

City of Chilliwack
PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
WEDNESDAY, October 18, 2023 – 8:00 am
VIDEO CONFERENCE / DOGWOOD ROOM

In attendance:

Councillor Bud Mercer, Chair	Councillor Nicole Read, Vice-Chair
Sergeant Krista Vrolyk, Community Policing, RCMP	Karen Stanton, Director of Public Safety and Social Development
Staff Sergeant Grant Floris, A/Operations Officer, RCMP	Brian Foote, Education/Crime Prevention
Corporal Brad Rendall, Community Policing, RCMP	Mark Klassen, SD33, Manager of Facilities
Caitlin Weston, Manager of Bylaw Enforcement	Joanne Jefferson, Stó:lō Justice
Holly Ferris, Manager of Social Development	Steve Roukema, Executive Director, Restorative Justice
Ian Josephson, Fire Chief	Justin Mallard, Chamber of Commerce
Krista Minar, Assistant Fire Chief	Joe Koczur, Director of Public Works and Parks
Trevor McDonald, Executive Director, Downtown BIA	Jaimie Tocher, Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Garrett Schipper, D/Director of Development and Regulatory Enforcement	Michelle Wulff, Chilliwack Crime Prevention Services
Andrew Pipke, Senior Road Safety Specialist	Chuck Stam, Community Member
Tanis Hatch, ICBC	Michelle Price, Community Member

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mercer called the meeting to order at 8:00 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, October 18, 2023, be adopted as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved /) That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Advisory Committee held
 Seconded (Wednesday, August 16, 2023, be adopted as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

4. DELEGATION

Round Table introductions were made, with the introduction of new Assistant Fire Chief Krista Minar, and new Bylaw Officer Aileen O’Sullivan, who both provided brief background information. Staff Sergeant Krista Vrolyk confirmed her upcoming retirement and that this would be the last PSAC meeting she is attending.

Justin Mallard arrived at 8:03 am.

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, A/Operations Officer, RCMP, reported on the following:

1. Chilliwack RCMP Staffing update – Chilliwack has recently introduced a new member from the “EPO”, experienced police officer program; as well as a reserve Constable who will work with “CRT”, the Crime Reduction Team.
2. There are three Constables making a lateral move to Chilliwack from other detachments in the division.
3. A new Sergeant has been selected for one of the watches.
4. A recent strategic planning session was held to review and prioritize future objectives for the UFVRD RCMP. The plan will be presented to Council once complete.

Sergeant Krista Vrolyk, Community Policing, RCMP reported on the following:

1. Chilliwack has been awarded “Car 67” or the “Mobile Integrated Crisis Response Team”, which pairs a psychiatric nurse with a mental health liaison officer, to respond to people in crisis and focus on crisis interventions specifically. There are two nurses on the team, as well as two part-time/backup nurses (there are currently 10 mental health calls per day approximately).
2. Protest and counter-protest situations have increased, with the RCMP working to ensure public peace, and law and order are maintained.
3. Extensive resources were used recently in a recovery associated with a Cultus Lake drowning, as well as a plane crash on Young Road.
4. Continuous dealing with those experiencing homelessness along the Vedder and Luckakuck corridor, ensuring people have access to sidewalks and buildings.
5. Community engagement events – “Coffee with a cop” is coming up.

Discussion ensued regarding the feedback the City receives in regards to protest/counter-protest groups. It was clarified that the RCMP monitors these groups and that their role is to maintain law and order, but people are allowed to express their ideas as long as it is within the law; and, that as long as protests do not constitute a provincial or federal infraction where it reaches the threshold of criminality, it is allowed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

b) Fire Department

Fire Chief Ian Josephson reported on the following:

1. Fire crews have attended a total 3423 total calls for service as of September 30, which is approximately 100 calls ahead of last year.
2. There have been 65 structure fires to date, of which 80% are in residential occupancies, with zero fatalities and 3 civilians injured.
3. 89% of structure fires were in the Downtown and Sardis Firehall (Halls 1 and 4) response areas.

4. Summary of information in regards to Fire Response times:
 - 2022 structure fires response times – average response time is 8 minutes in Hall 1’s response zone; Hall 4 was 7 minutes.
 - 2023 structure fires response times to date – average response time is 7 minutes for Halls 1 and 4.
 - Response areas further out such as Greendale, Ryder Lake, Yarrow and Rosedale – 12 to 14 minutes due to them being rural areas.
 - Other factors which could influence response times include: are crews out inspecting and/or training; the location of incident; traffic; weather; and, whether it’s night or daytime.
 - NFPA, National Fire Protection Association, standard is 6 minutes for structure fires.
5. Update on mutual aid during wildfire season – we always want to help other departments in the province, but due to our own potential risks locally, we also need to ensure we have our resources if needed. This past summer a tender was sent to Boston Bar, as well as support to Kelowna.
6. A Fire Prevention Week Safety fair was held, with 700 people attending.
7. Reminder with Halloween coming up, that fireworks vendors are out, but are not allowed within City limits; there are a number of fireworks vendors on First Nations Lands.

c) BIA

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

1. Incidents of vandalism and broken glass complaints.
2. The demonstration that occurred downtown on September 20th, was handled calmly and peacefully by the RCMP and went smoothly.
3. Property improvements updates – Wellington Avenue, Main Street, and Yale Road near 7-eleven.
4. A meeting was held recently with Mayor Popove and Caitlin Weston, Manager of Bylaw Enforcement, along with some downtown merchants to coordinate cleanup and improvements; and to create a Merchants Association that will liaise with the BIA to provide reports and information to Griffin Security and RCMP; to be vigilant and educate each other about secure gates and crime prevention tools; as well as educate those experiencing homelessness about resources such as the Wellness Centre.

Councillor Read joined the meeting at 8:29am.

Aileen O’Sullivan left the meeting at 8:35 am.

d) Bylaw Department

Caitlin Weston, Manager of Bylaw Enforcement reported on the following:

1. Statistics for Calls for service as of the 3rd quarter are stable compared to last year.
2. Statistics for proactive interactions as of the 3rd quarter are up – “proactive” refers to patrols in the downtown area, the Valley Rail trail, and in parks, engaging with people experiencing homelessness; also, at the river, the access points are busy and people are parking where there is none, blocking gates and access so tickets issued have increased.
3. Update regarding properties with issues - some have had at least one fire, if not multiple fires; Bylaw has been working with the Fire Department to bring properties to Council for remediation orders.
4. Bylaw is patrolling to make sure there are no fireworks sales in the City’s jurisdiction; members discussed the importance of messaging from the City about safety and regulations regarding fireworks.

Discussion ensued regarding people experiencing homelessness having moved more to the area of Luckakuck Way and the Valley Rail trail recently; and complimented the continued efforts by Bylaw, Griffin and RCMP to approach these situations with an “expectations setting” style, to ensure people are aware they cannot block access to businesses and streets and that there are alternatives available.

Joanne Jefferson joined the meeting at 8:40 am.

e) ICBC

No report.

f) School District

Mark Klassen, Manager of Facilities, School District 33, reported on the following:

1. Increased vandalism, youth gathering and police files created in regards to Cultus Lake Elementary over the summertime, which has recently had new roll shutters installed to prevent glass breakage.
2. Challenges with youth on property at Watson Elementary, looking at relocating picnic tables and they have added bright motion lighting.
3. Concerns regarding people having fires under covered areas is a concern, there have been instances at Cultus Lake Elementary and Imagine Integrated Arts and Technology School recently.
4. A Reconciliation Powwow was held with financial support from the City – RCMP attended, there were 3 grand entries, 58 table vendors, 3000-3500 people in attendance and a feast for 600 people.
5. Update regarding school board meeting and gratitude was given to the RCMP for their support with protestors attending, with 11 members attending to ensure everything went smoothly. They are looking to move the meetings online going forward.
6. Recent challenges include concerns around Sardis elementary area with bottle depot moving, plans have been organized in regards to Halloween.

Members discussed how this Committee has allowed different partners in the community to come together, keep communication open, coordinate and work together and to be able to go to each other as a resource and work on solving issues.

Staff Sergeant Krista Vrolyk was recognized for the significant role she has played in the school district as well as the community, that she is very resourceful and takes on a lot in the community.

Discussion ensued regarding School Liaison staff, the RCMP have recently added a fourth person, who is an experienced school liaison from another community and lives in Chilliwack. This will allow them the capacity to reach more kids, as there are more than 40 schools served in the community.

g) Public Works & Parks

Joe Koczur, Director of Public Works and Parks reported on the following:

1. Crews are finishing their vegetation management season, with some hillside brushing of overhanging vegetation still occurring, before snow arrives.
2. Drainage maintenance – open drainage maintenance is mostly coming to an end, other than hillside ditches which are not worked after the leaf fall.
3. Staff are completing winter training which involves all operators and a training regimen with plow sanders, snow blowers, with theory as well as practical application. Novice staff practice with an experienced operator.
4. Updated snow management plan – recently approved by Council and has changes to the priority system, upgraded a few roads.

Comments were made regarding the partnerships established through the Committee, a thank you to Staff Sergeant Krista Vrolyk for everything she has done over the years, as well as all of the RCMP for their work in cooperation with the City.

h) Social Development

Holly Ferris, Manager of Social Development, reported on the following:

1. September shelter update – adult shelter numbers were over capacity; youth shelter and the Wellness Centre were busy.
2. October shelter update – month to date adult shelter numbers were consistent, but not quite at capacity because there was an addition of 23 winter beds; there has been a spike in women’s usage of beds; and, the Wellness Centre has been continuously busier over the last month. Staff are still working with BC Housing and Fraser Health and are optimistic that the Wellness Centre will remain open.
3. Hosted Indigenous Homelessness training with A Way Home Canada, with 35 attendees.
4. Coordinated access engagement meeting with 19 attendees.
5. Hosted Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute training regarding de-escalating potentially violent situations, with 75 attendees.
6. Reaching Home community engagement meeting with 33 attendees, will take information back to “CAB”, Community Advisory Board, for further discussion regarding recommendations to Council for funding for 2024/2025.
7. Training with Away Home Canada for family and natural supports regarding youth homelessness.
8. Upcoming training with Stó:lō Nation regarding historical impact training.

Councillor Mercer thanked Holly and Karen, their teams, and the Mayor for their relentless pursuit for money and support for the continuation of the Wellness Centre, with the one-year term lease coming due soon.

i) Restorative Justice

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

1. Annual General Meeting – Dr. Darryl Plecas attended with 33 attendees, RCMP members, Council members.
2. 3 new referrals in September from: RCMP (one for mischief); 2 from Loss Prevention Officers (theft under \$5000).
3. 23 active files, with 4 restorative circles completed in September.
4. 27 different classroom conversations in 6 different schools.
5. Received a grant from United Way for an afterschool program at Central Elementary.
6. Inquiry from Chilliwack Middle School for restorative circles for non-criminal/non-police file type.
7. Restorative cycle grand opening – now have a part-time bike mechanic and part-time salesperson.
8. Due to previous break-ins have increased security and so a CPTED is currently in the process; installation of cameras through the BIA.
9. Community events – ride for Ruth and Naomi’s,
10. 73 volunteer hours in September, a total of 48 active volunteers, along with 17 mentors who have active files.
11. Operation Red Nose will be coming up soon; setting up sponsorship.

Comments were made to Staff Sergeant Krista Vrolyk and her support and resources for Restorative Justice to grow to where they are today.

Discussion ensued regarding Dr. Darryl Plecas, Head of Criminology department and focused on restorative justice in school and where resources should be prioritized; as well as how restorative justice is actually more effective with repeat offenders, than with first time offenders.

j) Stó:lō Justice

Joanne Jefferson, Stó:lō Justice reported on the following:

1. There is an Aboriginal justice liaison committee meeting coming up on November 23, for which invites will be sent to Committee members. It will be a roundtable open house style, with different agencies present to facilitate discussion around aboriginal justice issues.
2. There will be a gathering in February hosted by Stó:lō, for various restorative justice programs in BC to get together to discuss practices, issues and support each other.
3. A Respectful Relationships course is ongoing, in its 5th session with 6 participants to learn how to communicate better.
4. Started a Day treatment program – in its 4th session currently with only 3 or 4 participants, this fluctuates as they do not require participants to be clean and sober.

Joanne left at 9:06 am.

k) Chilliwack Crime Prevention Services (City of Chilliwack)

Staff Sergeant Krista Vrolyk provided information from Michelle Wulff, Chilliwack Crime Prevention Services, who was unable to attend:

1. Initiated New Block Watch area in Halcyon Meadows.
2. Attended the Garrison Boulevard Block party with Sergeant safety bear and RCMP members.
3. Together with the Fire Department provided Home Safety training for Halcyon Meadows and Promontory Estates residents.
4. Total of 53 active block watch areas in our community.
5. Crime Prevention Services - two University of the Fraser Valley Criminology practicum students will be working 200 hours each.
6. All staff attended de-escalation training and Front office volunteer scenario training.
7. Currently engaged twice a month with the Chilliwack Chiefs with Sergeant Safety Bear and going forward will have a member join for community engagement and recruiting.
8. Online Safety presentation TASK University of the Fraser Valley class.
9. Car seat clinic - 13 car seat checks, Involving Chilliwack RCMP Traffic, Chilliwack Fire Department and Chilliwack Crime Prevention Services.
10. Speed watch – total of 20 school deployments in September; 4 community deployments in areas of concern for speed such as Hackbrown Road (top speed was 103 km/hr), as well as three way stop enforcement near Promontory School and Menzies and Hope River Road.

l) Legal Representative

No report.

m) Chamber of Commerce

Justin Mallard reported on the following:

1. Update regarding a Public Safety survey which was put out to businesses from the Chamber of Commerce, which can be forwarded to Committee members to share if they would like.
2. Business Walks – there are none currently planned with the next being in early spring most likely, unless some additional volunteers could help to facilitate.
3. Government small business vandalism grant – currently no information has been received, but there should be details coming.
4. Upcoming event in Vancouver – “Beyond the Call” with Constable Adam Palmer, regarding public safety in relation to businesses and communities.

Members discussed the Chamber of Commerce survey and that once the results are compiled it will be shared with RCMP and the Downtown BIA.

n) **Crime Prevention/Education**

No report.

Further discussion ensued regarding Dr. Daryl Plecas and his study on restorative justice; as well as the importance of having School Liaison officers working with youths in school to ensure fireworks education is being presented.

o) **Corrections**

No report.

p) **Community Members**

No report.

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 Mercer, Chair