

City of Chilliwack
PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2022– 8:00 am
VIDEO CONFERENCE / DOGWOOD ROOM

In attendance:

Councillor Jason Lum, Co-Chair	Councillor Bud Mercer, Co-Chair
Karen Stanton, Director of Public Safety & Social Development / Staff Liaison	Holly Ferris, Social Development Coordinator
Staff Sergeant Grant Floris, A/Operations Officer, RCMP	Sergeant Krista Vrolyk, Community Policing
Mike Bourdon, Assistant Fire Chief	Garrett Schipper, Manager of Building and Regulatory Enforcement
Steve Roukema, Executive Director, Restorative Justice	Joe Koczur, Deputy Director of Operations
Mark Klassen, SD33, Manager of Facilities	Debbie Sargent, Communications Assistant, RCMP
Michelle Wulff, Chilliwack Crime Prevention Society	Tanis Hatch, ICBC
Garrett Schipper, Manager of Building and Regulatory Enforcement	Trevor McDonald, Executive Director, BIA
Angus Haggarty, Corrections/Restorative Justice	Kim Spice, Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Inspector Steve Vrolyk, Operations Officer, RCMP	Chris Terepocki, Legal Representative
Ian Josephson, Fire Chief	Brian Foote, Community Member
Joanne Jefferson, Stólō Justice	Collin Rogers, Chamber of Commerce
Peter Lang, Community Member, President, Chilliwack Métis Association	

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Lum called the meeting to order at 8:01 am and provided territorial acknowledgement.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved /) That the Agenda of the Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Advisory Committee held
 Seconded (Wednesday, June 8, 2022, be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved /) That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Advisory Committee held
 Seconded (Wednesday, May 11, 2022, be adopted as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

4. DELEGATION

Co-Chair Lum introduced Debbie Sargent, who has been hired as the new Communications Assistant for the RCMP.

5. PRESENTATION / COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

6. CURRENT ISSUES TO ADDRESS

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

8. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

9. REPORTS

a) RCMP

Staff Sergeant Grant Floris, RCMP, reported on the following:

1. The RCMP prepared communications releases regarding positive experiences between members and the public, including an instance where officers were able to revive a member of the public by administering medical assistance.

Sergeant Vrolyk, Community Policing, reported on the following:

1. Local citizens involved in the Block Watch program were able to alert police of suspicious activity, resulting in taking three individuals into custody. Another report was received by RCMP from Block Watch, which led to an investigation that determined a local residence was associated with the storing of precursors in a clandestine lab; RCMP engaged the CLEAR Team to respond;
2. Bike theft has increased substantially this year. The Bait Bike Program has been successfully deployed, arrests have been made and court dates set. Through enforcement efforts, proactive engagement and reporting, arrests can be made and stolen property returned;
3. Three individuals were arrested regarding a break and enter at Five Corners; and,
4. The Police Mountain Bike Program took place; six members were trained to allow for additional bike patrols.

Co-Chair Lum inquired if the City was still involved with Project 529 Garage, a bike registration program. Sergeant Vrolyk confirmed that the City was involved until two years ago and there are plans to begin promoting the program again this year.

9. REPORTS (continued)

b) Fire Department

Assistant Fire Chief Bourdon reported on the following:

1. On May 16, a Fire Smart presentation regarding Emergency Management was provided to residents in Ryder Lake;
2. The Fire Department participated in Yarrow Days, educating the public on Fire Smart, home safety and emergency preparedness; and,
3. The department received a Fire Safety House from Chilliwack River Valley, as an education tool to bring to community events.

Sergeant Vrolyk inquired if the Fire Department was still doing child safety seat fittings. Assistant Chief Bourdon confirmed that it is still ongoing and the department was looking to train more members to assist with the program.

c) BIA

Trevor McDonald, Executive Director, BIA, reported on the following:

1. Mr. McDonald commented on how great it is that event season has begun, since it was put on hold due to Covid-19;
2. He expressed appreciation to the organizers of Yarrow Days and mentioned the Car Show is taking place on June 26, 2022; and,
3. Graffiti remediation in the community continues and training of new volunteers is in progress.

Sergeant Vrolyk inquired about online reporting of graffiti hot spots so that the RCMP has the opportunity to ensure follow up and accountability.

d) Bylaw Department

Garrett Schipper, Manager of Building and Regulatory Enforcement, reported on the following:

1. The Bylaw Department has trained new Bylaw Officers for bike patrol, which has allowed for continued weekend patrol of the downtown core, as well as the southside of the City;
2. The Bylaw Department has received numerous complaints regarding the southside of the City and Bylaw Enforcement is working on issuing fines to address these ongoing issues;
3. The downtown side is experiencing issues at Bole Park and Edwards Park, which the Bylaw Department and RCMP are working to remedy;
4. A No Occupancy was posted on a property on Extrom Road, the house was subsequently boarded up due to the occurrence of illegal activity and squatters; and,
5. Mr. Schipper provided follow up comment regarding renoviction concerns and Prince Rupert's new Bylaw, raised during the May 11, 2022 meeting. He stated that the City uses the Building Maintenance and Standards Bylaw, along with Business Licensing and Health and Safety Inspections to investigate rental housing properties that may have tenants living in harsh conditions. This can facilitate remediation by property owner, similar to the Prince Rupert Bylaw. He clarified that renovictions are a Tenancy Board issue and the *Residential Tenancy Act* provides provisions for tenants to relocate during property remediation.

9. REPORTS (continued)

Co-Chair Lum inquired if it was possible to have a mechanism in place to require accommodations for tenants that are displaced due to property remediation, as not to exacerbate the lack of home rentals in the community. This proposed mechanism would disincentivize landlords to evict tenants on the basis of renovations, and then re-rent the rental property at a higher rate.

Mr. Schipper made comment with respect to the recent increase in vacant houses in the Chilliwack Proper area, causing unauthorized individuals to shelter in these houses and cause mischief.

Karen Stanton, Director of Public Safety and Social Development suggested the City could develop a policy that would ensure people are not displaced into homelessness during the redevelopment of properties, and, that this would need to be done in consultation with the Affordable Housing and Development Committee

Co-Chair Lum inquired if the City could put a moratorium on rezoning and subdividing until a mechanism can be implemented that ensures properties are not being left vacant and contributing to the lack of rental houses and renovations.

Co-Chair Lum inquired if the Province would share information regarding vacant properties. Mr. Schipper confirmed that the City tracks vacant homes by water consumption. Co-Chair Lum confirmed the City of Vancouver has an additional Empty Homes Tax and inquired if there was something in the City’s rezoning process that could be instituted to combat vacant houses and displacement, rather than using provincial legislation.

Mrs. Stanton confirmed other communities have established similar policies for rezoning applicants to demonstrate how existing tenants will be supported in finding new housing, alleviating the issue of displacement.

Co-Chair Mercer inquired if the Bylaw Department had purchased electric bicycles. He recommended that if there was a plan to purchase more, to be proactive as there may be a waitlist.

Sergeant Vrolyk provided statistics regarding use of bear spray, noting in 2020 there were 273 reports of bear spray use before the “Sale of Pepper Spray and Bear Spray Regulation Bylaw 2021. No. 5056” was enacted. In 2021 there were 138 reports of bear spray used. This bylaw has reflected a 45% decrease in incidents involving bear spray. Sergeant Vrolyk expressed appreciation to the Public Safety Advisory Committee and the Bylaw Department for their efforts in creating the bylaw.

Co-Chair Lum expressed frustration regarding the issue of vacant homes and proposed the following resolution:

Moved /) That Council look at strategies to address issues related to vacant homes in Chilliwack.
Seconded (

Carried Unanimously

e) ICBC

1. Tanis Hatch, ICBC, expressed appreciation to Safer City, Speed Watch and the RCMP, regarding the successful “Think of Me” campaign that was introduced to students in School District 33.
2. Ms. Hatch updated the committee with respect to additional Speed Watch equipment that will be helpful in implementing speed boards on both sides of the road for future deployments.

9. REPORTS (continued)

Co-Chair Mercer inquired about the possibility of having Speed Watch at Promontory Elementary School. Ms. Hatch stated that she would discuss the matter with Samantha Piper, Safer City.

f) School District

Mark Klassen, Manager of Facilities, SD33, reported on the following:

1. He expressed appreciation to RCMP, as a resource regarding graffiti on school property. Youth have been identified and payment will occur for damages caused;
2. There was an occurrence of a fire at McCammon Elementary, no major damage was reported;
3. The district has dedicated a space for Chilliwack Emergency Services, to make it easier for volunteers to assist individuals in an emergency event;
4. Six to seven C-Cans have had attempted break-ins; and,
5. There has been an increase of open drug use on school grounds, Griffin Security was notified.

Mr. Schipper inquired whether there was more activity on the south side of town. Mr. Klassen confirmed there was an increase in adults causing mischief in that area.

Sergeant Vrolyk commented that it was grad commencement for the upcoming weekend and that staffing at RCMP has been adjusted to add a larger police presence in the community.

g) Operations

Joe Koczur, Deputy Director of Operations, reported on the following:

1. Fraser River Flood Watch has begun. The Mission gauge was at 4.8m and is a month behind. Operations anticipate that properties outside the dyke area will likely become saturated;
2. The Vedder River and canal has continued to rise and trails on the Vedder River will become saturated as well. Staff will put signage up to alert trail users to use an alternate route;
3. Individuals experiencing homelessness have been camping at Edwards Park. Fencing will be installed to separate and prevent trespassing issues on adjacent properties;
4. Open drainage maintenance in Greendale on the non-fish bearing watercourses is underway;
5. Ongoing roadside mowing on rural roads has begun on a regular rotation, to reduce issues with sightlines; and,
6. The Downtown Graffiti Removal Crew is working to clean up the Valley Rail Trail.

Mayor Popove and Chris Crosman, Deputy CAO joined the meeting at 9:05 am.

h) Social Development

Holly Ferris, Social Development Coordinator, reported on the following:

1. Ruth and Naomi's has become a 24-hour shelter, as of June 1, 2022, allowing guests to access the shelter during the day as well as in the evening.
2. The Reaching Home Community Advisory Board funding has been approved by Council. This includes funding allocations for Youth Outreach, Prevention and Shelter Diversion, a future Wellness Shelter and Weekend Outreach. Request for Proposals will be prepared accordingly.

9. REPORTS (continued)

i) Restorative Justice

Steve Roukema, Executive Director, Restorative Justice, reported on the following:

1. A \$40,000.00 Civil Forfeiture grant was received. This will enable Restorative Justice to enter into a partnership with School District 33, providing education regarding Restorative Justice in two schools in the community. A full time Restorative Justice School Coordinator will be hired and oversee the facilitation of this partnership;
2. Restorative Justice is looking to fill the position for part time Restorative Community Coordinator, which will help facilitate the delivery of the Operation Red Nose Program.;
3. Eight new referrals were received in the month of May and there are 24 active files. Ongoing discussion with local establishments will continue, to assist with referrals from Loss Prevention Officers; and,
4. Training will occur in August for staff that will be working in the schools.

j) Stólō Justice

Joanne Jefferson, Stólō Justice, was not in attendance, however, provided the following update via email:

1. Stólō Justice is experiencing staff shortages; and,
2. The organization is moving to a new location on Skowkale First Nation by the end of the month.

k) Chamber of Commerce

1. No report

l) Chilliwack Crime Prevention Society

Michelle Wulff, Chilliwack Crime Prevention Services, reported on the following:

1. City Watch intercepted a fire at the 7-Eleven, which was reported to the Fire Department and successfully extinguished;
2. Garrison Boulevard and Tower Road were added as new Block Watch areas, bringing the total to 77 active Block Watch areas in the community;
3. Speed Watch conducted 15 deployments, three of which were three-strike projects and one violation ticket was issued;
4. A presentation regarding scams, frauds and personal safety was provided to 30 senior residents at Hampton House;
5. Ms. Wulff reported on 404 hours of volunteer time in the month of May and two interviews were conducted to retain new volunteers; and,
6. The organization participated in the Yarrow Days event.

Co-Chair Lum encouraged Mrs. Wulff to connect with the new RCMP Communications Assistant to explore ways to educate the public regarding the Block Watch Program.

9. REPORTS (continued)

Community Members

Angus Haggarty, Corrections/Restorative Justice, Community Member, attended a Zoom meeting regarding Community Services and Emergency Preparedness.

Discussion ensued regarding whether the City was prepared for an emergency, the various community partnerships for such an event, the element of personal responsibility and education for the public regarding what to do in an emergency, as well as what Emergency Services is responsible for. Co-Chair Mercer proposed a table-top discussion to address these issues.

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

11. ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION

Moved /) That, in accordance with Section 90 (1)(f) of the *Community Charter*, the Committee hold a
Seconded (Closed meeting.

Carried Unanimously

Councillor Lum, Co-Chair