

**SENIORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(SAC)**

September 9, 2021

**Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192
And in Meeting Room B**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Chinu Das	- Chair
Julia Schoennagel	- Alternate Chair/Community Member
Harbir Batra	- Community Member
Frances Blake	- Century House Association Representative
Calvin Donnelly	- Sapperton Old Age Pensioners' Association Representative
Rosemary Dunne	- Community Member
Tim Hicks	- Community Member
Donna MacLean	- Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative
Brenda Southam	- BC Seniors Services Society Representative

MEMBER REGRETS:

Lynn Radbourne	- Community Member
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STAFF PRESENT:

John Stark	- Supervisor, Community Planning
Jay Young	- Manager, Recreation Facilities
Anur Mehdic	- Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst
Jennifer Miller	- Manager of Public Engagement
Shelly Schnee	- Program Coordinator, Seniors
Katie Stobbart	- Committee Clerk
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the September 9, 2021 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting agenda be adopted with the addition of Item 5.3: Disabled Parking at Queensborough Community Gardens and Item 5.4: Transportation in Queensborough by Donna MacLean, Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative.

CARRIED.

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

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of May 13, 2021 Minutes

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the May 13, 2021 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

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

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

There were no items.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Seniors Advisory Committee Moving Forward

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that Council has established the new Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee which will take the place of the Seniors Advisory Committee, the Youth Advisory Committee, and the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee. He noted that the new committee would build on the accomplishments of the three previous committees and that engagement will be made with seniors, the LGBTQ2S community, and others who are interested in providing feedback on city issues. Mr. Stark acknowledged that the Seniors Advisory Committee has been instrumental in facilitating staff addressing various seniors' issues. He urged Committee members to research and apply for a city advisory committee that interests them so they can continue to provide a senior's lived-experience perspective.

Jennifer Miller, Manager of Public Engagement, shared that she will be a staff lead on the Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee and shared that staff are discussing organizational representation on advisory committees and how organizations can be represented moving forward.

Ms. Miller posed a number of questions to Committee members and received the following responses:

Are there any specific organizations that should be represented on the Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee:

- Sapperton Pensioners Hall

What is important to you as you consider the role of the new Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee?

- Less seniors (“watering down”) on committees may mean issues that affect seniors are not acknowledged nor addressed;
- Ensuring that seniors do not get lost in the change to a new advisory committee; and,
- Making enough time to discuss topics other than the large issue of reconciliation as that is a subject that will require a lot time and, hopefully, not at the expense of other important issues.

What advice do you have to help us welcome and include more diverse voices and perspectives on all our advisory committees? How can we help seniors feel welcome on all of our advisory committees?

- As many seniors experience challenges getting around, ensure access options to attend meetings; and,
- Consideration needs to be made with respect to the fact that senior representation on advisory committees will be small and there will be a lot of competition amongst all committee members to have their voices heard.

In response to questions from Committee members, staff provided the following comments:

- Once the Terms of Reference for the Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee is finalized, it will be sent to Committee members;
- Advisory committees are only one way to raise issues that are important to seniors with Council and other check-ins with seniors well established, including listening circles. As well, committee agenda setting will include input from seniors; and,
- It is the City’s goal to have seniors on every advisory committee, and staff have discussed geographical representation.

Discussion ensued and Committee member provided the following comments:

- Making room for seniors on advisory committees is good; however, realistically there will probably not be a senior representative on each committee as it is challenging for many seniors to get around;
- More time during meetings should be allocated for group discussion and feedback, not for watching presentations;
- In general, Committee members expressed disappointment that the Seniors Advisory Committee is being disbanded but noted that the Committee did do a lot of good things including the annual IMBY Information Fair at

Century House and may have been able to do even more good things if meetings were more frequent; and,

- Seniors will be lost in the transition which will be a loss for the community.

Councillor Das thanked everyone for providing their honest feedback on the new advisory committee structure noting that the discussion can continue at the next meeting if Committee members had additional input to share.

4.2 Extreme Heat Event Debrief

Jay Young, Manager, Recreation Facilities, shared that Century House was used as a cooling centre three times during the recent extreme heat events, noting that the Anvil Centre and the Queensborough Community Centre were also utilized as cooling centres. He shared that Parks and Recreation staff are very well trained and were able to open the facility successfully, welcome and accommodate visitors but were challenged when the facility was used for a second time as a cooling centre as staff were not trained to work with the many members of the unsheltered community who visited the centre.

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, noted the following:

- 719 deaths province wide were attributed to the three extreme heat events with 38 deaths occurring between June 25th and July 1st, most of whom were seniors who lived alone in low-rise, multi-family rentals that did not have air conditioning or provisions that limit heat penetration;
- Info regarding cooling centres, where to get water, etc. was circulated via CityPage and through the City's COVID-19 Task Forces;
- Century House was an overnight cooling centre as it is centrally located in the city;
- Staff from various Departments will be working with organizations and seeking funding and other resources for future extreme heat events, including a cooling centre for the unsheltered;
- During the City's extreme heat events debriefing process, thought was given as to what occurred during these events and actions and measures that the City can take moving forward in preparation for upcoming heat events. New Westminster Fire and Rescue Services has created a committee that will address this issue.

In Response to question from the Committee, Messrs. Young and Stark and Shelly Schnee, Program Coordinator, Seniors, provided the following comments:

- The Hey Neighbour Collective Pilot Project is looking at seniors' independent living buildings that were built in the 1960s and do not have air conditioning nor staff in place and how emergency management can be implemented, along with building tenant relationships;

- Fraser Health was limited in its handling of the extreme heat events as so many of their resources are still dealing with pandemic-related issues;
- In the future, work will be done to get resource information out in advance of these types of events via grocery stores, doctor's offices, pharmacies, etc.;
- Pets were allowed in the cooling centres and creating safe places for those with and without pets is being addressed during the debriefing sessions;
- Amongst other organizations, information was sent to all of the Residents' Associations and Landlord BC received electronic copies of resource information to print, circulate and post;
- Transportation was provided for seniors to cooling centres; and,
- The inter-departmental committee working on this issue recognizes that cooling centres are essential and that they need to accommodate the various needs for the different populations found throughout the city.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- Dissemination of information to seniors with disabilities or who do not use social media can be challenging so efforts should be made to share information early and through various means;
- The cooling centre at Century House was very well organized and staff did a tremendous job;
- Building management companies could slip extreme heat event information sheets under the doors of units in walk up buildings; however, information should not be shared too far in advance of an anticipated event as it may get lost or ignored;
- Many seniors may not want to leave their apartments or know when they are becoming dehydrated; and,
- When extreme heat events happen, the whole community needs to band together to help people as the city can only do so much.

5.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5.1 COVID-19 Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Task Force Update

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that the COVID-19 Seniors and Persons Living with Disabilities Task Force and the COVID-19 At-Risk and Vulnerable Populations Task Force were merged and now address standing items common to both Task Forces and items specific to each Task Force during their joint meetings. In addition, Mr. Stark advised of the following:

- The Friendly Support Caller Program continues to be active and is currently run through the Seniors Services Society who will look to expanding the Program in the future:

- As we enter the fourth wave of the pandemic, which is predicted to be worse than the third wave, the Task Forces will continue their work even past the pandemic as needs will continue;
- Work will continue to address seniors' issues more finely, including factors that may limit seniors' access to programs; and,
- A Task Force report will be going to Council on Monday outlining funding received and activities it has been used for thus far.

A Committee member thanked staff, members of the Task Forces, and the various organizations for the commendable job that they have all been doing throughout the pandemic.

5.2 Integrated Seniors Support Pilot Project and the Hey Neighbour Collective

Anur Mehdic, Housing and Child Care Planning Analyst, shared a PowerPoint presentation which outlined the issues of social connectedness and emergency preparedness for seniors and how the Hey Neighbour Collective Pilot Project at Ross Tower will address those issues.

In response to questions from Committee members, Messrs. Mehdic and Stark provided the following comments:

- Fraser Health has representatives on the COVID-19 Task Forces so they are aware of the Pilot Project; however, their resources are stretched as they continue to address pandemic-related issues;
- While Ross Tower is not solely a seniors housing building, a large population of live-alone seniors reside there so it was identified an ideal location for the Hey Neighbour Collective Pilot Project, and the two projects naturally came together, along with the City's Digital Inclusion Initiative;
- The emergency preparedness component, etc., would be transferable to purpose-built market rental buildings; and,
- Landlord BC is interested in the Projects as they also benefit landlords and may support tenants residing in buildings long term for the advantages that will be realized as a result of the Project.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- It would be great to have this expanded throughout the city as many people do not know their neighbours; and,
- Social connectedness and emergency preparedness are important issues to address and it will be exciting to see how this rolls out and what we will learn.

5.3 Disabled Parking at Queensborough Community Gardens – See below

5.4 Transportation in Queensborough

Donna MacLean, Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative, shared that the accessible parking located by the community garden located on Star Crescent is being misused by nearby residents and suggested that signs be erected that limit the parking to three hours.

Ms. MacLean also advised that a lot of trucks coming in and out of Queensborough along the very busy Duncan Avenue and Boyd Street put pedestrians at risk as there are no sidewalks, which means that seniors with disabilities do not have access to the area, and which prompts people to walk along the railroad tracks.

John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that he will bring the concerns outlined above to the City's transportation team for consideration but noted that the issue regarding the trucks may be out of the city's jurisdiction.

6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION

6.1 Century House Association Report

Frances Blake, Century House Association Representative, advised that their website is currently being updated, that Century House is doing a "soft" re-opening, and that 20 activities, including fitness classes, are now being offered again. She noted that Seniors Peer Counselling is getting their own office and that they are looking for a coordinator. Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk, will forward the coordinator job posting to Committee members for them to share with their networks.

Shelly Schnee, Program Coordinator, Seniors, announced that dining in at the Connections Café was now an option and that social areas are not also open and being utilized by visitors. She advised that consideration is being made with respect to the Seniors Festival and how it could be held.

6.2 Sapperton Old Age Pensioners Association Report

Calvin Donnelly, Sapperton Old Age Pensioners Association Representative, shared that some long-term members are returning to the Pensioner's Hall which is again hosting an Osteo Fit Program and will be used as a voting location for the upcoming Federal election. Lastly, Mr. Donnelly noted that the New Westminster Army Cadets had use the Hall for over a month and that the arrangement work out well for all concerned.

6.3 Queensborough 50+ Social Club

Donna MacLean, Queensborough 50+ Social Club Representative, advised that it is anticipated that the Club will again start meeting in October. She advised that members are concerned about the lack of a community bus and would like an update on what is happening with respect to getting one to service the community.

In response to the concern Ms. MacLean raised regarding access to swimming at the Canada Games Pool for seniors with limited financial resources, John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, advised that either him or Shelly Schnee, Program Coordinator, Seniors, would look into it to determine if there is a subsidy program that seniors could utilize and report back.

Councillor Das reminded Committee member that the next meeting of the Seniors Advisory Committee would be the last one and assured members that any outstanding issues would transfer over to other appropriate committees.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

Thursday, November 18, 2021

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Certified correct,

Original Signed

Councillor Das
Chair

Original Signed

Carilyn Cook
Committee Clerk