



MINUTES

MAYOR'S LEADERS' TABLE MEETING

Friday, June 14, 2024, 8:31 A.M.
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre,
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

Present: Mayor L. Krog, Chair
Donna Hais, Chair of Board of Nanaimo Port Authority
Bob Moss, Tectonica Management*
Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer at Nanaimo Ladysmith Public
School District 68
Dave Witty, Past Chair Nanaimo Airport Commission

Absent: Richard Horbachewski, Chief Advancement Officer and AVP
External Relations, Vancouver Island University
Erralyn Joseph, Councillor, and Assistant Negotiator, for
Snuneymuxw First Nation

Staff: D. Lindsay, Chief Administrative Officer
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works*
K. Robertson, Deputy Corporate Officer
N. Sponaule, Communications Advisor
J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting was called to order at 8:31 a.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

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

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

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

* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

- Minutes of the Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Friday, 2024-MAR-08, at 8:31 a.m.
- Minutes of the Special Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting held in the Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Friday, 2024-MAY-03, at 9:01 a.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

4. AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Follow-up Discussion re: Special Mayor's Leaders' Table Meeting 2024-MAY-03

Dave Witty introduced, and summarized, the previous discussion during the 2024-MAY-03 Special Mayor's Leaders' Table meeting. He and Bob Moss were seeking a motion from the Mayor's Leaders' Table and Council to support the report written by Dave Witty titled "Developing a Homelessness Action Plan for Nanaimo: Finding a Way Home" and implementing a Housing First Plus model. Highlights included:

- Housing First is not just about housing it is about the wrap around supports aimed at: reduction, prevention, law enforcement, and treatment
- Need to coordinate conversations with likeminded municipalities and corporations to address the provincial government
- There is an opportunity for the City to take a leadership role and take specific actions to try to make progress

Table discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The Penticton Herald Newspaper reported on Premier David Eby's comment that the current system is not working
- The only way to make Housing First work is with the support of the Province and the Federal Government
- Concern regarding crime and violent incidents related to mental health and addiction
- The potential for the upcoming Provincial election to focus on the homelessness and addiction issue
- Individuals who are deep into addiction and mental health crises will not seek out treatment willingly and may require involuntary care
- The need for a continuum of care that is not currently in place

- Reviewed the 19 recommendations listed in Dave Witty's report noting that the first four do not cost the City any money and will put pressure on other levels of government
- Concern regarding the number of death and violent incidents and the lack of response from senior levels of government
- Convening a small group of people to focus on what can be done as a City to make progress
- Noted the current work being done by City staff and other organizations to attempt to prevent homelessness and the previous work already completed by the Health and Housing Task Force
- Acceptance and support for Dave Witty's report (the report) by the City and other levels of government could create change
- The fentanyl issue being faced locally is more dire than what is being faced in European countries
- Ensuring the Nanaimo Systems Planning Organization (SPO), and other local organizations, are involved and seeking out their support for the report

Bob Moss disconnected at 9:10 a.m.

- Concern regarding the creation of another group and holding a homelessness conference

Bob Moss reconnected at 9:14 a.m.

- Using embarrassment to pressure the Provincial and Federal Governments to respond and provide funding
- The topics of health care and homelessness should never be politicized as they are a basic human right
- The current health care initiative has been working on their strategy to push the provincial government during the upcoming election for five years
- Concern that key steps may be overlooked by rushing ahead and the need to prepare a similar plan to the health care initiative for homelessness
- Request to review a list of the groups/organizations that the City is currently funding or working with to address the housing and homelessness issues. Staff noted that this information was available on the City's website in the document titled "City of Nanaimo's Response to Homelessness and Community Impacts" (<https://pub-nanaimo.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=5423>)

- Inviting groups to the table to seek their endorsement of the report in order to approach surrounding communities and gain additional support
- The power of community and creating a community voice for Vancouver Island as a whole in order to get the provincial government's attention

Dale Lindsay, Chief Administrative Officer, reviewed parts of the "City of Nanaimo's Response to Homelessness and Community Impacts" and noted the recommendations and work that has begun based on the Health and Housing Task Force Action Plan.

Table discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Concern regarding gaps in the types of housing being provided and the lack of housing available for seniors and families
- The need for increased preventative measure to address the homelessness issue
- Concern regarding the City taking on initiatives that are not its responsibility as this can cause future issues. The School District has experienced this by providing many additional (necessary) services which have had the result of impacting services in other areas
- Concern regarding how residents are approved for BC Housing accommodations
- Potentially adopting the first five recommendations of the report
- One of the first five recommendations includes a short-term task force to look at what has been done, look at what is in place, and recommend next steps
- Suggestion that the Table review some of the material that has been previously provided to Council and is available on the City's website
- No commitments from provincial candidates have been proposed related to homelessness for the upcoming election, but hopeful that some will be announced
- Suggestion that Mr. Witty schedule a meeting with Lisa Maria Barron, Member of Parliament for Nanaimo-Ladysmith, and Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, to review and discuss his report
- Request that the City adopt the first five recommendations of the report and ask Council to push for change:
 1. Recognize that homelessness in Nanaimo is an existential crisis that must be addressed with a fulsome response

2. Formally endorse the concept that homelessness violates the principle of human dignity
 3. Adopt Housing First Plus as the foundational element of a homelessness strategy
 4. Create a purpose driven Housing First Plus position
 5. Develop a robust plan to minimize the number of people at risk of homelessness
- First three recommendations do not commit funds or Staff resources
 - The need to take initiative as a City to start something
 - Potentially creating a Director of Housing position at the City to implement the recommendations and push other levels of government
 - Discussion regarding a timeframe being included in the recommendations to create a sense of urgency
 - Concern regarding potential overlap between the report and previous direction/commitments which are in progress

Dale Lindsay, Chief Administrative Officer, referred to the guiding principles and actions outlined in the report titled “Nanaimo Health and Housing Action Plan: Building our Path Forward” (https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/default-document-library/healthandhousingactionplan-document_for-website.pdf) previously provided by the Health and Housing Task Force.

Mayor Krog requested that the report from the Health and Housing Task Force “Nanaimo Health and Housing Action Plan: Building our Path Forward” be provided to members of the Mayor’s Leaders’ Table.

Table discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Council will not likely support the creation of another task force
- There is nothing prohibiting a community group from forming that is not coordinated through the City
- The intention is to encourage people to come forward with creative solutions to the homelessness issue
- Having support for the five recommendations would allow Mr. Witty and Mr. Moss to meet with people in the community and gather more support
- Advocating for the necessary bricks and mortar, and training need to make progress
- The first three recommendations are statements; however, the last two would require Staff resources

- Council has the ability to refer a motion to the committee for amendments

It was moved and seconded that the Mayor's Leaders' Table recommend that Council:

1. Recognize that homelessness in Nanaimo is an existential crisis that must be addressed with a fulsome response
2. Formally endorse the concept that homelessness violates the principle of human dignity
3. Adopt Housing First Plus as the foundational element of a homelessness strategy
4. Create a purpose driven Housing First Plus position
5. Develop a robust plan to minimize the number of people at risk of homelessness"

The motion carried unanimously.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Next Meeting Date

The next scheduled meeting for the Mayor's Leaders' Table is 2024-SEP-06.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 10:25 a.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER