



MINUTES

Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee – Everyone Matters

Thursday, February 3, 2022 1:00 p.m. VIA MS Teams

Attendees:

Co-Chair Lori Kleinsmith, Bridges CHC
Co-Chair Angie Desmarais, Councillor
Bill Steele, Mayor
Scott Luey, Chief Administrative Officer
Scott Lawson, Fire Chief
Susan Therrien, Director of Library Services
Jay McKnight, Niagara Regional Police
Jeffrey Sinclair, Community Services, Niagara Region
Taralea McLean, Bridge CHC
Judy Cassan, Bridges CHC
Christine Clark-Lafleur, Port Cares

Minutes:

Nancy Giles, EA to Mayor and CAO

Call to Order

Co-Chair Angie Desmarais called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Moved by L. Kleinsmith
Seconded by B. Steele

That the agenda for the February 3, 2022 meeting of the Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee – Everyone Matters be approved.
CARRIED.

Approval of the February 6, 2020 minutes

Moved by L. Kleinsmith
Seconded by S. Lawson

That the minutes for the February 6, 2020 meeting of the Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee – Everyone Matters be approved.
CARRIED.

Business Arising

Lodging by-law

The proposed lodging by-law is intended to regulate an unregulated segment of lodging usually occupied by those in a vulnerable sector. The City believed it should be regulated by the province. Bill 164 is on the table at the province and we believe it is still on the table. If this bill does not pass, then the region should pass a by-law. Our former Deputy Fire Chief was involved in a regional committee who formulated a draft by-law. The CAO presented a report to Council recommending the region implement the by-law. It was sent to the region and went to Commissioner of Corporate Services, who license things. Staff is sending a report to regional committee in March. There is also a CAO meeting in March and Scott will bring it them for support. In the absence of provincial legislation, it is staff's preference for a regional by-law and Scott will make sure our Regional Councillor and Mayor are aware.

Mayor Steele will bring this up at the February Regional Council meeting with Regional Councillor Butters under councillor's items. He will speak with the area Mayors on this issue to seek their support.

Taralea supports this being a regional by-law rather than 12 different by-laws. Lori advised that this previously got pushed back to the lower tier. Mayor Steele advised this has never been presented to regional council. The Mayors and CAOs are really driving this now. Let us see what happens in March.

City of Port Colborne Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan

City is putting out an RFP for an Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan to hire a consultant to complete the plan. Our problem is the diversity of housing being built. There is NIMBYism in some neighbourhoods.

Mayor and CAO attended a meeting on Friday with every Mayor and CAO in Niagara.

Five topics were discussed:

1. How would we describe the local demand for housing types and how can we launch an accelerated response to the Province's expectation to increase the availability of housing units? Do we have a consistent and agreed upon definition of housing and the housing needs in Niagara?
2. How would we best include an assessment of technology, staffing and other gaps that will require additional resources - a statement on where support will be needed?
3. A complex subject- Who and how would we best identify and address reasons for increased housing costs and how or if we can influence them locally?
4. Communication Planning will be an important component of our work to identify with the general public the level of seriousness that the LAMs are considering for the challenges ahead— a statement of this discussion including intentions going forward to be released promptly and include Regional Council if applicable.

5. Discuss the point at which we bring the local information to Regional Council and consider the value of a joint Regional Statement and whether we wish to share with the province. As issues are identified, how do we best identify the cost associated with any staffing or technology gaps, their value and a potential ask for provincial funding.

A sub-committee is being struck – we have offered our Manager of Strategic Initiatives to sit on the committee. The 12 Mayors are working together and we will get this moved forward. Regional Chair and his staff are on board.

We have done a scan of lots that the city owns and we have put some of this land up for sale. There are conditions that these lands be developed in a short time. We are trying to get the land in use.

Article in National Post – rise of the mini-midrise. Commercial on the main floor with housing above. We will share the article with the group.

We need to think about creative ways to adapt our zoning by-law for inclusion zoning.

Affordable housing build – Port Cares

Project is moving along quickly. Port Cares has secured the maximum CMHC funding for the project. They are very supportive of the project and pleased with the collaboration. Nearing completion of pre-development stage. Should be done by April. Noise study needs to be completed and a bit of land remediation. Will be approximately 40 units. Cost to build - \$13.5 million a year ago, now \$14.2 million. There is a program with CHMC whereby they will forgive a portion of the loan. Building will have an 80-year lifespan. Rents will be 30% below market.

Community contribution will be \$1.2 million. Port Cares has giving program if anyone knows anyone who might be interested in contributing. A lot of competition with Hospice Niagara and Pathstone Mental Health. This project is attracting a lot of interest from outside the community. Great need in the community based on numbers of people currently supported by Port Cares at the Reach Out Centre.

New Business

Transportation – NRT on demand – Scott

Welland Transit previously provided a community bus on a loop system. Region has been on a pilot program for demand transit. City of Port Colborne moved to NRT on demand on January 1. There are not pre-defined routes – 2 vans. Booked through using an app or dialing a phone number. Same cost as a bus – can use a monthly pass or load money on your phone. This is not a private service – may have to wait a bit. Accessible transit is a separate service. This now serves the entire population. There was some negativity passed on by previous provider but that has now been quelled.

There have been some growing pains, but it is moving forward. Scott will get some ridership stats for the next meeting. There was an issue with the 1-800 number and this has been corrected. Manager of Customer Services has taken a ride to get the user experience.

There has also been a vote about regional transit and this has passed by Port Colborne council. This has passed the triple majority and the change will come in the next couple of years.

Homelessness/Port-AI - Jay McKnight

Things have been very good with the Port-AI. First year 2018 – 70-80 situations; 2021 – 30 situations. This speaks to the effectiveness of communications and being proactive. Model is working. NRPS is expanding this to a CORE program. Jay will be taking over Welland and Grimsby as well. He will be able to give people a voice. Port Colborne should be very proud of the work we have done.

Homelessness – we don't have a problem. Not as many outrageous comments on social media. Jay and Scott Lawson have been doing walks about the community and speaking with business owners and individuals.

Port Cares outreach workers have been in overdrive helping the hidden homeless population – about 20 people. Getting pressure to serve other parts of the region but they can't cover that big an area. Jay and Christine will discuss further.

City responded to requests for a warming centre in January that if someone wants to run a program with qualified people, we will help provide some space.

Libraries across Niagara are helping organizations – Our library is open and staffed and Susan offered the library as a distribution centre if needed.

Child Care – Provincial/Federal initiative – Lori

Media reports and promises for \$10 a day daycare – it is in the works in Ontario – if the city could lend it's support to make the deal that would be appreciated.

Moved by L. Kleinsmith

Seconded by B. Steele

That the Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee – Everyone Matters requests the Port Colborne City Council send a letter to the province asking them to support the Early Learning and Child Care Plan whereby the province would enter into an agreement with the federal government to implement this plan and that the letter be circulated to all Niagara municipalities for support. CARRIED.

Reach Niagara Services – Lori/Christine

Port Cares started working on this program in June – two false starts.

The program provides primary care for those in need – the service in Port Colborne is a partnership with Port Cares, represented by Outreach Worker Marisa Cantisani and Bridges CHC, who provide Mark, their nurse practitioner. Christine has also been driving the van which comes from St. Catharines. They learned yesterday they will be funding a separate driver going forward.

The van is parked at the Reach Out Centre and the nurse practitioner sees 8-12 people each Wednesday afternoon from 1-4 (or later if there is a need and availability of providers). Helping people with basic medical needs, wound care, completing ODSP and vulnerable housing applications. Good relationships are being built.

Mark has been able to connect some people into primary care at Bridges.

Yesterday they held a vaccination clinic which was accessed by 37 people – some who were receiving their first shot.

Review of committee membership – see current list attached

The committee reviewed the list and made the following recommendation:

Moved by L. Kleinsmith

Seconded by J. McKnight

That the Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee – Everyone Matters requests council to amend Sections 3 and 4 of by-law 6530/97/17 as amended by by-law 6652/16/19 as follows:

That section 3 (c) be amended to remove “By-law Enforcement Division” and add “Public Works Department”

That section 3 (d) be amended to remove “The City of Port Colborne Health Services Coordinator and add “One member of staff from the CAO’s office”;

That section 3 (e) be amended to remove “Fire Department” and add “Community Safety and Enforcement”;

That section 3 (j) be amended to include after “lived experience” “or a representative from an organization/business who supports individuals with lived experience”;

That sections 3 (i) “One representative from Canadian Association of Mental Health, Niagara Division” and (k) “One representative from Niagara Community Legal Clinic” be

moved to Section 4 as non-voting, ex-officio members and section 3 and 4 be renumbered accordingly.

CARRIED.

The committee was also advised that our current community representative, Casey Forgeron has moved from Port Colborne. A request will be made to the Clerk's Office to advertise for a new representative.

Roundtable update from organizations

Port Cares

Working to strengthen relations with indigenous services. Largest provider of Early years services in Niagara - planning some outdoor programming for families. There has been a virtual platform for families 0-6 for parenting and child development.

Bridges

COVID has consumed Bridges for the past two years – providing access to primary care virtually and onsite. Supporting Reach program in Port Colborne and Fort Erie. Running own vaccination clinics. There will be a clinic four days next week.

Niagara Regional Police

Nothing further to add.

Community Services, Niagara Region

Lots of changes in response to COVID. Niagara Regional Housing is going to have a draft community housing master plan including affordable housing, community housing. Official plan ties in with this. Will need to make some tough decisions in communities.

Niagara Poverty reduction – addressing NIMBY – working with Brock University

Bridge housing facility opening in Niagara Falls for those coming out of health care into homelessness; also new 25-unit supportive housing with 24-hour supports – tied to coordinated access – based on triage of needs

Working on program for supports in real time for providers who are working with the homeless.

Canadian Association of Mental Health

No report.

Niagara Community Legal Clinic

No report.

By-law Enforcement

Fire Department took over by-law last year; good fit for the community. A lot of proactive property standards. Community garbage day planned for the spring.

Fire Department

A lot of problems with vacant properties and people looking for a place for the night. Still homelessness in the city but the thefts in the city are not by the homeless people.

Fire Department has been a bit of a thorn in one housing provider's side – 2 convictions recently. 803 King Street re-opening on March 1st.

Community Representative

No report.

Member of Council or Mayor

Council is being proactive in making this a healthier city. Awaiting start of affordable housing strategy and action plan.

Library

Let's Talk About Series – have not had one in past two years.

Finishing big grant providing more computer spaces and connectivity for residents in the city.

Library has a monthly newsletter with a broad reach and they would like to highlight each agency around the table – Susan will reach out.

Action Items

Motion to council about Early Learning and Child Care program - Nancy

Bring lodging by-law discussion to the next Regional Council meeting – Mayor Steele

Bring lodging by-law discussion to next CAO meeting – Scott Luey

Motion to council to amend membership of the committee – Nancy

Request appointment of a new community member - Nancy

Future Meeting Discussion

Invite guests who have lived experience with issues in the city to attend a future meeting.

Prepare a survey for individuals with lived experiences to share with the committee.

Next Meeting

Thursday, April 7, 2022 1 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.