



City of Surrey

Social Planning Advisory Committee

Minutes

Executive Boardroom
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2008
Time: 7:00 p.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

Chairperson – J. Villeneuve
L. Alexander
G. Gill
K. Kreis
Dr. Z. Malik
R. Mehta

Absent:

Councillor M. Martin
S. Dooley
R. Campbell
H. Parhar
K. Ardawa

Staff Present:

A. Murphy, Senior Social Planner
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services

Guests:

Janet Austin, CEO, YWCA
Helen Ghabel, CFO, YWCA
Michelle Sing, Dir. of HR, Volunteer Services &
Children's Services, YWCA
Andrew Hiscox, CitySpaces Consulting

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was

Moved by Gurtej Gill

Seconded by Lara Alexander

That the minutes of the Social Planning

Advisory Committee meeting held on January 24, 2008, be adopted.

Carried

B. DELEGATION

1. Challenges and Opportunities - The Provision of Quality Childcare in Surrey

YWCA delegates Janet Austin, Director of YWCA in Metro Vancouver, Helen Ghabel, CFO, Michelle Sing, Director of Human Resources, Volunteer Services & Children's Services, and Andrew Hiscox, CitySpaces Consulting attended to provide a presentation regarding quality childcare issues at the national, provincial and local level.

Chairperson Villeneuve provided background information: The City has leased land to the YWCA to develop a social housing project for single moms - women with dependent children who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless. The project will include 36 units of housing and will be located in Newton Town Centre, on a piece of empty land by the library, seniors centre and recreation centre. This project will meet the needs of the community. In addition to this housing project, in the future the site could accommodate additional facilities other than housing.

Round table introductions were made.

Janet Austin provided an overview of the YWCA:

- YWCA's mission is to build better futures for women and their families through integrated services that foster economic independence, wellness and equal opportunities.
- Social enterprise model to service provision. For example, the YWCA's 155 room hotel in downtown Vancouver made \$3 Million gross last year. The profits are used to support the Y's services.
- The YWCA uses this business model to make their programs sustainable and not over reliant on any one source of funding. This maintains the YWCA's autonomy.
- Are adopting a different language around child care: "*early learning and care centres*".
- Childcare is viewed by many as custodial or babysitting, when in fact the YWCA's programs are designed to promote healthy development and early learning.
- At the provincial level, early learning and care falls under the mandates of both the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Ministry of Education. An integrated approach is needed.
- YWCA's Investment in Early Learning and Childhood (operates 4 centres):
 - Crabtree Corner Centre (at-risk Downtown Eastside children)
 - Citygate Centre (special needs children)
 - Leslie Diamond Centre (working families)
 - Emmas Centre (teen mothers)
 - 99 spaces
 - \$0.5 Million annual deficit
 - Highly qualified and experienced staff
 - 100% have ECE and ITE certificates
 - 50% have special needs certificates
 - Salaries and benefits account for 80% of expenses
 - YWCA committed to quality and equity – training and salaries are key or you don't keep the people
- Investing in kids makes good sense – 0-6 is critical; 0-3 is huge for needing quality experiences; and identifying if children aren't meeting child development milestones.
- Labour force issues:
 - The benefits to society are enormous. Lower social and health costs – economic cost/benefit 2:1 return at a minimum based on current BC information
 - Impacts workforce of today by addressing underemployment of women
 - Early learning and care is associated with improvements in employee retention and productivity and decreases in absenteeism.
 - Early learning and care impacts the labour force of tomorrow:
 - Extraordinary low birth rates in country
 - School readiness (25% of BC children at risk)
 - Maximizing potential of all children
- Provided an information package on table and noted the contents of interest:
 - Business in Vancouver newspaper article regarding childcare being key to employee retention

- Goldman Sachs Global Economics Paper No. 154 – Gender inequality, growth and global ageing
- Women Matter – Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver by McKinsey & Company
- Quality:
 - Research demonstrates consistently higher service quality in non-profit versus for profit environments
 - Play based learning
 - Qualified and experienced staff
 - Wages and benefits commensurate with education and experience
 - Staff: child ratios
 - 17-1 cost benefit return for children with greater challenges
- Budget scenarios were provided to demonstrate operating funding challenge:
 - Assumptions:
 - Parents fees (\$1100/month infant toddler; \$600/mo for preschool children)
 - Salaries and benefits competitive to ensure staff retention represent 80% of operating expenses (YWCA pays staff \$19-\$21 per hour plus benefits)
 - Building costs reflect current operating expenses (no capital carrying costs)
 - Scenario 1 - Preschool early learning and care (59 spaces)
 - Revenue = \$502,832 (\$424,800 in parent fees and \$78,032 in provincial operating grant)
 - Expenses = \$719,539
 - Operating deficit = \$216,707 per year
 - Scenario 2 – Infant/toddler early learning and care (59 spaces)
 - Revenue = \$956,508 (\$778,800 in parent fees and \$177,708 in provincial operating grant)
 - Expenses = \$1,102,577
 - Operating deficit = \$146,069
 - Not many single parent families can afford the parent fees. Single parent families with incomes under \$38,000 are eligible for \$500/month subsidy. Double income families do not qualify for the subsidy.
- Critical Factors of Early Learning & Care
 - Need to take on more child care
 - Partnership
 - Land
 - Capital costs are not a problem – the YWCA is able to fundraise
 - Operating funding is the missing piece of puzzle
- Opportunities with provincial throne speech:
 - Pilot project for full-day kindergarten
 - Build relationships with schools

- Strong start
- Our future in Surrey

The delegation further commented:

- With the change in the federal government, the vision changed from the Liberals' plan to develop a national early childhood development and child care system, to one of putting funding directly into the hands of individual parents.
- 2007 Federal Budget – Universal Child Care Benefit and Child Tax Benefit costs \$24 Billion annually. This was almost enough to fund a childcare system across the country.
- Nationally, most of the provinces have moved in a progressive direction with significant commitments by the provincial governments in Manitoba and Ontario.
- Ontario is planning to implement full-day kindergarten for 3-5 year olds. Basically this is play-based and the same as quality childcare available during the working day for families so is very positive for Ontario.
- The problem in BC is the lack of operating funding available for operating child care.
- BC's recent throne speech included a statement regarding assessing the feasibility of all-day kindergarten. The YWCA is trying to find out more about the Province's plans and will position their advocacy around that. There may be opportunities to explore the possibility of a pilot project in Surrey.
- A full-day kindergarten program will need to work with the colleges, to ramp up their programs so that there are staff available, and in order to retain staff, salaries would need to be competitive.

Chairperson Councillor Villeneuve thanked the delegation for the very informative presentation.

In response to queries the following information was provided:

- In terms of special needs children, it is important to make certain staff are able to identify and intervene when children are not meeting developmental milestones and in connecting parents to the needed resources.
- How can this committee support these endeavours related to all-day kindergarten and lobby for a pilot project in Surrey? Is there an opportunity for the City of Surrey and the YWCA to approach the Province together? Janet Austin has requested meetings with the Ministries of Education and Children & Family Development. Once she knows more she will report back to the Committee.
- Janet Austin is prepared to come back to this committee to consider the opportunities potentially available. Would be willing to do a joint delegation with the City of Surrey to the Province.
- Janet would be willing to make a presentation to the business community in Surrey on the challenge of child care. Most businesses are small and so it is unrealistic to expect them to subsidize childcare. Government support is required.
- Could consider the SFU Surrey Campus as a partner for childcare spaces.

- Sheila Davidson heads up the Early Childhood program at SFU. Sheila and Susan Christy are two women who might be able to play a valuable role on this issue.
- United Way has become extremely supportive of childcare issues and may be of help in how to address the deficit.
- The throne speech is the first time that a serious statement on serious money to be invested in child care has been made. Ontario is doing it and getting positive credit for it. We can do our best to work on reinforcing this. The best way to deal with literacy is to ensure children get the early childhood development experiences that they require.

Chairperson Villeneuve thanked the delegation and requested the financial information from Janet Austin regarding the current federal funding.

Andy Hiscox provided site plans of the new social housing project being developed by the YWCA in Newton on table. Site is located at 137 Street and 70 Avenue, by the Safeway and the Surrey Library. A great location with a library, seniors' centre, shopping centre, bus loop, and Wave Pool for moms and kids:

- There is room on the west side of the site for a future development such as a childcare centre or additional housing for women.

Chairperson Villeneuve thanked the delegation and they departed the meeting.

Committee comments:

- This presentation was great and serves the 0-6 age group but there is a gap for age groups 6-12. There is no before and after school care. The school board has a role to play in this. The City Parks, Recreation & Culture could offer programs at schools throughout the city or partner with the YWCA.
- Lara Alexander commented that a recreation program was offered at her children's school on Valentines Day from 2:45 – 4:15 pm. The program was packed solid within the first 15 minutes of the first day, had 3 staff (2 of which were students). It was amazing. Programs like this could be a big money maker for the city but the City doesn't have staff enough for each school. Staffing full day care would also be a problem.
- United Way funds the community schools. Community schools would be a good place for before and after school care since an agreement is already in place to keep the schools open after hours. There are 9-12 inner-city schools involved in current programming within hubs of community schools in Newton, Guildford and Whalley. The model is to utilize school facilities for programs and servicing besides for school use. This could be for a variety of things and is generally dictated by a community's wants and needs and the programs set up may differ between schools.
- The best childcare provider may be the mother, but not all women can work from home; self-employment is not an option or an economic feasibility for many.
- Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS) was providing a 2-week training program for grandparents who care for their grandchildren.
- Judy Villeneuve commented that in past this committee has tried to take on the child care issue but the City can only take on so much responsibility for social issues that are the responsibility of senior governments.

- The Committee will keep in touch with YWCA to explore opportunities, and over the next year meet with business people in Surrey to discuss needs within the City and to build recommendations to present to Council.

C. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1. Community Impact Statement

Aileen Murphy, Senior Social Planner, provided follow-up on the discussion at the January Committee meeting regarding the Community Impact Statement (CIS) process.

Comments follow:

- City has a requirement that an application for a new community service business license in the City Centre area must include the completion of a Community Impact Statement.
- The presentations at the January meeting indicated that the CIS has proven to be problematic for non-profits, and is not an effective tool for determining the impact of a service on the community. Most non-profit organizations cannot afford the cost and delays associated with conducting a CIS.
- Due to problems in the area the business community is very supportive of the CIS.
- The Social Planning Advisory Committee confirmed its support for a simplified process. A non-profit society should not have to complete a CIS unless a major concern is identified.

Chairperson Councillor Villeneuve thanked staff for their work and said she looks forward to the follow up report.

D. CORRESPONDENCE

E. INFORMATION

1. Surrey Association of Sustainable Communities

Workshop: "Building Strong Communities"

Saturday, May 10, 2008

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Fleetwood Community Centre

Guest Speaker: Jim Diers, former Director of Neighbourhoods of Seattle, and author of book entitled: "*Neighbor Power*"

Further information provided as agenda addendum.

The Keynote speaker, Jim Dies is meant to be a very interesting and inspirational speaker. Committee members may be interested in attending this free workshop. Information provided on table.

2. Cultural Capital of Canada – Civic Treasures Award

Call for Nominations: Surrey's Civic Treasures.

Committee members were encouraged to submit a nomination for anyone who has contributed to cultural development of city.

3. Karen Kreis

Newest Social Planning Advisory Committee member introduced herself and is very happy to be involved with the Committee and working on social issues.

F. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Social Planners really deserve a pat on their back for their work, especially the research work they are doing. When we ask for 5% they come back with 100%. Aileen Murphy was thanked for all her work.

G. NEXT MEETING

1. The next meeting of the Social Planning Committee is scheduled for **Tuesday**, May 27, 2008 at 7:00 pm in the Manager's Boardroom.
2. Proposed meeting date change: from Thursday, June 26th to **Tuesday, June 24, 2008** at 7:00 pm was approved.

H. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by R. Mehta
Seconded by Z. Malik
That the Social Planning Advisory

Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Social Planning Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:01 pm

Margaret Jones, City Clerk

Chairperson, Councillor J. Villeneuve
Social Planning Advisory Committee