

Disclaimer: These minutes were prepared as a reasonable summary of the essential content of this meeting, not as a transcription.



Minutes of the Community Support & Accessibility Committee Meeting

February 28, 2024, 10:00 AM

Meadows Room

12007 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 2B5

Voting Members: Councillor M. Hayes
Councillor O'Connell

Members at Large: M. Robson, Friends in Need Food Bank
A. Sanchez, Fraser Health
C. Shearme, Community Network - Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows & Katzie First Nation
H. Treleaven, Seniors Network
V. Kipps, Community Services
M. Perretta, Ridge Meadows Senior Society

Regrets: K. Sullivan, School District 42

Staff: P. Ward, Director of Planning & Development
D. Parr, Planner II, Planning

Recording Clerk: V. Reid, Committee Clerk II

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor O'Connell acknowledged that the meeting was held on the traditional territory of the ȕicǎȕ (Katzie) First Nation.

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. LATE ITEMS

None.

3. APPPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the February 28, 2024 Community Support & Accessibility Committee agenda.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the minutes from the October 25, 2023 Community Support & Accessibility Committee meeting as circulated.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Accessibility Plan

P. Ward, Director of Planning and Development, provided an overview of the project and obtained the Committee's feedback on the draft terms of reference.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- The Province has introduced accessibility legislation and the government requires prescribed organizations to do three things:
 - Form a Committee
 - Develop an Accessibility Plan
 - Build a tool to provide feedback to government
- This is not only limited to physical disabilities, but includes any person who is unable to participate fully and equally in society as a result of an impairment or a barrier;
 - This includes a sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive impairment, whether permanent, temporary or episodic.
- Development of the accessibility plan will involve research, internal consultation and community engagement with the purpose being to identify, remove and prevent barriers to individuals in, or interacting with, an organization;
- An introduction to the work plan noted that it is currently in Phase 1; key goals during this phase will include engagement with the Committee and

local community members and businesses to identify current accessibility gaps and gather feedback;

- It was shared that in Pitt Meadows, wheelchair accessibility is an issue for many local businesses;
- A Request for Proposal is planned to hire a consultant with subject matter expertise to work along side the City of Pitt Meadows and Committee members;
- Phase 2 will entail identifying specific challenges within our community;
- Phase 3 will entail the execution of a draft plan with emerging priorities and Council approval of the plan in early 2025;
- Dana Parr, Planner II, will be the Staff Liaison working with the consultant to develop the draft plan and will lead updates with this Committee and Council as well to ensure alignment is on track;
- How best to include individuals with lived experiences during the gathering of critical information phase of the project;
 - Focus groups, and tasks groups with guidance from the committee to identify individuals with lived experiences was suggested;
 - It was noted that the BC Disability Alliance has a grant available that might be applicable.
- Concern regarding the budget amount for this plan; while this is an exciting this opportunity to do some really great work, budget might be too low to take full advantage of the opportunity for engagement:
 - Pitt Meadows staff resources will compliment the work required to be done as well as the consultant will support the project.

*A. Sanchez and C. Shearme arrived at 10:15 a.m.

- It was suggested that the Committee pool resources and share contact information for research purposes; specifically if Committee members can share contact information to P. Ward;
- An idea was circulated to create targeted engagement for people with disabilities as well as their caregivers;

- A question was raised on whether this plan would include cognitive impairment or the unhoused community;
 - Individuals with cognitive impairments would be within the scope of this particular project, whereas individuals that are unhoused (without an impairment) would be beyond the scope of this project;

5.2 Updates from Community Outreach Agencies

Community Outreach Agencies participated in a roundtable discussion providing a verbal update on their individual organizations.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

M. Robson - Friends in Need Food Bank Update:

- A revision on previous statistics provided at the last meeting:
 - June 2023 to September 2023, the number of homes served in Pitt Meadows was 87 (not 117 as previously reported) with 230 members served within those households.
- October 2023 to January 2024 saw ten (10) new households registered;
 - In the past three months, 86 households served, with 233 members served within those households.
- Food Banks are executing a Standard of Excellence review on all Food Banks, as an accreditation process. Standards will vary for small, medium and large size Food Banks;
 - Pitt Meadows is considered medium in size;
 - Received a grant to do legwork on this process, someone working on this since last October - going to take until at the end of this year to complete.
- School District 42 has been cooperative in recent months in providing funding for dairy products purchased by the Food Bank;

- It was noted that approximately 150 students are benefiting from (all four local elementary schools) sit down breakfasts and lunches;
 - It was reported that approximately 550 students are benefiting from snack programs in our local elementary schools.
- Perishable Food Recovery Program update:
 - Currently at 5.5 years running with 5.5 million pounds recovered, repurposed and with no food sent to landfills;
 - Averaging 51% for human consumptions - shared with Food Bank clients and other organizations that are dealing with food insecurity, such as the Salvation Army and the Senior Centre, with the balance going to farm feed and compost;
 - Current managers have brought this percentage up to 70% - means less for farmers but more for families.
- It was noted that there is an increase in registration - over 700 families per month accessing Food Bank services at least once per month;
 - 760 households registered - lifetime registration in Pitt Meadows;
 - Done by address: currently 86 are accessing Food Bank services from October 2023 to January 2024, at least once per month.
- Food Bank is looking at what changes can be made to accommodate the growth as line ups get long;
 - Suggestions were to change hours or operational procedures.
- Food Bank has some dedicated and amazing volunteers, however it's an ongoing challenge to maintain a strong volunteer base.
 - December volunteer hours were 170;
 - January volunteer hours were 261.

J. Kloosterboer - Emergency Preparedness Update:

- J. Kloosterboer shared an overview on what Emergency Support Services ['ESS'] can do in emergency situations and how accessibility can be better addressed;
- A question was raised in regards to potential extreme heat situations this summer and how we can better prepare and serve the community; it was noted that we have options for cooling centres at the Recreation Centre and Library, more information will come and an update to be provided at a later date.

V. Kipps – Community Services Update:

- It was noted that the majority of services offered by Community Services are free to clients;
- An update was provided regarding Cythera House, which is a 12 bed transition house providing a safe refuge and basic necessities to women and children fleeing abuse;
 - A barrier has been having to turn away women who have pets;
 - It was noted that Cythera House has applied for permissions to allow for pets on property;
 - It was reported that Cythera House has a 30 day transition period and there is limited alternate housing post stay and a need for second stage housing; construction of secondary housing - 26 units for women and children is underway.
- Community Services is currently expanding their seniors program and their legal services program;
- It was noted that childcare streams are now receiving increased funding from Government resources and Community Services has reapplied and been accepted, which will allow for expanded childcare services offered to clients.

M. Perretta – Pitt Meadows Senior Society [‘PMSS’] Update:

- Pitt Meadows Senior Society is currently focused on grant proposals, specifically with a focus on providing meals for local seniors;
- There has been a loss of volunteers over the past few years with several people having moved or passed away;
 - Individuals come to volunteer and are receiving meals in return.
- The PMSS is making calls to check in and to chat with seniors and welcome them back to the centre;
- 70 brand new seniors register in Pitt Meadows;
- PMSS is currently gearing up for tax clinics:
 - Two tax clinics open at Katzie First Nations;
 - Highly beneficial and used service, last year the clinics assisted over 600 seniors.

C. Shearme - Community Network Update:

- The Community Network continues to focus on Truth and Reconciliation work with a specific focus on Pitt Meadows history;
 - There is an open invitation for all to learn about Truth and Reconciliation work;
 - Attending a meeting this week at the Pitt Meadows Museum - learning local history and settler history of City of Pitt Meadows.
- Trends continue to see a focus on current housing issues:
 - Groups that struggle the most are senior adults and single persons;
 - BC Housing is already a highly limited resource, with wait times up to eight years.
- Meeting Circle with the Kwantlen First Nation with a presentation on March 20th;
- New relationship with Metis Society at April meeting.

A. Sanchez - Fraser Health Update:

- Shots and immunization programs are currently underway:
 - Doing mobile and drop in events to be able to accommodate as many people as possible.
- It was noted that food insecurity continues to be a focus for Fraser Health and A. Sanchez sits as committee co-chair with School District 42 to work on a local strategy to address causes.

B. Treleaven - Seniors Network Update:

- The Seniors Network is working hard to assist seniors affected by housing challenges;
- Critical to include seniors voices and what housing is needed and what is missing;
 - Mapping was done with eight seniors who participated, one Pitt Meadows senior resident: and it was shared that many are continuing working into their senior years in order to afford rent.
- New Horizons funding helps to focus on intergenerational work that is being done;
 - Senior volunteers that are reading in local elementary schools;
 - Garden volunteers;
 - SD42 - connecting with seniors and the schools for food distribution.
- A question was asked what age level is considered a senior;
 - While it would depend on the program being offered, typically the range is 55 years and up.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

The next **Community Support & Accessibility Committee** meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 22, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.**

Certified as correct:

Vanessa Reid, Committee Clerk II

DRAFT