

TRI-CITIES SENIORS PLANNING NETWORK

Minutes of Meeting Tuesday, October 20, 2015 - 1:00 - 3:00 pm City Centre Library 1169 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam

Attendees:

Stacy Ashton
Donna Bailey
Gina Hortelano
Judy Jackson
King Lum
Patrick Maguire
Roland Mitchell
Mary Ong

Regrets:

Bruce Bird
Pat McBlane
Mike Oakley
Irene Turnbull

Agenda:

- Accepted with one correction

Guest Speaker:

Kara Bloch, Executive Director, Seniors' Services Society, New Westminster

- Seniors' Services Society was started in 2006 when two other agencies amalgamated
- Services from these two agencies included keeping seniors in their homes and outreach to homeless seniors
- Their mission: We house and support seniors to live independently
- Their vision: We foresee a community where everyone lives with dignity in a safe, comfortable and healthy home
- Their office is located near the New West SkyTrain station
- They provide support to seniors in housing crisis throughout the Lower Mainland
- Key service areas include:
 - Community Education (they offer an 8 wk. 32 hr. Housing Counsellor course- \$100)
 - Support Services
 - Volunteer Opportunities (100+ volunteers)
 - Housing Services (*focus of today's discussion*)
- There are 22,000+ people 65+ in the Tri-Cities
- There are a total of 1,018 affordable housing units available
- For Port Moody/Coquitlam – 3 units per 100 seniors
- For Port Coquitlam – 9 units per 100 seniors
- There were about 1,500 new clients last year; 518 were homeless at-risk; 26 of those came from the Tri-Cities

- Seniors' Temporary Housing Program has facilitated 199 seniors finding permanent housing since 2008.
- SSS operates 14 private, furnished apartments for seniors at-risk of homelessness
- Funding for these apartments has been through United Way (ending 2016), BC Housing and 35% of the individuals income
- While in temporary housing they have direct access to an outreach worker
- Average stay is 6 mos. to a year before permanent housing is found
- All housing clients must be able to live safely on their own and able to live independently
- Average client age is 63, usually male
- Intake is usually a client phoning and arranging a face to face interview
- SAFER (Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters) is accessible at age 60 and based on 30% of family income – BC Housing oversees this
- Housing Outreach is also a big piece of what they do – one-on-one outreach to senior clients who are at-risk of becoming homeless
- Service Canada has supported this for 10 years
- Criteria has changed and there is only one person assigned to this program for all of the lower mainland; 2 days per week there is a worker across the lower mainland and 3 days per week strictly in Vancouver (Vancouver funds the 3 days per week)
- SSS maintains the Seniors' Housing Directory of BC – searchable province wide directory of housing options for seniors – approx. 30,000 visitors per year
- Seniors Homelessness is on the rise – between 2011 – 2014 there was a 38% increase in homeless seniors (371 more seniors!)
- Why? Poverty, insufficient affordable dwellings, 25% deal with multiple barriers (i.e. mental health, addictions)
- SSS does not deal with long term care
- Agencies need to take a strong advocacy role
- Put pressure on municipal and private sector to create a budget to address needs
- SSS's annual fundraiser is "Coldest Night of the Year" (coordinated through Blue Sea Philanthropy)
- Kara passed a pocket directory of services (we may try to create something similar – Mary Ong said she may be able to help with printing)

Minutes of Last Meeting (Sept 21):

- Motion to accept, Stacy
- Seconded by Mary
- Carried – no discussion

Business Arising from Previous Meetings:

Communications with Local Papers:

- Will 'workshop article at next meeting as a group

Housing Forum Sub-Committee

- Gina, Pat McBlane, Patrick Maguire, Mary Ong and Stacy to schedule first meeting

Federal Election

- Responses to our survey from all candidates except Conservative

- Stacy will try to generate a news article from the results

New Business

Community Response Network

- King attended last meeting (Pat was away)
- Have funding to provide 'Train the Trainer' courses
- CRN will be presenting to our Network at November's meeting

Updates

Gina Hortelano

- Better at Homes is registering more seniors (currently serving 163 at end of Sept.)
- Shopping and visiting are now including in the services
- Housekeeping still a bit of a struggle
- Have grandfathered some CVSS clients since their closure

Roland Mitchell

- Wilson Centre having their Fall Family Fair on November 7th from 10am to 3pm
- Focus of the event is on young children and seniors
- Last year approximately 400 people attended
- Crossroads Hospice is having their annual fundraiser 'Treasures of Christmas' at the Hard Rock Casino on November 21st; tickets for the event and/or the raffle are available on-line

Stacy Ashton

- Successful Volunteer Festival – 25 organizations attended...and Trevor Linden stopped by
- CVC 2nd Pub Night – Thursday, October 22nd from 7 to 9 - \$20; supports the CVC Flying Squad
- 'Get on Board' training series
 - Nov. 4 covering the Society Act
 - Coquitlam Innovation Centre
 - First Wednesday of each month -- \$10 members/\$15 non

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 17, 1:00-3:00 p.m. – Poirier Library, Boardroom, 575 Poirier Street, Coquitlam