

Minutes of the Abbotsford Homelessness Task Force meeting held Wednesday August 6, 2014, at 4:15pm in the Legacy Building at Exhibition Park

Task Force Members Present: Councillor Ross – Co-Chair (part), Councillor Smith – Co-Chair, J. Burkinshaw, S. Kuperis (part), K. Macdonald, J. McElhoes, J. Njogu, R. Seimens, M. Welte and R. van Wyk (part)

Council Present: Councillor Barkman and Councillor Braun

Staff Present: J. Rudolph – Deputy Manager, B. Rich, Chief Constable, E. Taylor - Administrative Assistant and L. Ganske – Recording Secretary

Facilitator: C. Enns – Social Planning Consultant

Public Present: 16 +-

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Councillor Ross, called the meeting to order at 4:15pm.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by J. Burkinshaw, that the minutes of the July 24, 2014, Homelessness Task Force meeting be adopted.

HTF46-2014

CARRIED.

3. DELEGATION

.1 Deb Lowell – Salvation Army

D. Lowell of the Salvation Army advised the Task Force of services provided by the Salvation Army and the new initiatives they are looking at, such as a pilot program to allow pets to go into the shelter with their owners, and modifications to their length of stay policy. She wished Task Force members had been at the Gladys Avenue homeless camp take down to comprehend all of the factors involved. Ms. Lowell cited success stories the Salvation Army has been involved with.

.2 Jodi Sturge – Elizabeth Fry Firth Residence

J. Sturge provided an overview of the history and programs run by the Elizabeth Fry Society in Abbotsford. She noted the organization works with incarcerated women transitioning back into mainstream society. She highlighted work programs, housing provided and the various challenges and incentives women encounter who are trying to improve their lives. She explained they also do a lot of policy work and are funded by the Provincial and Federal government. Ms. Sturge emphasized that community plays a large part in the success of their clients.

.3 Jeannette Dillabough – Raven's Moon Resource Society

J. Dillabough explained the wrap around approach taken by Raven's Moon Resource Society. She introduced a successful candidate who now works for them and is an inspiration for other residents. She distributed handouts outlining their philosophy and typical budgets for their supportive and low barrier houses, which currently house 56 people.

Moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by J. Burkinshaw that the delegations of Deb Lowell – Salvation Army, Jodi Sturge – Elizabeth Fry Firth Residence, and Jeannette Dillabough – Raven's Moon be received.

HTF47-2014

CARRIED.

4. BUSINESS OUT OF MINUTES

.1 Mennonite Central Committee Inventory of Services and Housing Update – Ron van Wyk

R. van Wyk advised that the Inventory of Services and Housing has been completed and will be shared with the Task Force shortly. Councillor Ross and C. Enns noted how important this will be to informing the Action Plan.

5. REPORTS

.1 Local Government Management Association Contact Shayne Williams, former Executive Director - KEYS Housing and Health Solutions

S. Williams, former Executive Director - KEYS Housing and Health Solutions, stated that Canada is the only G8 country without a housing strategy. He quoted a "Homeless Hub" statistic, that "homelessness costs Canada economy seven billion dollars annually". Mr. Williams referenced "Million Dollar Murray", a homeless man who cost the City of Reno, Nevada one million dollars in services. Mr. Williams advised that it is cheaper to house and wrap around homeless individuals, than to ignore them.

Mr. Williams explained that eighty percent of those who find themselves homeless get out of it quickly, but twenty percent become chronic and costly to any municipality. He noted that a homeless person costs society 4.8% more than an average person.

Through their initiatives, homelessness dropped 22% in Surrey since 2011, even though the population grew 10%. Some innovative projects implemented by KEYS Housing and Health Solutions in Surrey (Whalley), were:

- Creating a consultative, Homeless Master Plan;
- A winter shelter open 24 hours a day;
- A mobile unit, offering specialized supports;
- Individual case planning, costing \$5,000 - \$10,000 per client, per year;
- Successful individuals who inspire others to access services;

- An ACT Team;
- Turning a flop house, a night club and a strip club into shelters

S. Williams noted that with housing first, nutritious meals and adequate sleep, most people automatically make better choices. He offered to brainstorm or dialogue with Abbotsford to assist in addressing homelessness in our community. Mr. Williams recommended building community support; leverage our collective power to lobby BC Housing for funding and to lobby the Federal government for a housing strategy. He strongly recommends a housing first model.

Moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by B. Rich that the verbal report, from Shayne Williams, former Executive Director of KEYS Housing and Health Solutions, be received.

HTF48-2014

CARRIED.

6. MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

- .1 Regina Dalton email dated July 25, 2014

Moved by L. Loh, seconded by J. McElhoes that the email dated July 25, 2014, from Regina Dalton, be received.

HTF49-2014

CARRIED.

7. MEDIA

- .1 Abbotsford News July 23, 2014 – More Crime Near Camps: AP
- .2 Abbotsford News August 1, 2014 - Deadline for Eviction of Homeless Camps on Gladys Avenue

Moved by R. van Wyk, seconded by M. Welte, that the media distributed, be received.

HTF50-2014

CARRIED.

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by M. Welte that the August 6, 2014, Homelessness Task Force meeting be adjourned (5:30 p.m.)

HTF51-2014

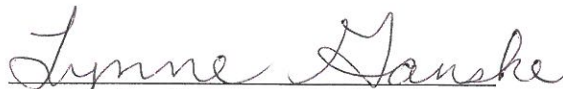
CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Homelessness Task Force is scheduled for Thursday, August 14, 2014 in Room 530 at 3:00pm. Please note that this is a closed meeting.

Certified Correct:



Co-Chair, Councillor Ross



Recording Secretary, L. Ganske