic Development Officer effective Oct. 5, 2026.

5. RDCO/COEDC Update

Corie Griffiths, Director of Corporate Services & Deputy CAO, RDCO

Corie Griffiths provided an update on the City of Kelowna's request to withdraw from the COEDC service. RDCO Administration has been working with the Province and legal counsel to understand legislative requirements, process and timelines associated with withdrawal from a regional service.

The Committee was advised that the Regional Board would consider options related to the request at its Oct. 8, 2026 meeting. No changes to COEDC programs, operations or services are anticipated in the short term.

6. Health Innovation

Betty Brown, Innovation Liaison: Government and Community, JP Centre for Health Systems Learning + Innovation

Dr. Dee Taylor, CEO, [JP Centre for Health Systems Learning + Innovation](#)

Betty Brown and Dr. Dee Taylor provided an overview of the JP Centre for Health Systems Learning + Innovation, including its social enterprise model, innovation support services, partnership approach and funding strategies.

The presenters highlighted opportunities for project referrals, health innovation partnerships and support for rural access initiatives. The Committee was advised that the JP Centre works with a range of innovators and organizations to evaluate and advance health-related products, services and initiatives. Potential funding and investor connections were discussed, including the [OKGN WMAN Angel Fund](#). The JP Centre also provides access to an Executive in Residence to support strategic partnerships and business development opportunities.

See presentation attached.

7. Doctor Recruitment and Connections

Beth Whalley, Executive Director, [Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice](#)

Amanda Oakes, Recruitment Lead, Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice

Beth Whalley and Amanda Oakes provided an update on physician recruitment and retention efforts in the Central Okanagan.

The Committee heard that licensing and compensation changes have improved physician recruitment, particularly from the United States, United Kingdom, Ireland and Australia. Current recruitment timelines have been reduced to three to four months for physicians from the United States and six to 10 months for physicians from the United Kingdom and Australia.

The presenters reported that 95 per cent of relocating physicians have remained in the region and highlighted the value of physician integration supports, including spousal employment assistance through the COEDC Connector Program. Progress toward achieving a fully attached patient population within the next 18 months was also discussed.

Current priorities include patient attachment, physician retention, specialty recruitment and physician transition planning. The Committee also received updates on a proposed community-led primary care clinic being developed in partnership with the District of Lake Country and a family practice teaching clinic being developed with the KGH Foundation and UBC. Opportunities for community partnerships were discussed, including physician attraction and retention initiatives, referrals to the COEDC Connector Program, and support in identifying clinic space and electronic medical record (EMR) solutions for future healthcare facilities.

See presentation attached.

8. Trade Updates and Resources from the COEDC

Haley Oliver, Associate Director of Communications & EDC, RDCO

Haley Oliver provided an update on COEDC trade-related supports, including the [Tariff Resources](#) and [Business Resource Hub](#).

The Committee was advised that enhancements to the Manufacturing Database are underway in partnership with CityViz, including new mapping features and expanded data insights. An announcement will be circulated to parnters, with additional discussion planned for the October Advisory Committee meeting.

Members discussed ongoing trade and supply chain challenges affecting local businesses, including interprovincial trade barriers, supplier diversification and market access opportunities. The discussion also highlighted indirect impacts on small and medium-sized businesses resulting from reduced consumer confidence and limited access to tariff relief programs.

Committee members were encouraged to continue sharing business feedback and trade-related impacts with the COEDC.

Action Items for Advisory Committee:

1. Refer physicians to physicianwafflehouse.ca for resources and connection.
2. Use the [JPcentre.ca](https://jpcentre.ca) website to submit health innovation ideas or contacts.
3. Encourage people to apply for market diversification grants through [AO/ETSI-BC](#)
4. Refer potential engineering connectors to connector@investkelowna.com

9. New Business

- The BIABC board lobbied for PST expansion delay
- Next meeting October 14th

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 am.
