



Corporation of the City of
NEW WESTMINSTER

COVID-19: SENIORS & PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TASK FORCE

**August 13, 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
Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk

PRESENT (via Teleconference):

Staff and Consultants

John Stark, Supervisory, Community Planning
Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner
Jim Luu, Assistant Manager, Queens Park Concessions

Organizational Representatives

Erin Daly, Fraser Health Authority
Calvin Donnelly, Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association
Sharon Ennis, Royal City Legion Manor
Vivian Garcia, Spinal Cord Injury BC/Lived Experience
Tim Hicks, Century House
Kay Johnson, New West Hospice Society
Asifa Lalji, Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee
Kyoko Takahashi, Seniors Services Society
Jules Wilson, Ministry of Children and Family Development

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 June 18, 2020

Friendly Caller Program

Jacklyn Altamura, Recreation Supervisor, advised that that Friendly Caller Program is ongoing, registrant numbers remain the same, and calls are still mainly made to provide social contact to seniors who may be isolated.

In response to a suggestion from a Task Force member, Ms. Altamura agreed that it would be appropriate to advertise the Program again as the weather begins to change which may cause more people to stay inside. Program information can be included in the advertisements for other fall programs.

Grocery, Meal, and Food Programs

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, provided the following updates:

- The City and Greater Vancouver Food Bank run hamper program will transition to a new model with a partnership with Holy Trinity Cathedral in September, at which time participating nonprofits will pick up their hampers from the Cathedral on Wednesday mornings. Task Force members were asked to contact Betina Wheeler, New West Homelessness Coalition Society, if they would like to their organization to the list;
- The Century House Supper Program will continue to run until at least September after which it will be reviewed. It was noted that during July and August an average of 25 meals per day were provided, compared to approximately 38 meals per day in May and June; and,
- St. Adin's Presbyterian Church has received funding from the United Way of the Lower Mainland and have set up a food hub with pop up programs in various neighbourhoods, including Sapperton and Queensborough.

Task Force Web Portal

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, reminded Task Force members that staff continue to update the web portal which contains resource information such as information such as is updated on a regular basis and included resources such as the Food Calendar, the Survival Resources Guide, as well as other trusted links and resources regarding COVID-19.

Financial Programs

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, advised that the Summary of Financial Supports includes the List of Financial Supports which has links to various

resources such as the British Columbia Response to COVID-19 website, the Government of Canada Economic Response Plan website, Family Services of Greater Vancouver.

Further, Mr. Mehdic informed members that the BC Temporary Rental Supplement will be discontinued at the end of August and stated that Karen Campbell, Policy Planner/Tenant Support, will be invited to the next Task Force meeting to provide additional information on rental issues.

Other Updates

John Stark, Supervisory, Community Planning, advised that city task forces are working on second wave plans and how the city would adapt if the province returned to Phase 1 or Phase 2, noting that development is underway of a strategy to deal with a worst case scenario. Second wave plans would include extending the Friendly Caller Program, expanding food resources, etc.

Kay Johnson, New West Hospice Society, expressed her gratitude to staff for all that the City is doing for residents during the pandemic.

4. COVID-19 and Mental Health

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, shared that the pandemic may affect our daily lives in ways that we may not realize and stressed the importance of the available mental health resources that are listed in the meeting follow up emails. Links in the email include the BC Government's website which offers a variety of virtual mental health supports, HealthLink BC, Wellness Together Canada which was created specifically in response to the rise in mental health issues due to the pandemic and offers self-guided courses and apps, a five minute self-assessment tool, etc. Additionally, there is the Century House Good Cheer Facebook page and the Virtual Coffee Break with Shelly.

Kyoko Takahashi, Seniors Services Society, announced that the Society has a new partnership with Westminster House Society to provide virtual mental health support, starting in September. A link to the program will be provided to the Task Force and included in the follow up email.

5. Extreme Heat Cooling Centre Update

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, stated that although Century House has been designated as a cooling centre, we have not experienced extreme heat events so far this summer, and reminded the Task Force that if we do have an extreme heat event, there is also information online with respect to keeping cool and recognizing heat

exhaustion. He noted that the City's work through its climate actions over the next year will facilitate how to respond to extreme heat responses, including during a pandemic.

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

No comments were received.

7. Next Steps and Meeting Schedule

Jacklyn Altamura, Recreation Supervisor, Century House, reminded members that the September 10, 2020 Task Force meeting was cancelled, and that the next meeting would be on Thursday, August. 27, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 1:24 p.m.

Original Signed _____
Jacklyn Altamura
Chair

Original Signed _____
Carilyn Cook
Committee Clerk