

MINUTES
SPECIAL HEALTH AND HOUSING TASK FORCE MEETING
BOARDROOM, SERVICE AND RESOURCE CENTRE,
411 DUNSMUIR STREET, NANAIMO, BC
WEDNESDAY, 2020-APR-22, AT 3:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor D. Bonner, Chair, (joined electronically)
Councillor E. Hemmens (joined electronically)
H. Hartman (joined electronically 3:39 p.m., disconnected 5:06 p.m.)
J. Harrison (joined electronically)
A. LaHue (joined electronically)
S. Madden (joined electronically)
E. Manson (joined electronically)
J. McCormick (joined electronically)
M. McNaughton (joined electronically)
K. Smythe (joined electronically)
L. McHaffie (joined electronically)
L. Murphy (joined electronically)
Supt. C. Miller, OIC, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP (joined electronically)

Absent: K. Glynn

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
K. Kronstal, Social Planner (joined electronically)
F. Farrohki, Manager, Communications
S. Gurrie, City Clerk
S. Snelgrove, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE SPECIAL HEALTH AND HOUSING TASK FORCE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Health and Housing Task Force Meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

(a) Emmy Manson advised she would be adding an alternate member Marina White.

3. PROCEDURAL MOTION:

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be closed to the public in order to deal with agenda items under the Community Charter:

Section 90(2) A part of the Council meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following:

(b) the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal

government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.

The Health and Housing Task Force moved “In Camera” at 3:11 p.m.
The Health and Housing Task Force moved out of “In Camera” at 3:51 p.m.

The Health and Housing Task Force reconvened the Open Meeting at 3:51 p.m. in the Boardroom.

B. Corsan and D. Lindsay vacated the Boardroom at 3:52 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS: (continued)

(a) Add Agenda Item 8(a) Other Business - Correspondence dated 2020-APR-22 from the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition regarding the co-creation of community solutions for marginalized and homeless populations.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

5. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Special Health and Housing Task Force Meeting held in the Service and Resource Boardroom, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Tuesday, 2020-APR-07, at 3:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Rudolph vacated the Boardroom at 3:53 p.m.

6. REPORTS:

(a) City Updates on Actions to Support Vulnerable Populations and Food Security Working Group Update

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning:

- The work of the Health and Housing Task Force is continuing
- The working group is meeting weekly and terms of reference are being drafted
- Intent is to look at food security issues during the crisis and long term
- Meeting weekly with shelter providers
- Working in partnership with BC Housing and Island Health

S. Gurrie vacated the Boardroom at 3:55 p.m.

- Continuing to work on rent bank project

- The City had three portable toilets installed and made adaptations to drinking water fountains
- Maps of toilet locations are on the City's website
- Shower program at Caledonia Park is continuing
- Staff are working with Unitarian Shelter to expand shower capacity
- The need is increasing as shower facilities which were available at the Salvation Army haven't been able to continue
- Harris House which provided shower facilities has closed
- Looking at possibility of laundry facilities to be included with shower program
- As updates arise the City's website and Task Force will be updated
- Staff are checking in with different non-profit organizations to see what supports they may need

B. Corsan returned to the Boardroom at 3:58 p.m.

Task Force discussion took place regarding:

- Food security working group terms of reference approved by Task Force rather than going to Council for approval
- Idea is to keep things nimble so working group can work fairly fast
- Sub-group of 3 volunteers are working on terms of reference and hopefully return to the next Task Force meeting for approval
- Marina White, alternate for Emmy Manson introduced herself and provided background regarding her work history and involvement in social services

J. Rudolph returned to the Boardroom at 4:02 p.m.

- Supt. Miller advised that the RCMP are seeing an increase in homeless people coming to Nanaimo from out of town

D. Lindsay returned to the Boardroom at 4:06 p.m.

- People are abandoning their encampments and moving downtown
- Non-profits are seeing more people they know of but don't see regularly
- RCMP are seeing people brand new to the community
- Snuneymuxw First Nation would like to be involved in food security working group

7. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Systems Mapping Project - Findings Update

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning.

Dr. Alina Turner, Turner Strategies, via electronic communication, provided a verbal update regarding the Initial Needs Assessment and Design Lab Feedback:

- Have had meetings with Staff and the working group to see how to pivot work during this time and develop a game plan to keep the work going

- Comprehensive integrated needs assessment has been completed, but was completed when COVID-19 emerged and will be updated into the fall
- Draft document is being circulated and will be a living document as information is still being collected
- COVID-19 emerged in the middle of consultations
- Completed two sets of design labs before everything was put on hold
- Design labs for second part of March were postponed to September with the caveat engagement may have to be digital
- Determining creative ways to receive lived experience feedback virtually if things are not back to normal in September
- Using data to inform decision making and preparing tangible costs and projections on spacing and types of spaces needed for a Health and Housing Task Force perspective
- Information needed from modelling work comes from the Affordable Housing plan and needs assessment
- COVID-19 will have impact on modelling
- Proceeding with modelling work so first scenarios may be completed for working group review next week
- Will update scenarios with COVID-19 data coming in and will provide a ballpark to address challenges in Nanaimo

(b) Systems Mapping Project - Adaptations to COVID-19

Dr. Alina Turner, Turner Strategies, via electronic communication, provided a verbal update regarding adaptations made to the Systems Mapping project due to COVID-19:

- Ecosystem map is the main deliverable
- Service listings mapped before COVID-19 occurred
- New listings that have come on-stream to deal with social responses to COVID-19 may involve brand new groups or existing groups
- Have found in other communities that there is an opportunity to mobilize societies using the HelpSeeker platform in a targeted way
- Groups have come together to deliver groceries for seniors and it would be a waste to not tap into ongoing energy
- Partnering with the United Way, City, Homeless Coalition to have social responses mapped into HelpSeeker
- 600+ listings in HelpSeeker have been updated as operations have changed so quickly
- Campaign to service providers and community so they know there is help available and leveraging helpseeker platform so it is easily accessible
- HelpSeeker app will be available in 22 languages 2020-MAY-07
- Working on developing a first nations language strategy
- City realigned Staff to help get push going
- COVID-19 situation provides opportunity to have people use HelpSeeker and have direct contact with a person
- City of Nanaimo has a game plan which is positive as a lot of communities are waiting for federal and provincial government support
- Communities that are mobilizing well are striking coordinated functions and funders are involved

- Leveraging funds after the crisis and what the City does around infrastructure mobilization during COVID-19 won't be wasted after COVID-19
- Topics of concern at the beginning of COVID-19 were housing and food security which is now overtaken by abuse, addictions and mental health challenges
- Webinar on Thursday, 2020-APR-23 at 8:00 a.m. to learn what other communities are doing regarding food security

J. Rudolph vacated the Boardroom at 4:24 p.m.

Task Force discussion took place regarding:

- Conversations with non-profit organizations are taking place as they are expecting 30-40% revenue drop through donations and other sources but are expecting an increase in service needs
- Non-profits may need to curtail services while need is going up

8. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) Correspondence dated 2020-APR-22 from the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition regarding the co-creation of community solutions for marginalized and homeless populations

Task Force discussion took place regarding:

- The need for a long term response, to be prepared for funding once the crisis phase has passed and the response phase is ongoing
- Need to revisit and create a new action plan for homelessness with new data available
- Homeless Coalition is concerned that the current process of immediate response to the crisis has proven inefficient and is not leveraging the knowledge and expertise of the Task Force
- Concerned that unless another nimble structure is created around shelter response, the Task Force is not using resources to assess the risk or using basic principles of crisis response or project management
- Ask from Homeless Coalition is to encourage the Health and Housing Task Force to take the lead on communicating to the Province what the actionable short term crisis strategy should be
- Need support from business community and all political levels
- Seeing reports in Canada of COVID-19 entering homeless communities and shelters
- BC Housing is working with Island Crisis Care Society, City and Island Health for responses
- BC housing advised if there are shelter opportunities they will provide funding
- Island Crisis Care Society toured St. Peter's Church but didn't feel comfortable operating that site
- Identified another site in the City which is being finalized and BC Housing anticipates being able to share that site tomorrow

- BC Housing doesn't want to lose sites and needs to work through logistics with each operator
- BC Housing's commitment remains the same that if shelter opportunities are available they will provide funding
- Suggestion to have a Public Health representative present at meetings
- Public Health could emphasise the pillars around long term strategies with opportunities to shelter in place and prepare for worst case scenarios
- Chamber of Commerce being part of temporary and longer term site selection to ensure no unintended consequences of selecting a site
- Neighbourhood consultation is key for BC Housing
- Longer term solutions include engagement with City based on Memorandum of Understanding
- The Task Force is the place to bring topics forward to be considered then put through to be actioned
- Concerns regarding the response time to help those on the street
- Hasn't been a collaborative vetting of what the community action will be
- Distinction between sheltering for people asymptomatic and symptomatic
- Reporting role of the Health and Housing Task Force to Council
- Medical response versus social response
- Potentially move "In Camera" at a future meeting to have BC Housing share information with the Task Force
- BC Housing's goal is to be strategic with regards to shelter sites and looking for a site that isn't a municipal site so that services can be continued as BC Housing is aware that when the emergency is lifted they won't have access to a municipal site such as a recreation centre
- Challenges if every potential site BC Housing toured was announced
- Longevity for sites is wanted when emergency is lifted
- Memorandum of Understanding in Nanaimo for permanent housing solutions
- Emergency Management BC involvement
- Island Health and BC Housing responsible for vulnerable populations, if resources requested from the community the City has an opportunity to do cost recovery
- Recommendations would come from the Health and Housing Task Force to Island Health and BC Housing in order to understand the local context and be reflected in planning work
- Wanting community created solutions

H. Hartman disconnected at 5:06 p.m.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning advised the next meeting will be held 2020-MAY-06 from 2:45 to 4:45 p.m.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:07 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER