

MINUTES
HEALTHY SAANICH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held virtually from Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
November 3, 2021 at 6:01 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor Ned Taylor

Members: Clare Attwell, Carren Dujela, Ryan Henderson, Kam Judge, Silvia Mangu Alene, Jasmine Noble and Nadia Rajan.

Staff: Laura Ciarniello, Director of Corporate Services; Megan Catalano, Communications Manager; Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager, Community Services; and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk.

Absent: Jasindra Jawanda and Liz Miller (SCAN).

MINUTES

MOVED by C. Attwell and seconded by N. Rajan, “That the minutes of the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee meeting held October 7, 2021, be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REMARKS

- Applications for 2022 Committee Appointments are now open, all those who wish to serve on a committee in 2022 need to apply before the deadline on November 5, 2021.
- Council was supportive of the committee recommendations related to the One Planet Saanich Region, the recommendation was referred to staff on October 18, 2021.

STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS DISCUSSION

The Director of Corporate Services provided an update on the motions made by Council in support of the committee recommendations. The committee was invited to provide guidance to ensure that any changes to the Saanich Strategic Plan are aligned with the intentions of the recommendations made by the Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee.

The committee discussed the intention of the first motion passed, which related to the addition of “supporting the mental health and well-being of residents” to the Strategic Plan:

- The committee is interested in learning about initiatives being undertaken by other municipalities. External presenters could share knowledge about their mental health related initiatives and experiences. The committee could then produce a report of high-level recommendations that consider potential partnerships, budget implications, as well as suggestions on how to explore the options available.
- Feedback from the community would be extremely beneficial, having input from those who need mental health support would help to supplement services that are provided.
- Isolation and stigma have been heightened with the ongoing pandemic, identifying gaps in services is essential. The work recently done by Community Services which

- introduced an inclusion aid for summer camps is one example of beneficial work that could be built on and expanded to help support the mental health of all residents.
- Education is important for all. The committee could potentially recommend that presenters to provide information to Council, staff and residents, that would help to increase awareness and education, while promoting mental health literacy.
 - The pathology of mental health is complex, it is important that we do not blame those with poor mental health, but rather examine what systems exist that are not inclusive.
 - Mental health and mental illness is a continuum, not opposite binary states of mind.
 - There is a need to take a critical look at exclusionary policies and procedures.
 - The health care system may be failing those who need support for mental health. This can lead to stress for those involved as well as friends and family around them.
 - The Mental Health Commission of Canada recently created a brochure titled Creating Mentally Healthy Cities and Communities, which was distributed to the committee and staff. This brochure outlines the critical role that municipalities play in supporting mental health initiatives and what can be done to support healthy cities.

The committee discussed the intention of the second motion passed, which related to considering the Strategic Plan through a post-colonial lens, visiting the language and structure to ensure that it is equitable and reflects the diversity of the community. The following was noted:

- The Strategic Plan is only available as a written/electronic document in English. This means that the document is not truly accessible.
- Language is important to communicate ideas and to structure understanding. We should evaluate the language and any underlying assumptions.
- One example is the Community Well Being section, where we state that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are vital. The section then goes on to state that people or either housed or homeless. Anybody who falls on the continuum between being housed or unhoused is excluded from the conversation.
- There is technical language that may be hard for some to understand.
- Ensuring that DEI is considered at the onset of the creation of a document would be best practice, it is hard to retroactively apply this lens. DEI needs to be embedded in all documents and policies from the beginning, this is especially important to consider prior to the next Council beginning work on the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.
- On page 4 of the Strategic Plan, the motto is in Latin. The motto does not represent indigenous people. We do a territorial acknowledgement at the beginning of every meeting, but there is not acknowledgement in Coast Salish language in the plan.
- There are many opportunities to engage the community in this process.
- Embedding DEI in all policies and plans is a work in progress, there is still much to be done. Members of the committee expressed their gratitude for having staff in attendance to gather committee feedback and work collaboratively on this topic.

In response to committee discussion, the Director of Corporate Services stated the following:

- Council spent many hours creating the Strategic Plan, they were thoughtful on many of the words that were chosen. If edits or revisions are made to the current Strategic Plan, Council will need to ensure that the intent of the document is still intact.
- It is possible to look at the current document and propose some changes.
- In advance of the creation of the next Strategic Plan, staff will provide orientation and training to Council about applying a DEI lens as a foundational framework for the plan.

DIVISION REPORT

The division report was included for information as part of the agenda.

COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

The committee discussed topics of interest, the following was noted:

- If committee members would like an item added to a future agenda, they can send it to staff. The item will be included on a draft agenda, the Chair will make give formal approval prior to agenda distribution. The committee member who has requested the item be included will be responsible for arranging the presentation.
- The City of Victoria was not able to provide a presentation on participatory democracy in November. They have indicated they can provide a presentation in early 2022.
- Councillor Taylor will remain as the Chair of HSAC for the 2022 term.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:06

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for January 5, 2022.

Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary