

MINUTES
HEALTHY SAANICH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held electronically via MS Teams from Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
April 7, 2021 at 6:02 p.m.

Present: Councillor Ned Taylor (Chair), Silvia Mangué Alene, Jasmine Noble, Kam Judge, Carren Dujela, Liz Miller (SCAN), Nadia Rajan, and Clare Attwell.

Guests: Chelsey Anseeuw, City of Edmonton; and Zanette Frost, City of Edmonton.

Staff: Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager Community Services; Regan Pemberton, Community Programmer II (Child and Youth Services); Alison Chamberlain, Community Programmer II (Older Adult Services); and Megan MacDonald, Committee Clerk.

Absent: Ryan Henderson, Jasmindra Jawanda and Abigail Toledo (Youth).

MINUTES

MOVED by C. Dujela and seconded by J. Noble: “That the minutes of the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee meeting held March 17, 2021 be adopted as amended.”

CARRIED

CHAIRS REMARKS

The Chair provided a verbal update on items of interest to the committee, the following was noted:

- This meeting is the first Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee meeting being held virtually. Instructions were provided on how to use the “Raise Hand” feature, for members to indicate that they would like to get into the speaking queue.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & OLDER ADULT STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Senior Manager of Community Services provided a background and summary of the Youth Development Strategy (YDS) and Older Adult Strategy (OAS) and implementation plans. The following was noted:

- Both strategies have been in play for a few years. 2020 was a difficult year, but staff moved forward as the services Saanich provides are very much needed.
- 2020 marked the 5th and final year of the YDS, but this is not a stopping point; staff will continue to build and improve on everything created over the last five years.
- The OAS finished the 3rd year of implementation in 2020, it will run until 2022.
- Staff continue to adapt the YDS and OAS programs considering the pandemic.
- Both of these initiatives support the Council directive of community well-being.
- Positive feedback has been received from schools, local organizations and youth.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

R. Pemberton, Community Recreation Programmer (Child and Youth Services) provided a verbal update on the Youth Development Strategy. The following was noted:

- At end of 5 years, staff are 95-96% successful on the strategy's goals and priorities.
- Despite COVID, enrollment in the youth adventures breakout camps was at full capacity during summer of 2020, and staff expect the same for 2021. There was also an increase in registered programs for LGBTQ2 community at Upside Teen Centre.
- Collaborations increased, and in 2020 we partnered with Saanich Neighbourhood Place who provided mental health support for youth in the Tillicum area.
- The youth element at Horner Park was completed in 2020, and Council will be considering the installation of an art mural at the Tripp Station outdoor bike park.
- Low-cost life skills workshops have helped youth take classes in first aid, food safe, and youth employment readiness programs. Self-expressive art programs including water color painting, needle felting and clay molding was done at Cedar Hill as well.
- Staff created a community and school resource manual that went out to service groups and school district partners. The manual includes information on Leisure Involvement for Everyone (LIFE) access and provides information on grants available to youth.
- Youth programs were adapted and expanded to meet youth needs. The Pearkes teen centre was lost but staff still managed to provide some valuable programs.
- Work continued with non-profit partners to enhance service delivery.
- In 2021 the department would like to strengthen school partnerships, as well as continue the leadership academy and life skills workshops. Staff wish to provide opportunities to experience Indigenous culture. Saanich will soon see the completion of the Tripp Station Youth Bike Skills Park, which was a recommendation of the YDS.

In response to questions and comments from the committee, the following was noted:

- The youth in existing programs provide feedback on how they would like to be involved with current programs, as well as future programs that would be of interest to them. New programs are developed based on interest show by the community.
- Feedback provided from the community has resulted in additional programming for LGBTQ2 youth, who need safe space to gather and feel comfortable.
- A group of youth recently partnered with the Victoria Native Friendship Centre to make dream catchers with original materials. They learned about the history of dream catchers and took part in cultural story telling while creating the dream catchers
- Staff are always looking for opportunities to provide cultural educational experiences.
- There are opportunities for students who are interested in sharing cultural expressions based on their diverse cultural backgrounds to share their knowledge and/or skills.
- Appreciation was expressed for these initiatives that support vulnerable populations.

OLDER ADULT STRATEGY

Alison Chamberlain, Community Programmer II (Older Adult Services) provided verbal update on the Older Adults Strategy information on the work done in 2020 and the following was noted:

- The presentation contains pictures of hearts, which are from the Hearts Together collaborative program, about 250 older adults participated in the program.
- Staff have continued working from the OAS strategic priorities that were adopted in 2017. The priorities include programs that serve diverse ages, inclusive age friendly spaces, collaboration, and enhanced access to information for isolated seniors.
- Council funded a part-time programmer one position who has supported the work required to implement the OAS, including coordinating volunteers at Cedar Hill club, organizing dementia programs, health care access programs and facilitating outreach.
- When the strategy is complete, there will be four part-time programmers.

- Prior to the pandemic, in January-March of 2020, staff could support a wide range of social opportunities and support caregivers with respite opportunities. Groups of elders self-organized themselves and partnerships expanded with Native Friendship Centre.
- The Connections guide was distributed, including information on the LIFE program.
- As the pandemic began in March of 2020, and Provincial Health Orders began, there was uncertainty in program planning. Staff adapted to evolving health orders by allowing participants to reserve spots for fitness and arts, and limiting sizes of groups to be safe. The website was adapted to provide more information on partners and resources. Outside activities commenced and park programs occurred at three parks.
- Enhanced communications and age friendly spaces were provided and the Older Adults Connections guide was published. A second welcome desk was purchased which helps visitors navigate new safety protocols and provides program information.
- Much positive feedback was received on the reopening of facilities and the reinstatements of programs, as there are many benefits for physical and mental health.
- Providing safe access to programs during the pandemic has been a challenge.
- Staff will continue to focus on building and enhancing communication and partnerships, having welcoming spaces, and continue with programs that are relevant.

PRESENTATION – HELLO, HOW ARE YOU?

Chelsey Anseeuw and Zanette Frost from the City of Edmonton provided an overview of the Urban Isolation/Mental Health Council Initiative work by the City of Edmonton. The following was noted:

- Mental health, isolation, loneliness, suicide and addiction are all interrelated issues impacting the community. The Urban Isolation initiative works to positively affect mental health and well-being by connecting residents within their communities.
- The initiative has three desired outcomes. The first is an increased awareness and understanding of urban isolation and mental health. The second is an increased understanding of how the urban form impacts mental health and well-being. The third is to build partnerships with the community that develop, support and promote mental health and prevent mental illness and utilize harm reduction approaches.
- The City of Edmonton has a campaign called “Hello, How Are You?” which encompasses two council initiatives, the Council Initiative on Urban Isolation and Mental Health and the Council Initiative on seniors. The campaign encourages Edmontonians to get connected to their communities to help prevent social isolation.
- The initiative works with partners to promote public awareness of the campaign through community based events, such as during Mental Health Week.
- Educational tools such as an informational board game have been created.
- Buddy Benches have been created to encourage inclusion in elementary schools. A Buddy Bench pilot project set up in neighborhoods helped turn strangers into friends.
- The City is working on understanding how urban form impacts mental health. A partnership with the University of Alberta conducted a literature review on how elements of urban design and their application in municipalities promotes positive mental health of people living in core urban neighborhoods. The review found several promising areas in which urban design interventions reported beneficial impacts of mental well-being of local residents, including proximity of green spaces, aesthetic features in parks, accessibility of parks and inclusivity for diverse users.
- Living Hope is a local suicide prevention plan, which promotes a preventative approach that seeks to enhance the protective factors that decrease the risk of suicide. There are three overarching goals of the plan which are: to increase awareness and

education; enhance accessibility to the full continuum of services; and to address the specific needs of high risk populations.

- The Community Mental Health Action Plan includes over 50 local organizations which work together to address mental health and addictions. This maximizes collective resources, leverages opportunities to respond to existing gaps and fosters innovative approaches to integrate supports and services. The plan has resulted in many successes thus far, and will continue to do so until the plan concludes in 2022.

In response to questions from the committee, the following was noted:

- The Happy City Initiative included a tool kit on cooperative housing that could potentially improve mental health, such as intergenerational living.
- The Buddy Benches were promoted via social media. The benches had a decal with conversation starters, translated information and accessibility considerations.

DIVISION REPORTS

The division reports were included for information with the agenda.

COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The committee discussed the strategic priorities, the following was noted:

- Motions were passed at Council recently related to addressing the overdose crisis.
- The Nanaimo City Council adopted a Doughnut Economics Framework, which may be of interest to members of the committee as it includes many of the strategic priorities.
- The committee would like to make recommendations of value, it would be beneficial to have subject experts to inform the committee on recommendations and resolutions.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary