

**MINUTES**  
**ARTS, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams

770 Vernon Avenue

November 27, 2024, at 5:09 p.m.

Present: Councillor Karen Harper (Chair), Barbara Elson, James Hesser, and Mark Leiren-Young (6:13 p.m.)

Staff: Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services; Kathy Graham, Community Services Programmer II - Financial Development; and Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk

Regrets: Kimberly Van Nieuvenhuysen, Peter Quinn, and Pamela Carroll

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Due to lack of quorum, no motions were passed.

**CHAIRS REMARKS**

The Chair welcomed committee members, and the following was noted:

- The Uptown Light Up event took place recently.
- The committee was updated that a new member of Council will assume the role of chair in the new year.
- A follow up presentation from the Police on sheltering in parks could come to the committee next year.

**LEISURE INVOLVEMENT FOR EVERYONE (L.I.F.E) PROGRAM**

The Community Services Programmer II - Financial Development gave a presentation (PowerPoint on file) and the following was noted during committee discussion:

- The L.I.F.E. program works with individuals and families who are classified as low income, defined as being near the poverty line.
- Cedar Hill Recreation Centre serves many residents living on the Saanich/Victoria border who choose Saanich recreation centers due to proximity.
- L.I.F.E. is a regional program that allows members to access services wherever and whenever they need them.
- Some individuals face challenges obtaining a Notice of Assessment if they do not file taxes. Efforts are being made to accept alternative documents and improve program accessibility.
- In 2025, outreach will expand to more organizations, starting with those already collaborating on other Saanich programs.
- The Observatory may be a potential partner, offering opportunities for collaboration on educational initiatives through their lecture series.
- The L.I.F.E. program could consider implementing an attestation form during re-application to confirm that participants circumstances remain unchanged.
- Spot checks and audits are conducted to verify documentation and ensure the target demographic is being served.

**EDIBLE LANDSCAPING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE**

The committee discussed a referral motion from Council and the following was noted during committee discussion:

- The Panama Flats concept plan is being updated.
- A voluntary stewardship program may be introduced in the future.
- The committee expressed interest in learning more about this subject from the Parks Department.

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

The Committee had a roundtable discussion, and the following was noted:

- The topic of homelessness was very engaging, and it was interesting to hear from the Police.
- The committee would like to explore the topic of funding for major theatres in the region.
- The committee is interested in creating a list of ongoing topics to provide useful recommendations to council.
- The observable conflict between cyclists and drivers impacts community wellbeing.
- The committee would like to explore the potential of using Uptown as a venue for more multicultural events.
- A presentation from the Victoria Francophone Society is scheduled for the committee in the new year.
- The committee would like to discuss the disappearance of arts venues and how to sustain the arts scene.
- Arts and culture contribute to community wellbeing.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

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Councillor Karen Harper, Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

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Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk