



City of Surrey

Social Planning Committee

Minutes

Councillors' Boardroom
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2003
Time: 7:08 p.m.

Present:

Chairperson - Councillor J. Villeneuve
S. Blown
R. Day
S. DeRapp
J. Grafton
A. Khanzadeh
M. Martin

Absent:

J. Brown
S. Moore

Staff Present:

B. Beblo, Planning & Development
L. White, Parks, Recreation & Culture
K. Miller, Administrative Assistant

Also Present:

Ramona Soares, A/Associate Regional Executive Officer, Ministry of Human Resources
Janice Abbott, Executive Director, Atira Women's Resource Society
Linda Dechief, Program Coordinator, Atira Women's Resource Society

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Social Planning Committee Minutes - June 26, 2003.

It was Moved by R. Day
Seconded by J. Grafton
That the minutes of the Social Planning
Committee meeting held on June 26, 2003, be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

1. Ramona Soares, A/Associate Regional Executive Officer, Ministry of Human Resources, together with two colleagues, attended the meeting to provide an overview of Provincial Income Assistance policies and programs.

The delegation reviewed the following issues:

- Regional caseloads have decreased from 2001 by 25%, to 18,000 clients with further decreases of 4% to 5% per month. This is the result of clients being successfully re-integrated into the work force.
- Programs support British Columbians to move them through income assistance to independence. Applicants are expected to actively job search while receiving assistance while assisting to return to self-sufficiency. Eligibility for assistance follows criteria including family income, employment background, etc. Each set of circumstances is reviewed.
- The main tool to assist clients is the employment plan, a collaborative effort between the Ministry, the client and service providers, which ultimately enables the client to achieve self-sufficiency.

- Childcare subsidy program: available to applicants with low to moderate income who need childcare. Eligibility for the subsidy includes parents who are working, seeking work, or attending school or training programs.
- A separate legislation provides assistance to persons with mental illness and physical disabilities. Persons with disabilities are eligible for a wider range of medical services such as pharmacare, basic optical and dental. Transit passes are also provided for persons with disabilities who qualify for this type of assistance.
- Families and individuals on income assistance for over twenty-four out of sixty months are re-assessed for eligibility. At the twenty-four month re-assessment, if the client is deemed employable, assistance is discontinued. Human Resources staff connects individuals and families with community services that can provide support beyond income assistance. No plans are in place for other contingencies. Any personal earnings must be declared and consequently deducted from the assistance.
- The Ministry is expanding to twenty-nine offices from the current twelve for the Fraser Region. This is the result of amalgamating the North and South Fraser Regions.

There followed a general discussion relative to the logistics of providing assistance to individuals and families who require subsidies for training and education programs. There are no plans to provide housing, however the Ministry funds two shelters in the Fraser Region.

The committee expressed concerns relative to not being included in consultation with the Province regarding policy development for income assistance and homelessness. Further concerns were expressed regarding the lack of transit accessibility in areas outside of central Surrey, the feasibility of trying to find gainful employment while on income assistance, and the general desire to be proactive.

The delegation withdrew from the meeting at 7:50 p.m., at which time the committee recessed. The meeting reconvened at 7:58 p.m., with the same community members in attendance.

2. Janice Abbott, Executive Director, and Linda Dechief, Program Coordinator, Atira Women's Resource Society, to discuss the Surrey High Risk Pregnancy and Early Parenting Project planning committee. The planning committee is comprised of MCFD, Fraser Health Authority, South Fraser Community Health Services Society, and the Surrey Aboriginal Society. The goal of the committee is to ensure that the project goes on. The delegation further described the prenatal clinic, alcohol and drug counselors, housing component, etc. A research consultant has determined the following data:
 - Social issues related to high risk pregnancies in Surrey
 - Higher percentage of low birth weights
 - Infant mortality rates are higher than anywhere else in BC
 - Major barriers to receiving services

- Substance abuse vis a vie prenatal care
- Infant development workers
- Transportation issues need to be addressed as soon as possible, services are not accessible
- It is hoped that this project will increase nutritional status, decrease substance abuse, enable accessibility to social and medical services
- Proposed building sites and funding opportunities

High risk pregnancy is defined as expecting women who may be living in poverty, abusive relationships, substance abusers, sex trade workers, with very little social support. Statistics compiled by the consultant indicate that Surrey has the highest number of teen pregnancies in the Province. It is anticipated that approximately 100 clients will be served in the first year of operation. Funding concerns may restrict the scope of the project.

Existing services in the community are few and are used to the maximum. There are gaps in the current system, particularly for women living in poverty, and women with substance abuse or working in the sex trade. Referrals will come through transition houses, public health nurses, outreach programs, hospitals, private practitioners and community agencies. The proposed name for the building is "The Maxine Wright Centre". Parks, Recreation and Culture staff were encouraged to contact the Atira Women's Resource Society to provide awareness of recreation services and facilities available to the public.

The delegation withdrew from the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

C. DISCUSSION OF DELEGATION

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Social Planning Awards November 24, 2003: the committee reviewed the Request for Nominations. The closing date is October 22, 2003. The committee will review the nominations at the October 23, 2003 meeting. The nomination form will be distributed throughout the City-owned facilities and libraries, published on the City Page, and is available on-line at www.city.surrey.bc.ca. An American Sign Language interpreter will be available at the awards ceremony. The Administrative Assistant will contact Shaw Cable to arrange placement of the interpreter.
2. Draft Homelessness Plan for Surrey:

Councillor Villeneuve advised the committee that she and the Social Planner attended a meeting of the Homelessness and Housing Taskforce earlier this evening. She advised that the consultants to the taskforce have completed a draft plan which the taskforce members are reviewing. The taskforce will be finalizing

the plan over the next few weeks as well as preparing a communication strategy. It is expected that the plan will be released later this fall.

3. South Fraser Community Services Gateway Homeless Shelter: Following receipt of Corporate Report No. R190, Council adopted a resolution to forward correspondence to the Provincial and Federal governments requesting that year-round funding be provided for homeless shelters and that these be located outside the City Centre.
4. Surrey Early Childhood Development Mapping Project (Clyde Hertzman Study): The Social Planner informed the committee that two presentations reviewing the findings of the above study are scheduled for October 14, 2003 at the Surrey School Board Conference Centre, located at 92 Avenue and 140 Street. The morning session, from 10 a.m. to noon, will provide a South Fraser regional perspective, and the afternoon session from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.; will focus specifically on Surrey data. Members were requested to attend and provide a report at a future meeting.

E. NEW BUSINESS

F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

G. UPDATES

1. Surrey/White Rock - Child, Youth & Family Network
2. Joint Youth/Family Court Committee
3. Hyland House - Shelter Advisory Committee
4. Surrey Social Futures - Semiahmoo Planning Group: The Social Planner informed the committee that issues in the Semiahmoo Peninsula are being addressed by the Group. During a recent meeting, background information and an offer of information support was provided by the Social Planner. It was suggested that the Group attend the committee as a delegation in early 2004.

H. CORRESPONDENCE

I. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Whalley Enhancement Initiative Project – Update, Press Release, July 24, 2003

2. City Program Improves Affordability and Choice for First Time Homebuyers, Press Release, August 11, 2003, and Surrey Home Ownership Assistance Program Brochure.
3. City of Surrey 2004 Grants – Accepting applications from non-profit groups and organizations, closing date is Tuesday, September 30, 2003.
4. FIX: The Story of an Addicted City, Canada Wild Productions, Press Release announcing the screening of the film in East Vancouver and Surrey for three nights from Friday, September 19 to Sunday, September 21, 2003.
5. AIDS WALK 2003, South Fraser Community Services Society is creating a “walking team” to join the 2003 Vancouver AIDS Walk on Sunday, September 21, 2003 starting in Stanley Park.
6. South Fraser Women’s Services Society, Invitation to the 25th Anniversary Celebration, Sunday, September 21, 2003, 1 – 4 p.m., 15318 – 20 Avenue, Surrey, BC.
7. OPTIONS: Services to Communities Society, Invitation to the 30th Anniversary Annual General Meetings, Thursday, September 25, 2003, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m., Sunrise Golf & Racquet Club, 5640 – 188 Street, Surrey, BC

It was

Moved by Jane Grafton

Seconded by S. Blown

That the Social Planning Committee receive

the above items of information.

Carried

J. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

1. Upcoming Events

- (a) Planning Institute of BC’s Council : *Connecting Through Learning*, scheduled for September 25, 2003, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m., at 1933 West Mall Annex, Room 150, School of Community & Regional Planning, UBC (1 block from the Museum of Anthropology). Please contact Suzy Blown for further information.
- (b) South Fraser Valley Regional Child Youth Committee: *Early Childhood Development Indicators and Community Mapping Initiative*, scheduled for the following dates:

Regional Session – Overview of Surrey, White Rock, Delta and the Langleys, October 14, 2003 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Surrey School District Conference Centre, 9260 – 140 Street, Surrey

Presentation for Surrey, White Rock, October 14, 2003, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.,
Surrey School District Conference Centre.

Dr. Clyde Hertzman will present a profile of children in the above
geographical areas, describing neighbourhood characteristics and
community resources and how they connect to our children's well-being.

2. Meeting Schedule: December 2003

The committee considered meeting dates for December 2003. It was agreed that
December 4, 2003 be a tentative meeting date.

The Administrative Assistant was requested to provide the above information to
the City Clerk's office and Councillors' office.

K. NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Social Planning Committee is scheduled for Thursday,
October 23, 2003.

L. ADJOURNMENT

It was

meeting do now adjourn.

Moved by J. Grafton
Seconded by R. Day
That the Social Planning Committee

Carried

The Social Planning Committee adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Chairperson