

COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 12, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Community Safety Advisory Committee convened on Thursday, May 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC, with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Councillor Craig Hodge, Chair
Councillor Teri Towner, Vice Chair
Tom Bowlware, Hope for Freedom Society
Chloe Chen, Youth Council
Brett Johnson, Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce
Thábata da Costa, Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership
Kelly Zimmer, School District No. 43

STAFF: Jim Ogloff, Fire Chief
Michelle Hunt, General Manager Finance, Lands and Police
Lindsey Grist, Manager Business Services
Kim Singh, Manager Police Services
Aaron Hilgerdenaar, Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager
Eric Kalnins, Tourism Manager
Ashland Selby-Brown, Legislative Services Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT: Ivan Krcmar, Austin Heights Business Improvement Association

CALL TO ORDER

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Community Safety Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, March 31, 2022

The Minutes of the Community Safety Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, March 31, 2022 were approved.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

2. Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan and FireSmart Initiative Update – Follow-up: Construction Sites in High Fire Risk Areas

The Fire Chief appeared before the Committee and provided an update on the advancements to the latest edition of the British Columbia Fire Code and its contribution to the safety of properties located within high fire risk construction site areas.

NEW BUSINESS**3. Bylaw Enforcement Webpage Content Update**

The Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager provided the Committee with an on-screen presentation and utilized slides titled as follows:

- Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services – Webpage Content Update
- Agenda
- Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services
- Methods of Communication
- City Website
- 2021 Bylaw Webpage Usage Statistics
- Bylaw Enforcement & Animal Services Landing Page

The Committee considered the following focus questions:

1. If you were contacting the City about a bylaw concern, what information would you want to see first?
2. What information do you think is important to have on this page?

Discussion ensued relative to the website and the following comments were noted:

- The recognition that the City is multicultural and the understanding that there are members of the public viewing the website through this lens
- The website features large chunks of text-heavy information which can be difficult for those with English as a second language
- There are terms and concepts in Canada, for example “bylaw”, that are not common or straightforward in other countries
- The suggested that there be a space to reference terms and definitions on the website, noting that it could be helpful to click/tap on words that take the reader to a broader definition
- There could be residents who seek to adhere to the City’s rules, regulations and bylaws but do not understand what they need to do
- There could be residents who feel embarrassed to call the City for information, as often times they are directed to visit the City’s website
- The idea that visual images, such as photos and icons, could be helpful in reducing the amount of text featured on the website (example: A photo of animals to represent the animal shelter)
- The knowledge that the City is divided into six zones with a bylaw officer designated to each area
- The understanding that the City’s general bylaw enforcement phone-line receives and triages complaints and comments to the designated bylaw officers

The Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager continued the on-screen presentation and utilized slides titled as follows:

- Complaints & Enforcement

The Committee considered the following focus questions:

1. How could we more clearly explain how to file a complaint?
2. What information do you think is important to have on this page?

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The understanding that the public may call the City and request a translator be present when coming to City Hall
- The suggestion that the website have QR codes, and when scanning it will take you to a translated webpage, adding that this could be more convenient than booking an appointment with a translator

The Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager continued the on-screen presentation and utilized slides titled as follows:

- Noise

The Committee considered the following focus question:

1. Is there any information about noise complaints or enforcement you feel is missing from this page?

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Appreciation that the webpage is broken down with sub-headers explaining the different types of noise

The Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager continued the on-screen presentation and utilized slides titled as follows:

- Parking

The Committee considered the following focus question:

1. Is there any further information you feel is important to provide regarding parking in the City?

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Appreciation for the layout of information on the website, noting that it is easier to understand

The Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager continued the on-screen presentation and utilized slides titled as follows:

- Opportunity for other feedback
- Next steps
- Thank you and contact information

The Chair thanked the Bylaw Enforcement and Animal Services Manager for his presentation.

4. Business Safety and Crime Prevention Initiatives

The Chair invited Ivan Krcmar of the Austin Heights Business Improvement Association (BIA) who provided an update regarding local crime prevention initiatives near his businesses. The following comments were noted:

- The safety and security benefits to knowing your neighbours and surroundings
- The understanding that residents can connect with BIAs for community information
- The understanding that the Austin Heights neighbourhood is in transition, noting that there is an increase in density with new residential developments
- The understanding that the Austin Heights BIA has funded a security company that conducts a six hour patrol four times per week. The results of the patrol are shared with the BIA and if required, information are shared with business owners
- The desire for the BIA to have an RCMP officer as a liaison, recognizing that while the community policing office is in the area, there is benefit to having a uniformed officer patrolling the streets
- The acknowledgment and gratitude for the educational webinars hosted by Community Policing Department, suggesting that one be hosted on the topic of crime prevention

The Tourism Manager, who is a city representative on the Austin Heights BIA, thanked the Chair and Ivan for the verbal update and emphasized the importance of Business Improvement Associations.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Staff advised that Council is supportive of other local BIAs and the potential to incentivize other Coquitlam neighbourhoods to establish their own
- The suggestion that there could be a correlation between unsightly premises and criminal activity
- The understanding that calls to police include mental health related calls, noting that all calls are not related to criminal activity
- The understanding that the Tri Cities Chamber of Commerce works with the BIA to share community information and to discuss emerging opportunities

5. Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF)

The Manager Business Services and Manager Police Services provided introductory comments to the Committee with regard to the opportunity to submit a proposal to the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSFC) and summarized the information circulated with the agenda package.

Discussion ensued with respect to potential programs and the following ideas and comments were noted:

- Connecting with local and grassroots organizations for ideas, noting that they are doing creative and inspiring work in the community
- Recognizing the drug and opioid crisis and the potential connection to criminal activity, the implementation of programs dedicated to this issue
- Working with the School District, the development of a youth strategy, speaking to the impact of having youth speak to youth
- Creating a health curriculum program for youth to address topics such as vaping, speaking to the importance that it be created with the “youth” lens
- The belief that the community may perceive a group of youth on the streets as a gang, or gang members, when that is not the case
- The understanding that a high percentage of kids and students are not involved in criminal related activity, suggesting that some topics are sensationalized by the media
- The belief that the RCMP Anti-Gang unit has done good work with students in local schools, noting that they speak from experience the reality and risks of being “caught-up” in criminal activity
- The development of a mental health initiative and the importance of creating preventative programs, noting that many organizations and programs
- Asking youth what they would like to see and explore opportunities to co-design a program
- The belief that a large percentage of youth who engage in drug use do so recreationally suggesting that it is not necessarily linked to gang activity

The Chair acknowledged the fulsome discussion and staff advised that through the grant, the City has one year to put the program together. It was reported that staff resources are eligible within the funding and this employee would be able to focus on developing the program. It was also noted that working with key non-profit partners in the community will play an important role in the program’s development. It was noted that progress updates on the program will come back to the Committee.

6. Emerging Community Safety Issues (Standing Agenda Item)

The Chair invited Committee members to discuss issues emerging in the community and reminded members to note any questions or topics that may arise for future meetings.

The Vice Chair advised that Coquitlam Search and Rescue is having an Adventure Skills Challenge event. The event educates participants by teaching outdoor skills. For more information visit <https://www.coquitlam-sar.bc.ca/>

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, June 29, 2022

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT

CHAIR



Ashland Selby-Brown
Legislative Services Clerk