

**COVID-19: AT-RISK &
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS TASK FORCE**
Minutes
March 25, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.
Room 401, Anvil Centre

(In order to undertake precautionary health measures and practice safe social distancing, only City staff are permitted to attend the meeting in person.)

PRESENT (in Person):

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning/Chair
Rob Dick, Assistant Deputy Fire Chief
Dylan Myers, Acting Emergency Support Services Chief Deputy
Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst
Silisha Ali, Youth Program Coordinator
Paolo Zenone, Recreation Leader
Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk

PRESENT (via Teleconference):

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner
Nazanin Esmaeili, Planning Assistant
Diana McDaniel, Inspector, New Westminster Police Department
Shayne Williams, Lookout Housing and Health Society
Susan Hogarth, Westminster House Society
Edith Tazumi, Union Gospel Mission
Shannon Patrick, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
Allison Luke, New Westminster Mental Health and Addictions Centre
Linda Fletcher-Gordon, Lower Mainland Purpose Society for Youth and Families
Courtney Pankratz, Lower Mainland Purpose Society
Kyoko Takahashi, Seniors Services Society
Lynda Edmonds, Fraserside Community Services Society
Kimiko Karpoff, United Church of Canada
Esther Hsieh, Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op
Lorrie Wasyliw, Monarch Place (WINGS)
Dana Osiowy, New West Family Place
Betina Wheeler, New West Homelessness Coalition Society
Sukhdeep Jassar, Fraser Health

The meeting convened at 1:00 p.m.

1. Introductions

Task Force members introduced themselves.

2. Review of Draft Terms of Reference

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, reviewed the draft Terms of Reference with Task Force members and posed the following questions:

Is the mandate clear and are there any suggested revisions or additions?

A member commented that the Terms of Reference should include ethno-cultural communities and those with language barriers.

Are there additional working group responsibilities that should be considered?

There were no comments.

Are there organizations that are missing and critical to the functioning of the working group?

A member suggested that the Task Force's membership remain fluid in order to allow for the inclusion of organizations and individuals as the process moves forward.

Selection of Alternate Chair from faith and non-profit sector

As no one volunteered for the position, Mr. Stark will contact individuals after the meeting to secure an Alternate Chair.

3. Introduction to Consultant – Courtney Pankratz

Courtney Pankratz introduced herself, sharing that she is the Project Coordinator for NWOCAT (New Westminster Overdose Community Action Team).

4. Update on the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Task Force

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, provided an update on actions taken to date with regard to the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Task Force, which is also addressing the needs of a highly vulnerable population.

5. Actions to Date Related to the At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Task Force

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, reviewed the list of interim actions that have already been taken with respect to the at-risk and vulnerable populations.

6. Immediate Actions for Consideration Related to the At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Task Force

Discussion ensued and members identified the following actions for consideration:

- Disbursement of baby supplies (e.g., formula and diapers), soap and other personal hygiene items, as well as the possible implementation of sanitation kiosks or stations around town;
- Work on ways to continue connecting with clients and delivering medications, etc., while maintaining minimal contact;
- Create a protocol for when symptomatic clients visit organizations;
- Create COVID-19 packages with hand sanitizer and other protective supplies, to disburse on the streets as soon as possible;
- Grocery shopping and delivery services and promotion of local organizations;
- Warming centres to get people out of the cold and provide a place for them to build their immunity systems with the provision of nutritious food and vitamins and other supplements;
- Work with other communities to share resources;
- Many organizations are in need of masks, gowns, gloves, and thermometers;
- Provide social supports for those who lose their jobs during the pandemic;
- Access to testing, possibly via testing stations;
- Increase online services with clear communication and provide clear communication as to where donations can be sent;
- Provide access to protein-rich food in various neighbourhoods throughout the city; and,
- Community advocates to provide information and walk people through such things as applying for government services (Employment Insurance, etc.), how to receive trauma counselling, filling prescriptions when you do not have any money, etc.

In order to avoid duplication of effort, John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, will work with relevant Task Force members on a Resource Survival Guide.

Silisha Ali, Youth Program Coordinator, shared that staff are determining how the Youth Centre can be used as a hub and advised that a youth resource reference guide is being created. Additionally, the windows of the centre will be used to display resources, and that social media connections will be launched in the next week or so.

7. Member Updates

Members were encouraged to contact each other for assistance, if needed, and advised that information regarding federal funding would be released soon.

8. Next Steps and Meeting Schedule

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, shared that an action plan will be created based on the information provided at today's meeting.

Mr. Stark noted that to start, Task Force meetings would be weekly, every Wednesday, at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Original Signed
John Stark
Chair

Original Signed
Carilyn Cook
Committee Clerk