



Family Court Committee

Wednesday, February 26, 2014 – 1:00 pm
Committee Room #2
City Hall

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Betty McIntosh	- Chair
Sarah Barone	- NW Law Courts
Bruce Clark	- Community Member
Brian Fiddler	- NW Victim Assistance
Mychael Gleeson	- Community Member
Molly Jeschke	- Community Member
Paul Johansen	- Community Member
Alana McIntyre	- Community Member
Silvana McNulty	- Community Member
Dorothy Shiu	- Community Member
Ronne Sun	- Family Justice Centre

GUESTS:

Gurinder Mann	- Executive Director, CERA
Michael Thompson	- Community Member

STAFF:

Lauren Blake	- Committee Clerk
Ruby Campbell	- Community Projects Coordinator
Sandon Fraser	- Youth Services Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 12:58 p.m.

1.0 ANNUAL HOUSEKEEPING

1.1 Introductions

The Committee members provided introductions, and Councillor Betty McIntosh, Chair, reviewed background information regarding the Family Court Committee.

1.2 Orientation

Lauren Blake, Committee Clerk, provided an orientation to the Committee. The following documents were reviewed and distributed to Committee members:

- Rules of Conduct: Advisory Committees and Bodies of Council
- Social Media Policy
- 2014 Schedule
- Permission Forms

Committee members were requested to review the Rules of Conduct and the Social Media Policy, if they have not already done so. Permission forms indicating the manner in which Committee members are to be contacted were distributed and collected by the Committee Clerk.

1.3 Committee Oaths

The oath of office was administered to the Committee members by the Committee Clerk.

2.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

No additions.

3.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Adoption of the Minutes of January 8, 2014

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the January 8, 2014 Family Court Committee meeting be adopted.

CARRIED.

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

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Youth Programs – Sandon Fraser, Youth Services Coordinator

Sandon Fraser, Youth Services Coordinator, provided a presentation regarding youth services in New Westminster. Mr. Fraser reviewed the youth services guiding principles, spoke to the City's youth programming and facilities and highlighted initiatives regarding youth services.

Mr. Fraser provided the Committee with information regarding the following topics:

- Safety and support programs that are available to youth, as well as youth committees that have been created with respect to youth safety and support;
- The Youth Awards, including information regarding the nomination process and deadlines;
- Workshops and programs for parents, including Parent Night, which is a workshop to support parents of teenagers. Mr. Fraser noted that this event is open to all members of the public;
- Youth programming at skytrain stations; and
- The Youth Centre, located at Century House.

Mr. Fraser advised that he will forward statistics with respect to youth in New Westminster, as well as additional information regarding the Youth Awards, to the Committee Clerk to distribute to the Committee.

Mr. Fraser can be contacted at sfraser@newwestcity.ca for additional information regarding youth programs in New Westminster.

5.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5.1 CERA – Gurinder Mann, Executive Director, CERA

Gurinder Mann, Executive Director, CERA, provided information regarding the role of restorative justice, and noted the following information:

- Restorative justice provides youth with an opportunity to accept responsibility for their actions, and an opportunity to adjust their behaviour.
- The process of restorative justice can provide a voice for the victim.
- Recidivism rates are lower in comparison to a punitive justice process.

Mr. Mann spoke to rising child crime rates, involving crimes perpetrated by elementary school aged children, noting that CERA would like to assume a preventative role, and it working with the School District, in order to find methods for implementing restorative justice related to school suspensions.

Mr. Mann discussed challenges with respect to social media and school issues, and noted that parental education will be required with respect to new and evolving technology accessible to children.

Discussion ensued and the Committee noted the following information:

- It was suggested that a minimum age requirement could be implemented with respect to ownership of a cellular phone and data packages. It was noted that civil and personal rights may be an issue.
- The Committee spoke to peer pressure and the role that schools and the community could have with respect to reducing peer pressure.

Ruby Campbell, Community Projects Coordinator, advised that she will liaise with Sandon Fraser, Youth Services Coordinator, with respect to providing cellular phone education to parents and children.

5.2 Family Day Review

Ruby Campbell, Community Projects Coordinator, provided a summary of the Family Day event held on February 10, 2014, and reported the following information:

- Approximately 4000 people attended the event. Ms. Campbell noted that many people arrived before the 11:00 a.m. start time, and stayed past the 4:00 p.m. end time.
- The activities remained busy throughout the day.
- The manner in which attendees were informed of the event was tracked by staff.
- Parks, Recreation and Culture hosted open houses at various community centres. Ms. Campbell noted that attendees that took their road map of the event to three or more locations were provided with a complimentary family pass, and that 23 complimentary passes were distributed.
- The provincial government providing funding for the event, however Ms. Campbell noted that the funding was provided upon short notice.
- The event was promoted on the provincial government's website, which provided additional publicity.

With respect to planning Family Day for 2015, Ms. Campbell advised that additional capacity would be beneficial to grow the event. The Anvil Centre was suggested as a potential additional venue. Ms. Campbell suggested that Century House could host an open house Family Day celebration, as a platform to showcase the amenities that Century House can offer customers.

Ms. Campbell thanked the Committee for their work with respect to Family Day, and extended thanks to Council for their support of the event.

With respect to the budget for the 2015 Family Day event, Councillor Betty McIntosh suggested requesting \$5, 000 from Council, as the budget of Family Day 2014 is expected to total approximately \$5, 000.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Family Court Committee request from Council a budget in the amount of \$5,000 for the 2015 Family Day event on February 9, 2015.

CARRIED.

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

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Family Court Committee reserve the Anvil Centre for the 2015 Family Day event on February 9, 2015.

CARRIED.

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

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Acting Chair

Councillor Betty McIntosh, Chair, requested that an Acting Chair be appointed, in the event she is unable to attend a Family Court Committee meeting.

Mychael Gleeson, Community Member, volunteered to be Acting Chair.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Mychael Gleeson be appointed as Acting Chair for the Family Court Committee when the Chair is unable to attend a meeting.

CARRIED.

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

6.1 School Suspensions – Paul Johansen

Paul Johansen, Community Member, reviewed information regarding a New Westminster District Parent Advisory Committee (DPAC) motion that was forwarded to the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC).

Mr. Johansen reported that several school districts have begun to practice alternative suspension practices, including restorative justice and positive behavior supports, and have noted reduced rates of suspensions.

The Committee discussed the benefits of monitoring school suspensions, and noted the following information:

- Monitoring suspensions may lead to positive interactions between the suspended individual and the authority figures, which may deter the suspended individual from further negative actions.
- It could be beneficial to identify the location of children are during their suspensions.
- Monitoring suspensions could assist in keeping children off of the streets during their suspensions.
- Monitoring suspensions could help diagnose personality disorders, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). However, it was noted that the definitions regarding personality disorders can evolve along with children's behaviours, and may become broader to include more children.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Family Court Committee write a letter requesting that the Ministry of Education revisit their decision regarding the British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) motion 2012.10 reporting on student suspensions and expulsions (student tracking), and encourage school districts to engage in alternative practices to suspensions such as restorative justice (CERA) and positive behaviour support.

CARRIED.

Sarah Barone and Bruce Clark voted in opposition.

6.2 Annual Report to the Minister of Justice

Councillor Betty McIntosh, Chair, requested that the Committee provide feedback regarding the Annual Report to the Minister of Justice. An on-table version of the report was provided to the Committee, and contained changes on the second page. The Committee provided the following comments:

- Under the issues discussed by the Committee, the item "review of Family Relations Act" should read "Family Law Act";
- Under "Family Day 2013", it was suggested that it be added that the Family Court Committee has hosted a community event celebrating families for the past 15 years; and
- The title of Attorney General is no longer utilized.

The report was received as amended, and will be sent to the Minister of Justice for information.

7.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

7.1 Member's Reports

Brian Fiddler, New Westminster Victim Assistance Association, reported that \$1600 was raised through a Canuck raffle for a volunteer fund at the New Westminster Victim Assistance Association annual dinner.

Councillor Betty McIntosh, Chair, reported that Council is responding to the Pattullo Bridge consultation, and that provincial funding has been discussed. City Hall hosted an open house regarding truck routes in New Westminster, and the potential removal of street sections from truck use. Councillor McIntosh noted that Translink has the authority to enact restrictions regarding truck use in New Westminster.

8.0 CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 Port Coquitlam Pilot Project aims to reduce risks to vulnerable youth

The article was circulated for information.

It was suggested that a representative from the University of British Columbia (UBC) be invited to a Family Court Committee to provide the Committee with additional information regarding the project.

9.0 NEXT MEETING

April 9, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. – Committee Room #2, City Hall

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Certified correct,

Councillor Betty McIntosh
Chair

Lauren Blake
Committee Clerk