



## Minutes

Council's Response Committee on Housing and Emergency Shelter (CRCHES)  
Committee Meeting  
January 14 – 9 am  
Council Committee Meeting Room, City Hall

Attendees: Councillor Trevor Bolin, Councillor Sarah MacDougall, Councillor Gord Klassen, Bonnie McCue, and Christina Brace (recording secretary)

Guests: Sharron Hammond, Seniors' Community Connector, Social Prescribing Program - North Peace Seniors Housing Society  
Helen Gilbert, Board Chair - School District 60 Board of Trustees

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 December 10, 2025, CRCHES meeting minutes were provided and will be included on the next Regular Council agenda.

4. Invited Guests/Presentations

Sharron Hammond attended as an invited guest.

Discussions took place regarding:

Senior housing challenges in Fort St. John are growing, with more seniors living in unsafe conditions and precariously housed. Local senior-serving organizations, including Better at Home and programs funded through United Way, are helping connect seniors to non-medical supports, benefits, and emergency assistance. Demand is rising as shelters report more unhoused seniors facing safety, mobility, and health risks. Many cannot access communal housing due to personal needs, mental health, or addictions. Long waits for BC Housing, vacant units awaiting renovation funding, limited assisted-living spaces, and gaps in medical and daily-living support worsen the crisis. Broader collaboration, increased funding, renovated units, and expanded assisted-living options are urgently needed.

Helen Gilbert attended as an invited guest.

Discussions took place regarding:

The rising challenges around housing and the unhoused in Fort St. John are increasingly reflected in student needs, with some families experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. The school district is taking proactive steps by integrating life-skills and entrepreneurship programs to help students build resilience and prevent future homelessness. Schools provide extensive food supports—including revamped kitchens, open pantries, backpack programs, and donations of meals and winter clothing—tailored school by school. Targeted curriculum areas address homelessness and food security, while counselling teams and social-emotional coaches identify students needing extra help. Though schools cannot mandate parent involvement, they collaborate with community agencies and continue to advocate for resources to support vulnerable youth.

5. Updates and Progress Reports:

None

6. Ongoing Discussion Items

None

7. New Business

A handout was provided detailing community health assessment focused on Fort St. John, identifying the city's urgent health-promotion needs, including homelessness.

8. Budget and Resource Planning

None

9. Action Items

- Bonnie: Invite Senior Alt teachers to attend an upcoming meeting or meet at an alternate location.
- Councillor Bolin: Reach out to Salvation Army staff and obtain contact information for Senior Alt teachers.
- Councillor Klassen: Bring back updates from the BC Natural Resources Forum.

10. Adjournment

10:35 am