



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

November 3, 2015: 5:30 p.m.
Committee Room 2, City Hall (511 Royal Avenue)

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	- Co-Chair
Norah Andrew	- Community Member
Brynn Bourke	- Community Member
Jason Campbell	- Community Member
John Hooker	- Community Member
Nadine Nakagawa	- Community Member
Peter Nautenbach	- Community Member (exited at 6:10 p.m.)
Deanna Tan	- Fraser Health Representative (Alternate)
Briana Tomkinson	- Community Member (arrived at 5:38 p.m.)
Ken Wilkinson	- Community Member

REGRETS:

Tammy Dewar	- Community Member
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STAFF:

John Stark	- Senior Social Planner
Lauren Blake	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of September 1, 2015

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the September 1, 2015 Community and Social Issues Committee meeting be adopted.

CARRIED.

All members of Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Council Motion in Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, provided an On-Table PowerPoint presentation regarding the Council motion that was passed at the September 14, 2015 Regular meeting in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

In response to questions, Mr. Stark advised that the City currently provides a list of reputable contacts in response to inquiries regarding refugee assistance.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee provided the following suggestions:

- The City could co-host a meeting with Peter Julian and the Syrian community to investigate what incoming refugees may require in the way of assistance;
- The City could connect with the School District, as refugees could be children;
- A package could be provided to sponsor families that outlines services offered in New Westminster, such as the New Westminster Electrical Utility;
- A program similar to the Big Brothers could be implemented that is intended to bring families together with ongoing connections;
- The City could provide information regarding the settlement process and additional connections to sponsorship groups that have sponsored refugee families;
- The City could consult with Mosques and the Muslim Brotherhood to identify existing support groups;
- Information sessions could be arranged during existing children's programs such as tiny tot playtimes;
- A frequently asked questions (FAQ) could be created for the city, as well as for potential sponsor families that could outline the requirements of a sponsor family;
- The City could coordinate specific events such as supermarket tutorials, as many incoming refugees may not be familiar or used to North American supermarket chains;
- An index could be created outlining stores that handle goods which would be familiar to refugees;
- Detailed information regarding local Muslim services, such as mosques, could be provided (i.e., if a mosque is Sunni or Shia based);
- Information regarding employment agencies for trades people could be provided to refugees;
- Different types of immigrants or refugees qualify for different types of aid; and,
- The City should have a framework for assessing our capacity as a city to accept additional refugees.

3.2 New Westminster Extreme Heat Response Plan

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, provided an On-Table PowerPoint presentation regarding New Westminster's Extreme Heat Response Plan.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee noted the following comments:

- Staff could work with the Parks, Culture and Recreation Department to post information regarding services that are available in the city;
- The City could coordinate and target areas with higher numbers of people affected by extreme heat through transportation signage (i.e., on buses, or at bus stops);
- A shuttle could be provided from areas with higher numbers of people affected by extreme heat to local cool down areas;
- The City could implement a hotline for information regarding extreme heat;
- Meal delivery program workers could check in on or connect with people that are at risk for extreme heat;
- Landlords should be made responsible to provide a cool down area in a building;
- A targeted mail out could be completed to residents of three storey walk ups;
- Residents of local walk-up buildings could be directed to the nearest cool down centre;
- Water fountains could be added in areas that have higher numbers of people affected by extreme heat;
- Commercial developments could be required to provide public seating and shaded areas;
- A symbol could be created that identifies cool down spots;
- A City cool down truck could be implemented that provides cool down supplies, such as water;
- Paper fans with the cool down symbol could be distributed at City events;
- A fan folding activity could be implemented for kids, with guidelines regarding what to do when being active in the sun;
- Depending on Metro Vancouver water restrictions, the City could implement public water misters;
- The City could discuss a sponsorship with Lowes, as they have provided bottled water in the past;
- Information regarding the Extreme Heat Response Plan could be included on the City's garbage schedule, and in the elevators of three storey walk-ups; and,
- Building caretakers could be provided with information regarding the Extreme Heat Response Plan, as they may be most connected to the residents of the building.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Tenant Relocation Policy Update

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, advised that the Tenant Relocation Policy is scheduled to be presented to the Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability on November 9, 2015, and to the Land Use and Planning Committee on November 16, 2015.

4.2 Payday Loan Regulations Update

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, advised that suggested regulation implementations could be forwarded to Council for consideration in January or February, 2016.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee noted they have noticed advertisements for VanCity's low cost loans.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Our City: A Community Conversation on Housing

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, summarized the on-table document regarding the Our City: A Community Conversation on Housing event.

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

6.1 New Westminster Takes Measures to Assist Refugees Press Release

This item was discussed during item 3.1.

6.2 Surrey/White Rock Extreme Heat Response Plan (2011-12)

This item was discussed during item 3.2.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

January 5, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in Committee Room #2

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting concluded at 6:51 p.m.

Certified correct,

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy
Chair

Lauren Blake
Committee Clerk