



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT
MINUTES
ACCESS AWARENESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 13, 2011
4:00 P.M.
Pioneer Room A, Recreation Centre

PRESENT: Sherry Contreras, Vice Chair
Councillor Don Linge
Emmy Labonté
Paul Newcombe
Heidi Bada
Peter Ryan

STAFF: Deborah Liske – Recording Secretary

REGRETS: Eleanor Calder, Chair
Councillor Randall Garrison
Bob McKie – Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Representative
Andy Katschor – Parks Manager (Staff Liaison)
Jeff Miller – Director of Engineering & Public Works (Staff Liaison)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Contreras called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. PRESENTATIONS

(1) Environmental Health Association of British Columbia

Karen Forbes, Bonnie Reid and Rachel Aube of the Environmental Health Association of British Columbia attended the meeting to provide a brief overview of the organization.

EHABC was formed approximately 20 years ago and is a volunteer charitable society dedicated to better health and providing information and resources to those with environmental sensitivities which include food, chemical and electromagnetic sensitivities. Environmental sensitivities are when someone experiences health impacts after exposure to foods, chemicals, pesticides, moulds, electromagnetic fields and radio frequencies.

Fragrance issues are a universal problem and create barriers for individuals with environmental sensitivities. Fragrance is composed of chemicals that make the fragrance smell. Considerable information is available about chemicals that make up fragrances in today's society. Environmental sensitivities is a preventable injury. Chemicals and fragrances enter your body through your skin and respiratory system and most individuals become sensitive after their first exposure. Depression is a very common after effect of exposure and workplaces can help eliminate environmental sensitivities by creating fragrance free policies.

The presenters provided personal examples of how environmental sensitivities affect their lives; noting that many individuals with environmental sensitivities have difficulty maintaining employment due to the lack of acceptance of the causes of environmental sensitivities. Recognition of chemical and fragrance sensitivities as a workplace hazard is a grey area for WorkSafe BC.

It was noted that affordable, safe housing is difficult to find for individuals with environmental sensitivities due to poor indoor air quality and off-gassing of furniture and buildings. There has been an increase in the amount of new products available to build green and clean but not enough consideration is given to processes and activities in current situations.

Committee members discussed how environmental sensitivities affect them and what can be done to change it.

It was noted the creation of a scent free environment is one way for prevention. Education is also a key component. Individuals need to learn and become aware of environmental sensitivities. The society has information available on its website and in brochures which can be obtained from local libraries, at booths at community events, public markets, etc.

The number of organizations implementing scent free policies is increasing. Schools are also starting to educate about scent free environments. This committee can start with recommending the adoption of a scent free policy. The policy would address any problems that may arise from environmental sensitivities.

The BC Lung Association may have a sample policy and the EHABC can assist the committee with drafting a policy.

Additional information on environmental sensitivities and the Environmental Health Association of British Columbia can be found at their website at www.ehabc.org.

Vice Chair Contreras thanked Ms. Forbes, Ms. Reid and Ms. Aube for attending the meeting and providing the committee with additional insight about environmental sensitivities.

Ms. Forbes, Ms. Reid and Ms. Aube departed the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

(2) Bruce Devitt, Centennial Celebrations Select Committee

Bruce Devitt, Vice Chair of the Centennial Celebrations Select Committee attended the meeting to provide the committee with an update on the preparations for the upcoming centennial celebrations.

Mr. Devitt reviewed the centennial walkway project in Memorial Park noting brick pavers are for sale and will assist with making the walkway more accessible. Mr. Devitt noted the Centennial committee is working hard to promote this project and construction will start in early 2012. The walkway will be a legacy project and will grow in to the future. The objective of the project is to capture Esquimalt's past, present and future and become a legacy for Esquimalt. Another legacy project for the centennial is a book about Esquimalt's history being written by Sherri Robinson. Publication is scheduled for sometime in 2012.

Additional activities scheduled for the centennial year include a community bbq and cake cutting. A centennial website (www.esquimaltcentennial2012.ca) has been created and will include historical pictorials and an event calendar; the website will also become part of the centennial legacy. Events will be added to the calendar as they are confirmed. Centennial pins, t-shirts and vests are available for purchase. A centennial lager, coffee, tea, rum, wine and rose are also being developed. The celebrations are continually growing with activities and events being added. It will be a very exciting year of celebrations to mark Esquimalt's centennial.

Mr. Devitt noted the Centennial Celebrations committee would like advisory committees to consider including a centennial flair to their annual events for the 2012 year. These events can be added to the event calendar by advising the Centennial Celebrations committee. The Centennial Celebrations committee may be able to assist with promoting the annual events in the 2012 year.

Mr. Devitt provided the committee with event suggestions they could consider when thinking of ideas for participation in the centennial year. They included highlighting changes/advancements to accessibility that have taken place over the last 100 years and a wheelchair access awareness day (suggested at Centennial Celebrations open house). Mr. Devitt further noted the Esquimalt Legion has voiced a need for a portable ramp or lift to access the Cenotaph – the Access Awareness Advisory committee may want to consider taking this on as a legacy project. Mr. Devitt suggested the committee consult with the Esquimalt Legion and possibly the Heritage Advisory Committee if they choose to take on the ramp project.

Councillor Linge suggested the committee consider providing the opportunity to showcase the evolution of accessibility – where it was 100 years ago and where and what it is now. Councillor Linge noted that accessibility is not limited to mobility and the committee needs to determine ways to promote and educate about accessibility. An example noted included having a computer available at the Recreation Centre to access the municipal website – this is not what is first considered as accessibility, but is a form of accessibility.

Mr. Devitt suggested the committee consider having a brainstorming session for ideas on how they would like to participate in the centennial celebrations.

Vice Chair Contreras thanked Mr. Devitt for attending the meeting and providing the committee with suggestions and an update on the celebrations.

3. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Access Awareness Advisory Committee will take place on Wednesday, May 11, 2011.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Eleanor Calder, Chair

This 11th day of May, 2011