

Mayor's Task Force Summary

On Homelessness and Community Safety and Wellbeing

Location: Cranbrook Fire & Emergency Services Board Room

Date: November 20, 2024, Time: 09:00-11:00 am

In attendance:

Mayor Price, Avery Hulbert (COTR), Marcel Germer (City of Cranbrook), Melody Munro (RCMP), Michelle Bates (RDEK), Nancy Reid (Community Connections), Polly (ANKORS), Linda Miller (Metis Society), Stacy Brensrud (Chamber), Ron Short (Dwelling Place), Jamie Jenkins (EKASS)

Regrets:

Ryck Schielke (Green Clinic), Paul Heywood (City of Cranbrook)

Mayor's Comments – Council is looking at the recommendations from the Final Report and implementing ideas. He appreciates the work being done by the task force at this point and moving forward with the recommendations.

Updates –

Nancy. R provided a Cozy Bear Update – B.C. Housing is providing vulnerable assessment training (VAT) and renovations to the property are underway. There will be 30 beds available to those 55 plus

A community member requested joining the task force. Currently group is not accepting new members.

Stacy B has accepted the position of Executive Director at the Cranbrook Chamber of Commerce.

Discussion about whether newly elected officials will impact the operations of the Task Force.

Polly.S reports that individuals at common ground are stabilizing with the outreach occurring. Essential items are being provided and residents living there are being engaged in contributing by accessing work grants at ANKORS. Relationships are being established through outreach.

Marcel

- **Emergency Treatment Fund** – A grant was submitted for 1.3 million to support several items including an outreach van at common grounds, an after hour and weekend drop in centre, food program, peer training and peer support. If

received a large portion of the funds must be utilized by March, 2025. Some of the funds are designated for operations of the project to March 2026.

- **Final Report** – Submitted to Council Nov 4, 2024. Task Force will move to implementing the other recommendations. Common Ground at a place that it will be managed by community stakeholders. Task Force will continue to be an advisor on the project.
- There is currently \$84,000 left in the project budget and this will be allocated to supporting Common Ground and the other recommendations.
- **Designation of Task Force**
Marcel spoke with Marnie and Mayor's Task Force is the appropriate designation for the group.

Paul (Not in attendance)

Community Futures/Business Plan - tabled

Monthly Newsletter - tabled

Collaboration Opportunity with Kootenay Employment Service – Jamie is currently working with Kootenay Employment Services around the day pay program. Success has been seen with similar programs in assisting individuals. Update will be given to Task Force next meeting.

GOAL IDENTIFICATION

Communication Strategy – How can we make sure the City is communicating properly on the work that is being done by the task force. Discussion around city communication staff taking on role of researching and sharing information on social issues.

Recognition that city communications is basically one person without the time or expertise to take this on.

The RDEK has an engagement site as well as the City of Revelstoke that provides updates on several projects in the works.

Task Force recommendation of a common site where citizens could get up to date and accurate information aligns with the goal of a communication strategy. Would it be possible for IT to help us set this up and then all members could upload information/projects/data.

The local media is interested in the Final Report that has been produced and Mayor Price is meeting with them to discuss the recommendations. The group discussed the need to improve communication around the efforts of many organizations and the hard work that is being done in the community. Regular and informative updates go a long way to calm the anxiety within the community.

The group discussed the need for a pilot project for one established drop-in center in a centralized location that would service the needs of individuals where there is a gap with other organizations being able to provide services.

Avery suggesting that instead of looking for a building for a drop-in center, perhaps exploring what existing agencies would need in order to expand their services to cover afterhours and weekends.

ACTION ITEMS

1) The group would like to invite the new MLA to the table in January. **Marcel will reach out to his office.**

2) **Task force members** commit to visiting the following sites to look at communications and public engagement ideas:

<https://engage.rdek.bc.ca/>

<https://talkrevelstoke.ca/>

3) Volunteer insurance is needed to complete some tasks at common grounds. **Polly & Marcel will investigate this.**

4) **Marcel and Polly** will reach out to agencies to begin conversations about expanding services to close gaps in afterhours and weekend service availability.

5) **Marcel** will talk with City IT to see if a similar page to RDEK can be created.

6) Pastor Ron will speak with Rick at Salvation Army regarding the plans for their property

The City Website contains the following about the Task Force:

<https://cranbrook.ca/our-city/mayor-and-council/committees/mayors-task-force-on-homelessness/>

Next meeting – December 18, 2024 @09:00 - City Council Chambers

Adjourned: 11:00