

Tri-Cities Seniors Planning Network

January 8, 2013

MEETING NOTES

1. Welcome and Introductions

Stacy Ashton welcomed attendees and introductions were made around the table. A sign-in sheet was circulated with attendees asked to provide name, organization (if applicable) and e-mail.

Robyn Newton volunteered to take notes and King Lum offered to be time keeper.

2. Organizational Survey – Pat McBlaine

A survey is being developed to help us identify what services exist for seniors in the Tri-Cities, who is doing what, and what organizations would *like* to be doing if they had the capacity (what are the gaps?). Representatives from the agencies will be asked to identify both issues and opportunities, and the survey will help us decide where we can effectively work together to improve services and programs for seniors.

Seniors Guide to Services

Cathy Burpee reported that the Society for Community Development has developed a seniors' guide, modelled on their Survival Guide for People who are Homeless, which they have published for several years now. Information on services was taken from several existing guides, and the topic areas were organized on the basis of the questions seniors want answered (for example, "Where can I get help with housing?"). Phone numbers are provided rather than web sites, for seniors who may not be comfortable with or have access to the internet.

Meeting attendees broke into groups of 3 to discuss what might be missing in the guide. At the end of the discussion there was a report out.

Action item: People with additional ideas are requested to contact Cathy at 604-461-2926 or e-mail her at cburpee@shaw.ca before the end of January, as SCD hopes to finalize the guide by mid-February.

The online version of the Guide will be kept up to date. Agencies like the library are given some print copies, but are encouraged to print out the guide as they need it so they always have the most current information.

Action Item: Any and all agencies are encouraged to provide a link to the guide from their organization's web site.

Burnaby Seniors' Interagency Society

Mike ??, who is a member of Burnaby's Seniors' Interagency Society, spoke to the group about the Society, which has been around for 25 years. They are well organized and have had very good turn out for their Healthy Living Fairs. The Society meets once a month, and Tri-cities seniors and representatives from seniors' agencies are welcome to attend their meetings.

If you are interested in attending a meeting or finding out more you can contact Anne Waller, the co-chair, at 604-294-7497.

BC Association of Community Response Networks

Christine Spinder spoke about the BC Association, which has been formed to stop the abuse and neglect of vulnerable people such as seniors, people with disabilities, and immigrants. They are funded by the Province, and are working to set up local hubs of community response networks. They work closely with Health and RCMP, and hope to engage firefighters as well as they are often first responders.

Ten years ago there was a lot of money for these kinds of initiatives. Now there is a little bit of money, which allows them to provide micro-grants to local hubs for projects, etc.

The general consensus was that there is interest in developing a hub in the Tri-Cities. Christine has made contact with the Coquitlam RCMP, who have expressed their interest in assigning one of their RCMP officers to cover that mandate.

3. Welcoming & Inclusive Communities Project

Gina Hortelano from SHARE reported out from the December 3 Community Forum, which featured Dr. Alden Habacon who spoke about using the Diversity Life Cycle to Build Diverse organizations. We can use the same idea to explore

how we as a Network can reach out to diverse seniors. Dr. Habacon's major points were:

1. Know what you have
2. Make the business case for diversity
3. Undertake strategic goal setting, planning, hiring
4. Attend to staff and client renewal
5. Adjust norms, rules and habit to suit a diverse workforce and clientele
6. Focus on staff retention
7. Conduct outreach
8. Ensure management has intercultural fluency

Gina pointed out that having a diverse staff doesn't mean your organization is necessarily welcoming. Practices and systems are needed that encourage people to share and contribute, and makes it safe to do so.

Linda Western pointed out that the Welcoming Community program has been around for several years, initially focusing on organizations. It is good for us to think about how we can be welcoming as we move forward as a network.

There was discussion about how important it is for seniors (both long time residents and newcomers) to have opportunities to meet each other. Stacy noted the importance of the importance of getting to know different cultural groups so we recognize the strengths they already have, such as the Bhutanese Refugee Organization.

4. Better @ Home

Better @ Home is a Ministry of Health initiative operating out of the United Way, to explore how seniors can be supported to stay in their homes for as long as possible, through the provision of a basket of non-medical services such as: visiting, transportation, shopping, light housekeeping and yard work, emergency repairs, etc. The intent is that most of these services would be provided through community volunteers, and fees would be charged on a sliding scale depending upon the seniors' ability to pay.

Linda Western applied for and received the contract to explore whether the Tri-Cities would like to be part of this initiative, and if so, how these services would be organized and hosted.

Linda will be holding focus groups and consulting with key stakeholders. Part of the project is to see what is already being provided, and how delivery of those services can

be better coordinated. CVSS provides many of these services, and other agencies provide bits and pieces, but there is no one agency that provides the whole basket. Using this model, the volunteers may have been asked to provide only one service, but can refer the seniors they serve to additional services that they could benefit from.

A focus group with Non Profit Agencies will be held on January 17, and We Care will host a focus group for Profit agencies on January 24. A community meeting will be held at Glen Pine on February 12 from 10 am to 3 pm.

There will be \$100,000 available a year for the next 2 years for each community, but there will only be one contract per community. Several agencies have expressed interest, but the lead agency can always subcontract with other agencies. Hopefully a decision about the most appropriate agency to take the lead can be made at the February 12 meeting.

In discussion, the following concerns were identified:

- Could this increase seniors' isolation by delaying their move into an assisted living setting or other arrangement?
- The reliance on volunteers may be unrealistic (but is an improvement over expecting families to do it all).
- Transportation to existing services is a real need.

There was consensus on the part of meeting participants that this kind of service is needed in the Tri-Cities.

5. Terms of Reference for Tri-Cities Seniors Planning Network

Stacy noted that the draft Terms of Reference have key decision areas highlighted (membership types, which members have a vote, governance options, using the Age-Friendly Community Framework to organize this work).

Meeting participants paired off to discuss the proposed purpose of the Network, by answering:

- a) What stands out for you?
- b) If you agree with this purpose, what is YOUR role in making this happen?

There was agreement that both organizational and seniors (individual) representatives are needed; however, if it is to be seniors led, there is still a prevalence of agency representatives around the table, so we have some work to do.

There was also agreement that it would be beneficial to have a formal relationship with City Councils, where Councils could refer seniors' related issues to the Network for their review and comment.

Stacy will use the feedback from the pairs to refine the Purpose. We will review the rest of the Terms of Reference at the next meeting. Bruce Bird from CARP offered to draft a Mission Statement.

6. Next Meeting

Tuesday February 19 from 1 to 3 pm (NOTE THE TIME CHANGE).