

## **Mayor's Task Force: Homelessness and Community Safety and Wellbeing**

Date: Mar 19, 2025, Time: 9am-11am

Location: Council Chambers

### **Attendees:**

Mayor Price, Mark Fercho, Paul Heywood, Jamie Jenkins, Stacey Brensrud. Pastor Ron Short, Polly Sutherland, Selina Blackwell (guest), Amanda Miller, Marcel Germer, Linda Miller, Mark Doherty (Canal Flats Mayor)

**Regrets:** Michele Bates, MLA Davis, Ryck Schielke; Wesley Graham, Nancy Reid, Sean Airth, Julie Free, Melody Munro

### **MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

Opened meeting and welcomed participants.

Mayor Price emphasized task force wins, specifically an update from Fire and Emergency Services highlighting a decrease in emergency calls, overdoses, and campfires.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Grant Updates**

The Vancouver Foundation Grants applications are still pending, however if the grant is awarded, funds could support the Afterhours program. Applicants chosen to go to the second round of process should be notified end of March, 2025. Grant is for \$100,000 for 3 years. Would have a huge impact on the community.

The Spark BC grant was awarded, along with a truck donated from the city. Fresh Start asked for \$37,000 was granted \$25,000. Funds will be used to purchase trailer and maybe a second truck.

The application for the RDEK grant has been submitted and it now pending. Application put in for \$10,000 for two years.

#### **Mayor Task Force Website/FRESH START Website**

The FRESH START website is currently under development. A website for the Mayor's Task Force remains a consideration. It is important to document the good work the Task Force has completed. This could be housed on the City main website and would allow users

access to information on this Task Force. Hiring a contractor to construct a separate website is ideal. This site would last beyond the life of the Task Force. GENX is a potential candidate. **Paul will reach out to GENX and find out availability and cost.**

### **Empowered Employment**

The T-shirt design for Empowered Employment (E<sup>2</sup>) was successful. T-shirts will be the workwear until the kinks are worked out. Other garments with branding, such as hoodies and hats, are now in consideration, but not until there is some consistency with workers. Still trying to work out how to ensure peers can launder their shirts. Perhaps an initiative to provide cleaning services for these clothes is a possibility. **Polly offering to reach out to Street Angels for potential partnership on this.**

The launch is set for May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Cranbrook Farmer's Market. With many ideas revolving around the launch, another meeting, possibly through FRESH START, is required before the launch to discuss specifics. **Marcel will reach out to Terry to find out how to reserve the bandshell.**

Looking for contracts for Empowered Employment remain underway.

### **Afterhours/Weekend Services**

Starting in May, The Dwelling Place will host Afterhours services on Saturdays. The name for the space will be Safe Havens, and it will offer food and shelter to those in need. Funds for staffing are secured, and support from other programs such as Kootenay Outreach and The Salvation Army is available. To get the word out, the committee is considering creating a website and going directly to common grounds to spread information. The Dwelling place is working with ANKORS and Community Connection on possibly providing an extreme weather shelter or temporary winter shelter in the future.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Transfer of initiatives to FRESH START-Marcel**

Discussed transferring certain Task Force initiatives to Fresh Start, specifically Empowered Employment and Afterhours and Weekend Services. Task Force has done the groundwork, and Fresh Start is doing most of the legwork now. Having a centralized program for these initiatives will help organize ideas and proposals.

## **Enforcement of Bylaw-Paul**

With the Travel Lodge decreasing beds and The Courtyard Inn increasing rent, roughly nineteen individuals will be unhoused. With enforcement of the no-camping bylaw in most areas of the city, these individuals will likely move to Common Ground, resulting in a need for a larger space for Common Ground. A map has been distributed to service providers and outreach teams regarding where individuals can camp.

Moreover, Individuals residing at Common Ground require additional security on site. Cameras were discussed, and while there are cameras currently at Common Ground, higher quality cameras with license plate tracking technology are in consideration. Working with local RCMP is likely necessary if using these cameras moves forward. However, these cameras should simply provide a deterrence rather than a solution, so more discussion is needed on Common Ground's security.

Starting in May, or once the permanent shelter on 16<sup>th</sup> N opens, individuals camping in the tree line beyond Common Ground's space will be charged with trespassing. If tents from this area are recoverable, they should be returned to ANKORS for redistribution.

## **SPCA site**

The NRO's were approached by FRESH START for funding to clean the site. FS was told there was no funding for the cleanup. The burnt trailers, and abandoned tents and cars remain at the SPCA site and are a biological hazard. SDC Germer suggesting a letter from the Task Force as well as MLA and Mayor supported letters should be sent to the province requesting cleanup and presented a clear plan on a clean-up initiative, the provincial government might consider providing funding with a little pressure. Marcel will draft a couple of letters.

## **BREAK OUT GROUPS**

### **Website Construction**

Group discussed following DART's model for the website. Illustrations and images for the website are complete. The group also discussed different providers who could build up the website. Furthermore, the group clarified that the FRESH START website will include a link to the website for the Mayor's Task Force page.

### **Empowered Employment**

Group discussed the business plan for Empowered Employment, worked on creating a budget and start-up costs for the program. Beyond costs, the group discussed reaching out

to local businesses for jobs, utilizing the high need for clean-ups in the spring. More resources, such as inquiring about Street Angels helping with laundry services, will help Empowered Employment moving forward.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Time-Line</b>
<b>Marcel</b>	<b>Will book space for Empowered Employment launch.</b>	<b>April 1, 2025</b>
<b>Paul</b>	<b>Will speak to developers regarding website construction costs.</b>	<b>April 15, 2025</b>
<b>Marcel</b>	<b>Will reach out to Hire Good regarding presentation to FRESH START</b>	<b>April 15, 2025</b>
<b>Marcel</b>	<b>Will send a letter to the ministry for the SPCA land</b>	<b>April 15, 2025</b>
<b>Jamie</b>	<b>Will create a financial framework</b>	<b>April 1, 2025</b>
<b>Polly</b>	<b>Will speak to Street Angels RE. laundry services</b>	<b>April 15, 2025</b>

**10:55am- Meeting adjourned**