

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

Present: Councillor Bonner, Chair
Councillor Hemmens (vacated 5:03 p.m.)
H. Hartman, BC Housing
A. LaHue, A/Director Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives Strategic Services Branch, Service Delivery Division, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (joined electronically 3:49 p.m.)
K. Smythe, CEO, Chamber of Commerce (joined electronically 3:10 p.m.)
J. Harrison, Executive Director, Canadian Mental Health Association
S. Madden, Executive Director, United Way
E. Manson, Councillor, Snuneymuxw First Nation (joined electronically 3:03 p.m., disconnected 3:56 p.m.)
L. Murphy, Director, Mental Health and Substance Use, Island Health
L. Fletcher, Nanaimo Detachment RCMP

Absent: J. Fix, Director Program Delivery, Service Canada
J. McCormick, Executive Director, John Howard Society

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
B. Corsan, Director, Development Approvals
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
D. Stewart, Social Planner
K. Kronstal, Social Planner
S. Snelgrove, Deputy Corporate Officer
K. Gerard, Recording Secretary

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

The Health and Housing Task Force Meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

(a) Agenda Item 6(b) Nanaimo Rent Bank – Add Correspondence from Dianne Varga, dated 2020-JUL-21, re: the Situation for Nanaimo Renters.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the following Minutes be adopted as circulated:

- Minutes of the Health and Housing Task Force Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2020-JUN-24, at 3:00 p.m.
- Minutes of the Special Health and Housing Task Force Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Wednesday, 2020-JUL-13, at 8:49 a.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

E. Manson joined the meeting electronically at 3:03 p.m.

5. PRESENTATIONS:

(a) Kelowna's Journey Home - Partnerships and Implementation

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning.

Presentation:

1. Sue Wheeler, Social Development Manager, City of Kelowna, and Stephanie Ball, Executive Director, Central Okanagan Journey Home Society, provided a presentation. Highlights included:
 - Kelowna's Journey Home Strategy included three foundational concepts: Innovation, Reconciliation and Lived Experience
 - The goal of the strategy was three fold and included
 1. End homelessness
 2. Introduce measures to prevent homelessness and
 3. Implement a coordinated systems approach
 - Kelowna realized that the most important part of success would be learning from and including people who have lived with homelessness
 - Other foundational groups to include in workshops and discussion are Indigenous, key stakeholders, developers and the private sector
 - The framework for the community engagement was moving toward a systems thinking approach which encourages a common understanding of issues, builds trust and educates the community on the root causes of homelessness
 - The first goal was to bring the community together with service providers and voices of homelessness to connect, listen and learn, organize and initiate
 - Phase 1 - Designed a workshop which brought together over 100 community partners, residents and service providers titled "Systems Thinking 101"
 - Workshop contained education and interactive exercises to show how systems thinking can work better and how all service providers can work together
 - Phase 2 - brought leaders of organizations, service providers, developers and community partners together to initiate a key

- conversation regarding the management of the Journey Home project and who would become the central contact
- Turner Strategies created a visual resource guide to showcase the proposed homelessness information management system
- A number of different groups consisting of the information technology sector, LGBTQ2+ community, key stakeholders, service providers and community groups were brought together to discuss the best way to move forward
- Created eight design labs including topics on lived experience , youth, funders, and Indigenous voices
- Strategy and design labs were completed over a two year period with key take away being to ensure you include people experiencing homelessness in the conversations and design labs
- A focus of all conversations and some design labs include an Indigenous voice with the goal of reconciliation through inclusion in the project and embedding the Indigenous view into the Journey's Home Strategy
- Staff collaborated with the University of British Columbia – Okanagan and Okanagan College to conduct community participatory research
- Created a pilot project titled “People” which included partnerships with the City of Kelowna, Interior Health, Indigenous groups and Community Action Team
- “People” is designed to help homeless/vulnerable people access the care and support they require through a connection with peers who have lived experience
- “People” peers manage a pop-up washroom and act as mentors for homelessness/vulnerable people
- The Journey Home Society have received three years of funding for the “People” program through Health Canada and has just received \$691,000 to develop a peer navigator program

K. Smythe joined the meeting electronically at 3:10 p.m.

- The Journey Home Society are actively engaged in the implementation of the strategy and a transition team was engaged to ensure momentum was not lost
- The City of Kelowna initiated a Complex Needs Advocacy Project and partnered with Interior Health, BC Housing, the Journey Home Society and other municipalities
- Goals of the project include identify levels of needs, develop a strategy, identify opportunities and create a Union of British Columbia of Municipalities resolution through interviews with community partners, service providers and homeless people
- Through the “Built for Zero” program staff can better track housing movements, inflow, understand placement breakdowns and identify where improvements can be made
- Current information shows there are approximately 374 active homeless people in the City of Kelowna

- The City of Kelowna COVID-19 response focused on five factors including enhancing current shelters, securing spaces for those at risk of COVID-19, securing mentors and health supports, finding and activating COVID-19 shelter space and providing access to basic needs
- The first priority was to find those without shelter, who were at risk and those who were unable to self isolate
- Key take aways included:
 - Designating one service provider or community partner to be the backbone, point of contact, for vulnerable/homeless people
 - Ensure that the those who have lived with homelessness are heard and have a voice
 - Ensure a partnership with Indigenous groups to teach and guide
 - Create a cohesive coordinated system

Task Force discussion took place. Highlights include:

- The pros and cons of the approach taken by the City of Kelowna and the Journey Home Society
- The workshop titled “Systems Thinking 101” and can the Task Force add the workshop to our existing list of design labs
- The contributions made by the private and business sectors and what approach was used to secure contributions and/or donations
- Cost of the program and funding providers
- Youth housing and identifying an approach for creating youth housing

Sue Wheeler, Social Development Manager, City of Kelowna, and Stephanie Ball, Executive Director, Central Okanagan Journey Home Society advised:

- They first established trust with other organization and acquired 100 signatures on a pledge to support the Journey Home Strategy and created a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Kelowna that provides \$160,000 in annual funding
- Transparent engagement and communication with the community
- Operations budget is approximately \$300,000 to \$400,000 per year with \$160,000 provided by the City of Kelowna, Provincial and Federal grants and in kind donations from private donors

A. LaHue joined the meeting electronically at 3:49 p.m.

E. Manson disconnected from the meeting at 3:56 p.m.

Sue Wheeler, Social Development Manager, City of Kelowna, and Stephanie Ball, Executive Director, Central Okanagan Journey Home Society continued their presentation:

- A committee was chosen based on their experience and knowledge and these members became ambassadors for the Journey Home Society

- Developers are working in partnership with BC Housing to create low income housing for vulnerable/homeless population
- Their goal is to have 400 housing units on scattered sites but they are aware that the homeless numbers have been increasing and are working with BC Housing for more housing options in the future
- Created a coordinated access list where an outreach team can provide daily check-ins with at risk people and help people get the services they require
- Created a timing list which includes names of each homeless/vulnerable person
- “Built for Zero Canada” is a national program that assists core groups in leading communities to end chronic homelessness and help communities with the process

Task Force discussion took place. Highlights include:

- \$300,000 in funding is available through the Reaching Home Fund
- Point of time count versus the timing list created by the Journey Home Society

(b) Data Sharing and Integrated Tables - Dr. Alina Turner, CEO HelpSeeker

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning.

Presentation:

1. Dr. Alina Turner, CEO HelpSeeker, provided a presentation. Highlights included:
 - Progress is being made with Island Health acquiring the information needed for integrated access mapping
 - Community engagement will begin in August and wrap-up in September
 - Design labs will include in person attendance, virtual attendance and will be led by a professional, local, facilitator
 - Advised that Island Health is providing the essential mapping and financial data required for success
 - Facilitation package and recruitment of facilitators by HelpSeeker will be completed next week with the goal of being completed by the end of August
 - Dr. Turner will be leading some of the design lab and with that information will be filling in gaps found in the housing continuum
 - Community leaders in each of the following sectors will facilitate the design labs:
 - Domestic violence & gender-based responses
 - Exploitation and vulnerability
 - Engaging faith/volunteer community
 - Food security
 - HelpSeeker will test drive and validate the emerging priorities/actions, proposed ICA model, complex needs approach and implementation of governance roles

- The complex needs action table will target 50 community members with complex needs in health, justice and housing/homelessness to ask how they can be better supported
- An action table will be created on complex needs with core frontline partners, and will focus on funder buy-ins and designating an action table lead person to coordinate activities

Task Force discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The Reaching Home funds provided by the Federal Government, must be spent by 2021-MAR-31 and are approved to assist in the coordinated access program
- Funding for the coordinated access program has been approved for the next three years, through the United Way
- Island Health and Island Crisis Care have created a small coalition to assist in the coordinated access piece regarding providing additional shelter spaces and designating a person to work with the service providers.

Dr. Alina Turner, CEO HelpSeeker, continued her presentation. Highlights included:

- Action plan overview will include a designed, branded document with graphics, quotes and pictures which is targeted toward interested community members and stakeholders, written in easy to understand language
- The action plan will include a technical report that will bring together all the data collected, financial model and needs assessment
- Next steps include:
 - September 2nd – community engagement update and council input/discussion
 - September 16th – deliverables finalized, plan launch, implement approach and discussion regarding the implementation roles
 - October 1st – discussion regarding project wrap-up and next steps
- Task Force will be required to discuss who or what service providers will be the main contact or backbone of coordinated access once implemented
- Key focus discussion in the future include: collaboration of the system, the capacity to implement the coordinated access plan, funding, key stakeholders, budget based on donations and grants and what the City of Nanaimo is able to provide in funding and support

6. REPORTS:

- (a) Discussion re: Daytime Resource Centre Expression of Interest

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning.

Task Force discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Announcement of Memorandum of Understanding with BC Housing
- Review the expression of interest for a daytime resource centre and if there is seed funding available
- Researching potential issues and success stories from other municipalities
- Ensuring that the money provided is used for its intended purpose
- Touring other resource centres and engaging staff at these facilities to see what has worked and what could be improved upon
- Ensure that partnerships are created with Island Health, Canadian Mental Health Association and other service providers to ensure the needs of all users are met

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, advised the Task Force that Staff have estimated the cost of operating a daytime resource centre could be \$800,000 to \$900,000 annually.

Task Force discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Researching costs, operations and planning of a daytime resource centre
- Location and the potential issue of grouping these resources into the downtown area as residents and business have already expressed frustration with the amount of homeless/social disorder downtown
- BC Housing recognizes that a daytime resource centre is needed and is currently contributing to one in Victoria

Councillor Hemmens vacated the Boardroom at 5:03 p.m.

(b) Nanaimo Rent Bank

David Stewart, Social Planner, provided an overview of rent banks. Highlights included:

- City Staff have been working with BC Rent Bank and the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition (NHC) to establish a rent bank in Nanaimo
- BC Rent Bank was established by the Vancity Foundation in partnership with the Province of BC to provide low income loans to vulnerable and/or homeless people to acquire housing
- 2020-JUL-02, the NHC selected the Nanaimo Region John Howard Society as the lead applicant for the Nanaimo Regional Rent Bank (NRRB)
- The John Howard Society and the City of Nanaimo (the City) submitted a joint application expression of interest in joining the BC Rent Bank
- The final decision will be made on 2020-SEP-18 and if approved the rent bank will begin on 2020-OCT-01
- Staff have identified the Housing Legacy Reserve Fund as a way to provide additional funding support to the rent bank

It was moved and seconded that the Health and Housing Task Force recommend that Council provide \$90,603 from the Housing Legacy Reserve funds received through the Online Accommodation Tax (OAP) to the Nanaimo Region John Howard Society in order to operate a local rent bank as a temporary pilot project. The motion carried unanimously.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

Due to time constraints, the Health and Housing Task Force agreed to defer the following item to the next Health Housing Task Force scheduled for 2020-SEP-02:

- (a) Letter dated 2020-JUN-08 from Bonnie Henry, MD, MPH, FRCPC, Provincial Health Officer, re: Homeless Encampment Health Issues Guidelines in the Context of COVID-19
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"It was moved and seconded that Council refer the correspondence from Dr. Bonnie Henry, dated 2020-JUN-08, to the Health and Housing Task Force to make recommendations, if any, to Council."

8. ADJOURNMENT:

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

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER