

Minutes of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the **DISTRICT OF MISSION COUNCIL** held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Hall, 8645 Stave Lake Street, Mission, British Columbia, on May 22, 2015 commencing at 9:35 a.m.

Council Members Present: Mayor Randy Hawes
Councillor Pam Alexis
Councillor Carol Hamilton
Councillor Jim Hinds
Councillor Rhett Nicholson
Councillor Danny Plecas
Councillor Jenny Stevens

Staff Members Absent: Tina Penney, Acting Manager of Corporate Administration

Staff Members Present: Glen Robertson, Interim Chief Administrative Officer
Michelle Bishop, Bylaw Officer
Constable Taylor Emmerson, Mission RCMP
Kirsten Hargreaves, Manager of Social Development
Jenny Hill, Administrative Clerk
Constable James Mason, Mission RCMP
Jennifer Russell, Deputy Corporate Officer
Mike Younie, Director of Development Services
Kerri Onken, Deputy Treasurer/Collector
Larry Watkinson, Fire Chief
Inspector Ted De Jager, OIC, Mission RCMP

Members of the Public: ± 10

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Hamilton, and
RESOLVED: That the May 22, 2015 Special Council Agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

3. NEW BUSINESS

Stone Soup Initiatives and Homelessness Discussion

Paul Horn and Kirsten Hargreaves presented a quick summation of their report, 'Stone Soup Report Out – Phase 1' which was presented at the May 11, 2015 Special Council Meeting to address the problem of homelessness in the District of Mission. Mr. Horn and Ms. Hargreaves requested that Council review the 35 suggestions from the 'Stone Soup' report and identify the 5 initiatives they would like focused on. Once a consensus is reached they will provide further detailed information to Council. Mr. Horn stressed that whichever suggestions are not chosen by Council will not be abandoned but rather other agencies will be approached to see if they would like to support the implementation of any of the remaining suggestions.

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Several speakers representing a number of different organizations were heard from in regard to the issue of homelessness in Mission:

Carrie Prentice – Hope Central Program Coordinator advised her program organizes and provides meals to people who are homeless, on a fixed income, and anyone else in need of this aid in the community. Ms. Prentice said they are willing to work with the 'Stone Soup' project and stressed that organizations need to work together to address the problems associated with homelessness. Ms. Prentice advised she is willing to act in the capacity of a central coordination for an integrated meals program.

Greg Glaim – Harvest Discovery Home

- Suggested bringing back the red/gold card program as he felt it had been working well.
- Was in favour of setting up a station in the library where homeless people would be able to provide input to service providers.
- Would like to see a Wellness Centre set up as a central location where all homeless people in the community would be referred to and could receive a needs assessment and obtain help to become self-sufficient.
- Noted that there are currently 3 tent cities in the community and suggested a program where coffee would be available to them in the morning.
- Advised that he is on the board for the Abbotsford and Mission Homelessness Task Forces and believes we currently have the best system due to our follow through and requirement to have police information checks done for all the first stage housing residents. He sees a need for improvement in teamwork and proactively addressing issues before they become problems.

Terry Wilkinson – Outreach Worker voiced her enthusiasm for this work and noted that personal relationships are what ties it all together. Ms. Wilkinson advised that Hope Central is 'ground zero' for the homeless problem in Mission. She stressed that the Mission homeless population is intelligent and articulate and invited members of the community to come down and speak with them directly to obtain a better understanding of their situation and to gain their trust.

Mike Younie - District of Mission Director of Development Services noted that his staff would be in favour of working closer with organizations in the community to address this problem.

Heidi Smith – Engaged Community Gal expressed her appreciation for the work being done on this issue and stressed that the focus of this project should be on finding accommodations for the homeless population. She advised that this is especially important for those who are hard to house. Ms. Smith noted that as it is very difficult for homeless people to navigate the resource system a single 'go to' person/agency would be very helpful.

Sanjay Gulati – Mission Community Services Society Executive Director advised that the programs are working but there are still gaps in services and the goal is to be able to house more people. Mr. Gulati noted that the Homeless Outreach Program and the Homeless Prevention Program both receive rent subsidies from BC Housing and that these programs are full in terms of serving people. Mr. Gulati noted that getting outreach workers to the 'hot spots' seems to be effective and all outreach programs are now adopting this strategy.

Michelle Bishop – District of Mission Bylaw Officer voiced her concern that the Mission Bylaw Officers are tasked with addressing the homeless camp problem but are not provided with alternatives for these people or any resource agencies to direct them to. Ms. Bishop said that contacts, housing, and resources are needed. She also noted that it would be beneficial to provide lockers for homeless people's possessions to prevent their items from being stolen, destroyed by inclement weather, and/or accumulating in visible areas of the community.

Inspector Ted De Jager – Mission RCMP

- Briefly spoke about the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Program (CPTED). He advised that although it is a fairly involved process it can be done as we currently have 2 trained officers at the detachment. He stated he believes it's a good idea in terms of assessing housing and specific areas.
- He advised the Abbotsford and Mission Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACT Team) is up and running. He acknowledged that we are now able to share a great deal of information as per the Memorandum of Understanding. The Mission RCMP Detachment has designated a Mental Health Liaison Officer who will be working in the downtown area with case managers and clients. He noted there will also be a greater visible police presence in the downtown area.

Ernestine O'Rourke – Fraser Health Society (Mission Youth House) advised that the Fraser Health Society has cards available to hand out which list the social services available and their contact information.

Barry McLeod – Youth Unlimited Youth Worker commented that he recently met with the Social Development and Social Innovation office who were looking for information to provide to their staff on what resources are available. They were unaware of the outreach committee meeting so there appears to be a disconnect in communication between organizations. Mr. McLeod advised that other agencies need to be kept in the loop and we all need to keep working together.

During the meeting the following points were discussed and noted:

- Stone Soup is a valuable project but we must ensure that tax dollars are used as effectively as possible;
- there is a need for a spectrum of services, (action and influence items) in order to cast the widest net with the smallest holes;
- all groups need to work together to ensure there is no duplication of effort and that the load is spread evenly among them;
- currently there is a gap in services; volunteers could be utilized and perhaps the downtown business community could assist in collecting money for this project;
- connecting and educating the public to understand the causes and effects of homelessness and how to become involved to help with this project is vital;
- the most effective ways to reach the homeless community; (i.e. websites, bulletin boards, people acting as liaisons for the homeless community and service providers, etc.);
- to focus on prevention, especially for youth; there is a concern that Riverside Centre could close and this could result in more youth living on the streets;

- the red/gold card program seemed effective and perhaps should be brought back now that the Union Gospel Mission has now closed down and there is an increased need for these services, (possibly integrated with option #10);
- the need to provide the homeless population, and those at risk of being homeless, with information on the resources available, (i.e. rental subsidies, youth grants, etc.);
- the District providing incentives to property owners and other programs to make it easier to provide accommodations for the homeless;
- implementing plans to integrate the current homeless population into the community rather than sequestering them, (i.e. no low income housing initiatives) to prevent stigmatization, areas of crime, etc.; and
- balancing initiatives which are a 'hand up' versus a 'hand out'.

Council identified the following priority items for further investigation:

1. (#8) Maintenance bylaws and enforcement – minimize unsightly premises
2. (#14) Downtown Ambassadors
3. (#17) Referral Line
4. (#18) Expedited process for low-cost suites
5. (#19) Landlord development, training and support
6. (#24) Lobbying for enhanced recovery and detox services, especially for youth
7. (#26) DOM Coordinator/Navigator
8. (#27) Market housing incentives
9. (#30) Multi-Disciplinary Service Centre: "One Stop Shop"

Council also expressed an interest in the following suggestions:

1. (#2) Consumer/Former Consumer Outreach Support
2. (#3) Public Information Sessions
3. (#4) Website/Social Media Clearing House
4. (#10) Service Infocards
5. (#12) Research effective practices elsewhere
6. (#33) Social Enterprise employment opportunities

4. AJOURNMENT

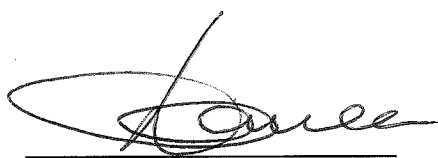
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Moved by Councillor Stevens seconded by Councillor Plecas, and

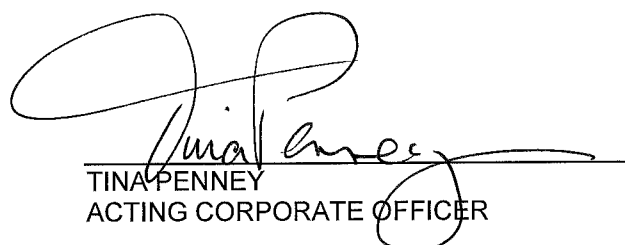
RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.



RANDY HAWES
MAYOR



TINA PENNEY
ACTING CORPORATE OFFICER