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HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FUND & COUNCIL

In the Beginning

In 1939, the Junior Chamber of Commerce explored the possibility of developing a Community Chest in Edmonton. The Chamber was advised that a Community Chest was only half of an ideal program for federated welfare work. The other half was a planning organization. On February 1st, 1940, the Edmonton Council of Social Agencies was incorporated. Through the efforts of the Council, a Community Chest was formed April 18, 1941.

The First Decade, 1940 - 1950

In 1946 the Chest raised \$140,000 on behalf of 27 agencies. The Council of Social Agencies was preoccupied with developing new services in the community; Family Welfare Bureau, Emergency Housekeeper Service, John Howard Society, Edmonton Friendship Club, etc. In 1950 it changed its name to Council of Community Services to reflect its wider involvement in the community.

The Second Decade, 1950 - 1960

In 1950 the Chest raised \$172,000 on behalf of 28 agencies. The Council of Community Services was concerned with a number of major problems in the community; the physical handicapped, immigrants, mental health, youth services. In 1953 the Community Chest and Council of Community Services merged to a limited degree by having common staff for both organizations. Separate boards were maintained. The Council helped establish the Welfare Information Service in 1959. In 1960 the Chest raised \$528,000 on behalf of 30 agencies.

The Third Decade

In 1960 a donor group representative of business, industry and labour, under the leadership of Dr. Francis Winspear organized the United Community Fund. The Community Chest agreed to disband and transfer its assets and functions to the new United Fund. In its 1960 campaign, the new United Fund raised \$1,011,774 on behalf of 46 agencies. When the United Fund was formed, the common staff was maintained, and Council staff and personnel were involved in allocations and agency admissions

and evaluations. However, during its first year, the Fund hired a special fund-raiser.

In 1961 the Council changed its objects and by-laws to provide an emphasis to longer-range planning and research. It operated on a "project" basis, and dealt with child welfare, social allowances, human rights, transients, school drop-outs, etc. It formally changed its name in 1963 to the Edmonton Welfare Council. It maintained close ties with government and the United Fund.

In 1967 the Council again changed its constitution to focus more on community issues, and dropped its agency membership. It retained individual memberships only and became increasingly involved with community development and new emerging groups such as the Future Society, Human Rights Association, Anti-Pollution Society, Housing Co-operatives, area and neighborhood development projects. It became concerned with community use of schools, welfare rights groups. It found itself increasingly militant in demanding social change, and there is some evidence of anti-establishment feelings and attitudes.

During this time the role of the Council in allocations and agency admissions and evaluations disappeared, but the exchange of three board members between the Fund and Council continued on an intermittently active basis. Generally speaking, the result of this process was that the Council increasingly acted on behalf of citizen groups, having long since ceased to act as a co-ordinator of agencies, and reduced its role as a "planning arm" of the United Fund. It should be stated that while the Council no longer "co-ordinated" agencies, it was involved in community problems which often brought agencies into the picture.

During this period, the United Fund became conscious of the growing involvement of the public sector in the community, and the emergence of new style groups operating in a manner very different from the traditional agencies.

The Fourth Decade, the 1970's

In 1970 the UCF raised \$1,849,061 on behalf of 48 agencies. It began to develop closer ties with both provincial and municipal governments, largely around the funding of the new groups who were appealing to the

City, the Province and the Fund. The Fund also responded to direct requests from the new groups by funding short-term projects initially from the General Reserves, subsequently in 1972 establishing a special developmental fund.

Recognizing the very extensive and pervasive changes in the needs of the community, such as the emergence of the problem of drug abuse, transiency in youth, homeless and transiency in women, etc., the Fund re-organized the Admissions and Evaluations Committee to the Community Services Committee, the primary function of which was to be sensitive to the changes in the community in order to help the Fund assess its present and possible future role in relation to all the changes.

In trying to meet this commitment, the Community Services Committee recognized that it needed its own fact-finding and analysing capability rather than being obliged to see the changes through the eyes of the Social Planning Council, which appeared to have a greater loyalty to the citizens at large, and the emerging groups in particular, than it did to either the Fund agencies or the Fund itself. This resulted in the Fund establishing its own planning department to undertake the reviews of agency operations, to maintain connections with new and emerging developments in the community, and principally to develop a method whereby the Fund could establish a set of priorities for meeting human need through its member agencies. It began to see the need for developing possible new arrangements with agencies to support certain services rather than supporting the total agency on a deficit financing basis. In brief, the planning department is serving the function of helping the Fund and its agencies to adapt to changed social circumstances.

One of the consequences of initiating this kind of process within the Fund itself was the confusion it created for the Fund agencies. They have heard the Fund say that it no longer regarded the Social Planning Council as the exclusive "planning arm" of the Fund; they themselves had been dropped from membership in the Planning Council, and they are now asking where they relate for planning purposes. Many have expressed the need for a method to be found, since they feel they must be able to relate to the Fund because of the very high degree of interdependence.

This point was underscored during our recent seminar on priority setting.

Many people in the agencies and the community are aware of the historical background of the relationship between the Fund, the Council and the agencies. Some are aware of the implications of the new changes, but most are confused by the action of the United Fund in taking on a planning function. In part, they are confused by the Social Planning Council claim that it has not changed its role; that it still is willing to act as the "planning arm" of the Fund, and that there is nothing incompatible in this as well as acting on behalf of citizen groups.

Another school of thought holds the view that because of the militant, anti-establishment stance of some of the emerging groups, that it is impossible for the Council to remain loyal to these groups, advocate their causes and pursue financial support for them, at the same time that they sit with the Fund and the funding organizations to help them make decisions on how to allocate resources. This is seen as a conflict of interest. Evidence of this has appeared in our recent Board meeting in connection with the Transient and Homeless Women Study.

Summary

Over the years the relationship between the Fund and Council has varied. The over-all trend however, has been for the Fund to take over functions formerly undertaken by the Council. These are as follows:

- 1) The Fund is now exclusively responsible for allocations. It formerly shared this with the Council.
- 2) The Fund now handles its own admissions. This was at one time the function of the Council. It subsequently was a shared responsibility, and now is exclusively the Fund's responsibility.
- 3) The Fund formerly requested that the Council undertake agency evaluations. This has now become a responsibility for the Fund Planning Department. No evaluations have been undertaken by the Council for a number of years.
- 4) The Fund has not commissioned the Council to undertake a major study for several years. This change came in the spring of 1969 when the Fund itself undertook a study on youth services.

- 5) The Fund is now developing its own planning arrangements directly with agencies. This developed on a substantial scale as a result of the priority study. Formerly, agencies related to the Council for planning purposes. This substantially ceased when the Council dropped agency memberships in a constitutional change in 1967.

These changes have been occurring over a period of the last five years. There remain only two formal connections between Fund and Council:

- i) The constitutions of the Fund and Council provide an exchange of three board members.
- ii) The United Fund provides a substantial proportion of the budget of the Social Planning Council.

The questions which the discussions between representatives from the Fund and Council should consider are:

- a) The UCF has, in the past, funded the Social Planning Council partly as its own planning arm. The planning arm function has now in effect been discontinued. On what basis should the Fund continue to fund the Social Planning Council?
- b) Should the exchange of board members continue?

1. Unilaterally ended.

Extend services
 - Research: - pop a services
 - Financing