

Minutes
Council's Response Committee on Housing and Emergency Shelter (CRCHES)
Committee Meeting
November 13, 2024 – 9 am
Finance Meeting Room, City Hall

Attendees: Councillor Trevor Bolin, Councillor MacDougall, Bonnie McCue (recording secretary)

Guests: S/Sgt. Scott Watson, Sgt. Dwayne Croll

1. Call To Order:

9:00 am

2. Approval of the Agenda:

The agenda was approved by consensus.

3. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes:

The October 9, 2024 CRCHES meeting minutes were provided and will be included on the next Regular Council agenda.

5. Invited Guests/Presentations

S/Sgt. Scott Watson and Sgt. Dwayne Croll attended to provide insights to the committee.

Discussions took place regarding:

RCMP report file statistics related to people with no fixed address. The RCMP does not specifically track statistics for individuals with no fixed address but can implement a process for better future reporting. It's considered that the statistics provided may be underreported. From January 1 to November 13, 2024, approximately 9 individuals with no fixed address had police files ranging from wellness checks to trespassing and mischief. The volume of the files is not statistically significant.

Sgt. Croll is a liaison to the Salvation Army as part of his RCMP portfolio.

Security enhancements at local retailers have been effective in reducing some theft. RCMP attends shoplifting incidents when reported, but not all incidents are reported to RCMP. Obtaining support and evidence from retailers is vital for RCMP files.

The status of the Situation Table initiative locally is unknown, it has been successful in other communities.

Sgt. Croll has previously provided staff training for closing procedures of City recreation facilities and can do so again. If there is no warming shelter this winter, there may be individuals using recreation facilities as daytime shelter.

4. Correspondence

- Dawson Creek Homelessness Committee ask to Council and Response

Received for discussion and information about the approach by community group in Dawson Creek.

6. Updates and Progress Reports:

• Staff Updates and Committee Member Reports:

- St. John's NFDL Communications Booklet was shared and reviewed. The booklet presents good information and will be used as a model for future communication in Fort St. John.
- VanCity Rent Bank Info was provided for information.
- Sparc BC – Grants available for one-time funding for local planning and collaborative initiatives designed to better respond to the needs of those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Applications are ongoing, and staff will research potential committee initiatives that qualify for grant funding.

7. Ongoing Discussion Items

Continue to seek information about BC Housing units and funding in Fort St. John, discussed solutions to obtain the information that has been requested.

8. New Business

None

9. Budget and Resource Planning

Grant opportunities for 2025 will be explored.

A review of initiatives for 2025 will be on the next committee agenda.

10. Action Items

- Inquire about the status of establishing a Situation Table locally.
- Develop joint public communication with RCMP.
- Develop public information communications based on St. John's NFDL example.
- Continue to seek data from BC Housing, and invite contractor to an upcoming meeting.
- Develop a list of initiatives eligible for grant funding.
- Add committee initiative planning to the next agenda, including a future presentation to Council.

11. Adjournment

10:30 am