

**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 24, 2025, 10:30 AM**

**Meadows Room**

**12007 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 2B5**

Voting Members: J. Armstrong, Fraser Valley Regional Library  
E. Crowdis, Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and Katzie Seniors Network  
Councillor Hayes  
Councillor O'Connell (Chair)  
M. Perretta, Ridge Meadows Seniors Society  
K. Rogge, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Services  
A. Sanchez, Fraser Health  
K. Sullivan, School District No. 42

Regrets: M. Robson, Friends in Need Food Bank  
C. Shearme, Community Network - Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows & Katzie First Nation

Staff: J. Kloosterboer, Emergency Program Manager  
D. Parr, Planner II  
P. Ward, Director of Planning & Development

Recording Clerk: R. Costa, Legislative Services Clerk

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor O'Connell acknowledged with respect and gratitude that the City of Pitt Meadows is located on the traditional, unceded territory of ąiǰǎý (Katzie) First Nation who were stewards of this land since time immemorial.

The meeting was called to order at 10:31 a.m.

**2. LATE ITEMS**

None.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the February 24, 2025, Community Support & Accessibility Committee agenda.

**4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the minutes from the November 25, 2024, Community Support & Accessibility Committee meeting as circulated.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**5.1 Accessibility Plan Update**

D. Parr, Planner II, provided an update on the Accessibility Plan Survey, which includes some of the following key points:

- The survey officially opened on Monday, February 24, 2025, and will close on Sunday, March 23, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. Physical surveys will be due to Pitt Meadows City Hall by Friday, March 21, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.;
- The City will continue working on promoting the survey. A post card with a QR code to the survey has been circulated, as well as posters. Notification of the survey availability has been posted on City Talks, the City's social media (Facebook and Instagram), digital boards, and newspaper advertisements;
- There will be a process implemented for connecting with various social organizations to inform members of the Accessibility Plan and the respective survey. The Accessibility Plan consultant will be taking the lead on this process and any leads on interested organizations are to be provided to D. Parr;
- Following the completion of the Accessibility Plan Survey, the next steps for the Accessibility Plan as a whole will be to gather survey data, engage with staff and have the consultant prepare a draft Accessibility Plan to present to the Committee for initial feedback; and
- Committee Members were encouraged to spread the word of the survey availability to members within their organizations.

## **5.2 Updates from Community Outreach Agencies**

Community Outreach Agencies participated in a roundtable discussion providing a verbal update on their individual organizations. Some of the highlights included:

### J. Armstrong, Fraser Valley Regional Library:

- The Fraser Valley Regional Library [“FVRL”] is in the final stages of completing their largest website upgrade to date, updating their website for the first time in 10 years. This includes a variety of accessibility updates (i.e. mobile friendly, text size, alignment and spacing adjustments, dyslexia friendly font, saturation of colours, etc.);
- The launch of the new website is expected to be released within the next couple of weeks;
- English Conversations Classes are available in April and are open to everyone;
- Pitt Meadows Public Library safety updates are in progress, which includes the application of reflective tape and mirrors along the stairwell to promote visibility and reduce the possibility of accidents;
- FVRL is looking into the implementation of installing sound-proof sitting areas in all libraries, which would create a space in each library that is up to 86% sound proof; and
- Following public feedback, the Pitt Meadows Public Library has adjusted their hours of operations now opening Saturdays and Sundays on long weekends.

### J. Kloosterboer, Emergency Program Manager:

- Following the recent earthquake on February 21<sup>st</sup>, the Province has been distributing safety awareness notifications to the public, including “Drop, Cover and Hold On”;
- Earthquake Preparedness Training Sessions will be available to City of Pitt Meadows staff and members of the public which will likely take place an evening at the Fire Hall for approximately one hour;

- There will be added contents to the public preparedness sessions from an accessibility standpoint, which includes how someone who may face accessibility obstacles can discuss emergency preparedness with their care workers, how to ensure they have the appropriate emergency supplies they need and other significant situational emergency preparedness topics; and
- There will be opportunities for organizations to request in-person information session presentations by volunteers to ensure information has been shared.

K. Sullivan, School District No. 42:

- After School Programming presentations have taken place with community partners working towards increasing variety and raising awareness overall. After School Programs include but are not limited to soccer, taekwondo, drama, robotics, coding, archery, and dance. After School Program registration is now open and closes on April 2, 2025;
- The International Student Program had an increase in tuition;
- Various key notes with respect to the district's completion rates are as follows:
  - The overall 5 year completion rate for the district is 93%, which is considered as favourable compared to the Provincial average of 86.6%;
  - There was a slight declination in the completion rate for students with disabilities or diverse abilities, which came in at 88.3%;
  - There was a significant decline in the completion rate for children and youth in care, which came in at 66.1%. The shift in the completion rate under this category was noted to be more pronounced due to a small cohort;
  - The overall completion rate for Indigenous learners is 93.2%, and it was noted that students living off-reserve have a significantly higher completion rate than students living on-reserve;
- The Ridge Meadows College Riverside Centre offers free online courses for youth ages 16 years and older. Upgrading programs are also available

for those aged 19 or older, and have completed grade 12 (or equivalent);  
and

A question was raised in regards to the close of the Starfish Pack Program and whether a similar program will be available for school aged children.

- It was noted that the Starfish Pack Program has ceased operations due to the lack of funding and that the district continues seeking alternate funding opportunities.

M. Perretta, Ridge Meadows Seniors Society:

- Attended an Education Day this past weekend, which was well attended, consisting of approximately 160 seniors and 40 volunteers. The keynote speaker, Dan Levitt (BC Seniors' Advocate), provided a presentation which included some of the following key statistics:
  - 1 in 5 people are considered seniors over the age of 65;
  - By 2026, 1 in 4 people will be considered as seniors over the age of 65;
  - 95% of people aged 65+ currently live independently;
  - 77% of people aged 85+ currently live independently;
  - 80% of these independently living seniors are homeowners;
- It was noted that Ridge Meadows Seniors Society [RMSS] has seen a substantial increase in the number of seniors coming utilizing their centres;
- The number of seniors in Pitt Meadows is growing is reflecting in RMSS's day to day programming; and
- The RMSS is currently seeking alternate satellite locations in an effort to accommodate their rapid growth.

P. Ward, Director of Planning & Development

- The continuous work on the Climate Action Strategy was noted. The strategy will consider extreme heat days, increased rainfall, and other relative circumstances, including impacts on vulnerable groups;
- Work is underway for the 'Harris Road Complete Street Feasibility Study'. This study is exploring the feasibility of improvements on Harris Road, and is anticipated to include a consultation opportunity with the Community Support and Accessibility Committee members;
- The construction of the new RCMP Detachment continues;
- The 'Complete Communities Project' has begun which includes the combination of City data analysis and Statistics Canada Census Data; and
- It was noted that the Heron's Nest Project broke ground with an expected completion of mid-2027.

K. Rogge, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Community Network:

- The Community Network continues working on their Strategic Planning Survey, which is now open and will close on March 9, 2025;
- The 'Daddy and Me' program has opened and runs on Tuesday evenings January through March;
- The Cytheria Second Stage Housing for Women facing domestic abuse and violence is anticipated to be completed in May 2025;
- The Community Network is currently working through their grant applications for United Way Seniors Programs; and
- The 'Girls Night Out' fundraiser will be held on May 1, 2025, and is \$100 a ticket.

A. Sanchez, Fraser Health:

- Ridge Meadows Hospital has a new Executive Director, Luauna McCartney and a new Medical Health Officer (MHO), Dr. Carolyn Wonnock.

A. Sanchez provided an update on the Community Network - Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows & Katzie First Nation, in the absence of C. Shearme:

- The Community Network has completed their annual survey and continues working on adding insights and ideas received from members for their 2025 action plan; and
- Funding has been received for the Community Network to be able to provide workshops to support the learning needs of those who serve the community.

E. Crowdis, Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows Katzie Seniors Network:

- The Annual 'Putting on the Glitz' Event for students who cannot afford formal wear, arranged by PLEA Community Services, will occur in March and they continue looking for volunteers;
- The Maple Ridge Public Library Volunteer Fair, partnered with School District No. 42 and Foundry Ridge Meadows will occur on April 29, 2025 at the Maple Ridge Public Library which is held for both seniors and students in grades 10 to 12;
- A brief overview of the Rivershed Society of BC was provided as follows:
  - Weekly membership social meetings have a great turnout;
  - The Barns at the Agricultural Fair have been opened for Rivershed Society use;
  - The Pitt Meadows Museum has asked the Rivershed Society to create a large water wheel; and
  - The Rivershed Society is searching for alternate transportation ideas for weekly membership meetings and other events held by the society.

Councillor O'Connell provided an update on the Friends in Need Food Bank in the absence of M. Robson:

- The Friends in Need Food Bank numbers have gone down slightly between 2023 and 2024;

- A reminder was noted that emergency bags and emergency hampers are available at the Food Bank and Salvation Army; and
- Food Bank funding could potentially be at risk considering the possibility of tariffs being implemented.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

*The next **Community Support & Accessibility Committee** meeting is scheduled for **May 26, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.***

**Certified as correct:**

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Rachel Costa, Legislative Services Clerk