



# City of Surrey

## Social Planning Committee

### Minutes

Executive Boardroom  
City Hall  
14245 - 56 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2004**  
Time: 7:00 p.m.

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**Present:**

Chairperson - Councillor J. Villeneuve  
S. Blown  
J. Brown  
R. Day  
J. Grafton

**Absent:**

S. DeRapp  
A. Khanzadeh  
S. Moore

**Staff Present:**

B. Beblo, Planning & Development  
K. Swaele, Administrative Assistant

**Also Present:**

L. Vincent, Community Liaison

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**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**1. Social Planning Committee Minutes - January 29, 2004:**

It was Moved by J. Brown  
Seconded by S. Blown  
That the minutes of the Social Planning  
Committee meeting held on January 29, 2004, be adopted.  
Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS**

1. Trent Brown, Manager Community Relations & Service Quality, Region 3, Darin Froese, Regional Executive Director, and Ramona Soares Field Manager of the British Columbia Ministry of Human Resources, were in attendance to review changes to Human Resources programs and progress in BC Employment and Assistance programs.

Darin Froese, Regional Executive Director noted that the Fraser Region runs from Burnaby to Boston Bar on both the north and south side of the Fraser River. The South Fraser Region includes areas south of the Fraser River – Surrey, White Rock, Langley and Delta. Mr. Froese continued:

- That since June 2001 the Ministry of Human Resources has undergone a fairly significant transition that was started by the previous government in 1996 to reduce the dependency on welfare.
- That the Ministry provides services that move people to sustainable employment and assists people and families in need.
- That people in need receive assistance and the Ministry is working to help individuals achieve their economic and social potential.
- That they work by the guiding principles:
  - Personal Responsibility
  - Active Participation.

- Innovative Partnerships.
- Citizen Confidence and fairness to the Taxpayer, who is also an indirect client.
- Transparency and accountability for results.
- That clients who are able to work are assisted in completing a personalized employment plan that outlines the steps they will take to find sustainable employment.
- That the Ministry provides Training for Jobs and Job Placement programs.
- That these programs focus on job training and placement strategies intended to help clients obtain sustainable employment quickly.
- That the average wage of former clients is \$10.50 an hour, which is often a stepping stone for them.
- That the boundaries of the Ministry of Human Resources Fraser Region are the same as the Health Authority and the Ministry of Children and Families.
- That in October 2003, they restructured from 9 to 5 regions, and the Fraser is the largest of the 5 operational regions.
- That the Fraser Region has 28% of the Provincial welfare caseload.
- That the Provincial welfare caseload is 31,500 cases and each family is considered one case.
- That the budget in the region went from 1.8 billion in 2000 and 2001 to 1.3 billion for the upcoming 2004, 2005 fiscal year.
- That there has been a 30% reduction in staff, which represents the reduced caseload as people move off welfare to work.
- That clients who reach the 24-month time limit will have the time limit policy apply if they are not in compliance with their employment plan.
- That if clients are in compliance with their plan they will continue to receive assistance at a reduced rate.
- That studies show that people are better off working than on welfare, that they have more confidence, commitment, with their children more likely to graduate and not enter the criminal justice system.
- That staff work closely with clients to ensure they have employment in place and that it is sustainable.

In response to questions Mr. Froese noted:

- That the employment plan can include training and skills upgrading – not for all, but for some clients.
- That the region did not have a lot of overhead in management, so most of the 30% staff reductions came in terms of line staff.

Ramona Soares, Field Manager, briefly commented on service delivery and its structure in the South Fraser. She noted:

- That if a working single parent loses their job, they can reapply for assistance at a reduced rate.
- That time limits only affect income assistance clients who are capable of working now.

- That there are 25 categories of individuals who are exempted from actively seeking employment, such as persons with disabilities, persons with persistent multiple barriers, single parents with a child under the age of three, etc.
- That the service delivery is being restructured and 7 offices in the Region will be closed, 3 of which are in Surrey.
- That these offices include one Employment Assistance Centre in Guildford and two Childcare Subsidy and Family Maintenance Centres.
- That the structure has been realigned so that the same services will be supplied in a one-stop shop method.
- That this one-stop shop method will make it easier for the clients who sometimes have to go to two offices to meet their needs.
- That there will also be 2 specialized offices to meet the needs of people with disabilities, and include staff with expertise in dealing with clients with special needs.
- That Employment and Assistance Centres will be located at:
  - 137<sup>th</sup> and 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue
  - 93<sup>rd</sup> and 120<sup>th</sup> Street
  - 79<sup>th</sup> and Scott Road
  - 160<sup>th</sup> and 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- That Persons with disabilities will be served from offices located at:
  - 100<sup>th</sup> and 136A Street
  - 137<sup>th</sup> and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

In response to questions, the delegates noted:

- That now that they are 4 intake offices, services will be closer to the clients.
- That there are no offices in South Surrey, which has a lower incidence of people on assistance.
- That of the 31,500 Province-wide cases, 10,523 are located in Surrey.
- That 48% of Surrey clients have employment obligated files, whereas 52% do not.
- That the Provincial caseload is expected to go down by 10,000, with an increase of 2,000 cases of people with disabilities, for a net reduction of 8,000 cases.
- That there are certainly lots of good child care spots available, and they do not have people coming in unable to take a job because their child care costs are not covered.
- That they provide a list of child care services and refer them to OPTIONS who can also assist.
- That 60% of the childcare recipients are not on welfare.
- That the child subsidy is income tested.
- That the Ministry of Human Resources administers the child care subsidy on behalf of the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.
- That childcare subsidies are also provided for those who are on welfare and seeking a job.

Trent Brown, Manager, Community Relations & Service Quality, Fraser Region 3 noted:

- That since 2001, the Provincial Government has put approximately \$300 million into employment programs to assist welfare recipients.
- That the most employable persons will be referred to the job placement programs.
- That 50% of the applicants are temporary and 29% are expected to attend job placement or actively seek work.
- That service providers work on a success-oriented basis and are paid when clients are successfully placed and maintaining employment.
- That certain clients don't fit into the Job Placement or Training for Jobs Programs, and will be referred to the Community Assistance Program.
- That the Community Assistance Program helps them deal with life skills, volunteering, supported pre-employment skill development, advocacy and support for individuals.
- That the object of the Community Assistance program is to get clients to the point where they are able to attend a training program.
- That if there is a training program of value in another community for a particular client, the service provider will assist them in getting to that training.
- That a unique program recently developed in Surrey is training for jobs where English is a second language, and where language is a barrier to employment.
- That another gap which has been filled is the Bridging Program, which helps women leaving violent or abusive situations and former sex-trade workers to overcome employment barriers and help them make successful transitions to sustainable employment.
- That some of the clients in the Bridging Program may not become independent of income assistance but be able to go into a volunteer program.
- That caseloads are becoming more multi-barriered with more social issues, an increase in less educated people and people with disabilities, and an increase in Asian applicants.
- That pre-employment service for the disabled population persons has tripled over the past 25 years, with the current caseload at almost 50,000 and expected to increase 5% over the next year.

In response to questions, the delegation noted:

- That out of the money being saved through a reduction of 30% in the caseload, increases can be given to funding to persons with disabilities.
- That the challenge is to get people with disabilities to the point where they are willing to participate in programs and help them to succeed.
- That employment for people with disabilities is entirely voluntary, but people who do get involved get excited and happy about being involved with the community.
- That employment is tailored to individual needs and what they can handle – perhaps 1 or 2 days a week.

- That there are large organizations such as Home Depot and Costco who are willing to participate by employing people with disabilities.
- That an assessment is made at the outset, and individuals who are not ready for employment are not set up for failure.
- That employment consultants at each of the offices will sit down with some of the clients who present as employable, but for some reason are unable to find jobs.
- That there are specialized staff who are vocational rehabilitation consultants who deal with employment programs for people with disabilities.
- That the time-limit criteria are quite broad and allow them to assess on a case-by-case basis.
- That the Ministry spends about \$800,000 annually in top ups for clients who are in alcohol and drug addiction recovery.

The Social Planning Committee then asked for information on Urban Development Agreements. Darin Froese, Regional Executive Director noted:

- That Urban Development Agreements are a partnership between the 3 levels of government, Municipal, Provincial and the Western Economic Diversification Canada.
- That there are 3 agreements in Canada – Edmonton, Winnipeg and Vancouver.
- That the Agreements focus on realizing opportunities and addressing challenges in these cities.
- That the agreements focus on ensuring the full economic participation of all residents.
- That the Agreements are partnerships that improve coordination of activities among Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments.
- That the Agreements help the community focus on the needs and opportunities to determine what it wants to do in terms of social issues in the community.
- That the Urban Development Agreement melds with the City of Vancouver Social Plan and has been quite effective in identifying projects which the 3 levels of government agree are priorities.

The Chair noted that this does not necessarily mean that the projects are funded, simply that an agreement has been reached on what is a priority.

Darin Froese noted that if the Social Planning Committee is interested in obtaining more information, Isabel Donovan from the City of Vancouver would be an interesting delegation to the Committee.

Judy thanked the delegation for the very helpful information and thanked them for being so open. She noted that it is healthy to have programs for people to seek employment, which allows them to feel more valuable to the community and have more pride in themselves. She commented that the philosophy of the Ministry and its staff is good as long as there is a sensitivity to the struggles of the individual.

The meeting recessed at 8:48 p.m. when the delegation left the meeting and reconvened at 9:00 p.m.

**D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**E. NEW BUSINESS**

**2. Development of a Social Plan for the City of Surrey**

The Social Planning Committee discussed the development of a Social Plan for the City of Surrey and how terms of reference should be developed. The Committee commented:

- That it is important that the City get the best qualified people to help with a Social Plan and be able to consult with the highly experienced social service people within the City.
- That preparation of the Plan would require an extensive public consultation process.
- That the City might wish to consider a partnership with a Social Agency in the City, which could help with funding of the plan.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

It was  
Moved by J. Grafton  
Seconded by R. Day  
That the Social Planning Committee  
supports the City moving forward with the process of a Social Plan as a high priority and suggests that staff consult with knowledgeable organizations such as SPARC (Social Planning and Research Council of BC); and

That Council may also wish to consider partnerships with non-profit organizations, which may be able to leverage funding from foundations or other levels of government

Carried

**3. Preparation of 2004 Work Program**

- (a) Review of 2003 achievements
- (b) Key directions for 2004
- (c) Video and discussion

Preparation of the 2004 work program was deferred to the next meeting of the Social Planning Committee.

**F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**G. UPDATES**

1. Surrey/White Rock: Child, Youth and Family Network
2. Joint Youth/Family Court Committee
3. Surrey Homelessness Task Force
4. Hyland House - Shelter Advisory Committee

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

**I. INFORMATION ITEMS**

It was Moved by S. Blown  
Seconded by R. Day  
That Information Items be received.  
Carried

1. Surrey Crime Prevention Newsletter - Winter 2003
2. SPARC BC News, "Redefining Security", Winter 2004

**J. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

The Social Planner distributed the following items:

1. Surrey/White Rock Make Children First – a community partnership focused on the health, well-being and learning potential of children during their first six years of life and sponsored by the Ministry for Children and Family Development.
2. Social Planning & Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) – workshop to be held April 5, 2004 on creating connections/building community: an Introduction to Social Planning for Communities in the Lower Mainland.

**K. NEXT MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Social Planning Committee, scheduled for Thursday, March 25, 2004, was rescheduled at the request of the Chair.

The next meeting of the Social Planning Committee will be held Thursday, April 8, 2004.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

The Social Planning Committee adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

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Chairperson