



Corporation of the City of
NEW WESTMINSTER

COVID-19: SENIORS & PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TASK FORCE

**June 4, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.
Committee Room 2, City Hall**

Minutes

(Due to precautionary health measures, only City staff are permitted to personally attend meetings)

PRESENT (In Person):

Jacklyn Altamura, Chair/Recreation Supervisor, Century House
Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst
Dylan Myers, Acting Emergency Support Services Deputy Chief
Mike Antoniali, Acting ESS Operations Coordinator
Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk

PRESENT (via Teleconference):

Staff and Consultants

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning
Alison Ching, Recreation Leader
Mariam Larson, Consultant, Mariam Larson Inc.

Organizational Representatives

Daisy Au, MOSIAC Seniors
Sharon Ennis, Royal City Legion Manor
Vivian Garcia, Spinal Cord Injury BC/Lived Experience
Laura Labelle, Fraser Health Authority
Ingrid Timmermans, Fraser Northwest Division of Family Practice
Kay Johnson, New West Hospice Society
Tim Hicks, Century House
Janice Barr, Community Living Society
Asifa Lalji, Sustainable Transportation Committee
Calvin Donnelly, Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association

The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m.

1. Introductions

Task Force members introduced themselves.

2. Review of Draft Minutes

No comments were received.

3. Update on Actions Taken Since Meeting of May 21, 2020

Friendly Caller Program

Mariam Larson, Consultant, advised that the Friendly Caller Program has 46 people registered to receive calls with 207 calls being made to date, and shared that over 3500 minutes of call time has been logged, noting that calls have become longer as relationships are established between the volunteers and recipients.

Grocery, Meal, and Food Programs

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, shared food security plan updates including:

- The Greater Vancouver Food Bank program is scheduled to continue until at least June 21st, and staff expect to hear about a requested extension soon;
- Holy Trinity Cathedral is offering Saturday morning take-away brunches, from 11:00 a.m. to noon; and,
- The Lookout and Purpose Daily Sandwich Program will continue, with interim funding from the City, until July 10, 2020.

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that food insecurity will become an even bigger issue once deferred bills come due and with both federal and provincial assistance ending; therefore, staff are working on how to address this issue over the next 12 to 18 months by securing as much continued support and funding as possible. He noted that during this time we may see many people experiencing food insecurity for the first time.

Task Force Web Portal

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, reminded members that the Task Force and Community Resources web portals are continuously updated and urged them to visit the sites frequently in order to have the most up-to-date information.

Financial Programs

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, advised that the List of Financial Supports located on the City website will be updated every two weeks with the next update being next week.

Kay Johnson, New West Hospice Society, shared that one of their clients had a great experience recently when they utilized Key West Ford's transportation program to get an appointment.

Jacklyn Altamura, Recreation Supervisor, Century House, announced that the Tuesday and Thursday dinner services at Century House will begin ½ hour earlier, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on order to accommodate the many patrons who arrive earlier.

Mr. Mehdic advised of a request from a Community Health Nurse seeking a volunteer for one of her clients to provide assistance with errands, attending appointments, etc. Task force members were asked to contact Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, if they know of anyone who can fill this role.

4. COVID-19 and Mental Health

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, advised of the following:

- The post meeting email will contain updated information pertaining to numerous government mental health resources;
- The Canadian Mental Health Association's website offers a number of user-friendly resources; and,
- The online coffee break with Shelly Schnee, Program Coordinator, Seniors, and the Good Cheer Facebook page continue to keep seniors connected.

5. Hey Neighbour Collective Initiative

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, recapped Hey Neighbour Initiative information from the previous meeting including that the Initiative is a pilot program to facilitate social connectedness and emergency management in multi-residential buildings, and that the City is seeking partnership opportunities, including one with a senior's residence. Implementation of the Initiative would involve identifying one or two residents in the building who would facilitate social connectedness by planning social activities, etc. Learnings from the Initiative will be shared.

Mr. Stark agreed with a Task Force member that contacting a housing coop would be a great way to get ideas of how to connect residents with each other.

6. Identification of Other Issues, Suggestions to Assist Seniors and Persons with Disabilities, and Member Updates

Jacklyn Altamura, Recreation Supervisor, Century House, asked Task Force members how their organizations are planning for the recovery stage and if any new needs have been identified:

- Janice Barr, Community Living Society, shared that they are moving into Phase 2 of the pandemic recovery and that partially re-opening their non-essential services involves a lot of planning, risk assessment, etc.;

- Kay Johnson, New West Hospice Society, advised that they have been discussing the recovery phase, noting that the unknown is a huge barrier for planning anything significant;
- Ingrid Timmermans, Fraser Northwest Division of Family Practice, announced the recent launch of a community resource for new parents and expectant families at www.maternityhub.ca which will assist with various maternity needs; and,
- Sharon Ennis, Royal City Legion Manor, stated that they are keeping their COVID-19 information bulletin boards up to date with information received from staff and Task Force members.

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, shared that staff continue to work with faith and non-profit organizations on the pandemic recovery phase, including assessing pre-pandemic services and those brought on during the pandemic, and determining upcoming needs. He noted that fundraising abilities have been greatly hindered, as have donations and volunteering even though needs are increasing, and that staff want to be prepared to take advantage of any upcoming government funding opportunities. Mr. Stark advised of an upcoming survey that Task Force members could expect to receive which will help plan and guide the recovery process.

Mr. Stark also advised that staff have begun planning the City's extreme heat response, and shared that the issue is particularly concerning for seniors who live alone in three-storey walk up apartments. He stated that Century House would be a cooling centre, adhering to social distancing, mask wearing, etc., and that staff will look into possibly securing small air conditioner units from corporate sponsors for vulnerable seniors to use, which is what some other cities have done.

Ms. Johnson announced that Lookout Housing and Health Society is collecting coats and jackets for the unsheltered. Members were asked to contact Lookout directly to have donations picked up.

7. Next Steps and Meeting Schedule

Next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 18, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 1:34 p.m.

Original Signed
Jacklyn Altamura
 Chair

Original Signed
Carilyn Cook
 Committee Clerk