



2SLGBTQ+ ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

A meeting of the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, September 17, 2020, at 5:42 pm, by electronic means.

PRESENT: Brooklyn Fowler, Co-Chair
Raj Alamchandani
Kyle Demes
Eddy Elmer
Stephanie Goodwin
Jutta Kolhi
Sylvia Machat
Rob McDowell
Nazanin Moghadami
Tribesty Nguyen, Co-Chair*
Linnea Strom
Chase Willier

ABSENT: Aisha Tejani (Leave of Absence)

ALSO PRESENT: Constable Dale Quiring, Police Liaison

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Kathy Bengston, Committee Clerk

* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

WELCOME

The Co-Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh Nations.

1. Leave of Absence Requests

MOVED by Jutta Kolhi
SECONDED by Nazanin Moghadami

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee approve leave of absence for Aisha Tejani for today's meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Tribesty Nguyen absent for the vote.)

2. Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Linnea Strom
SECONDED by Eddy Elmer

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee approve the Minutes from the meeting of June 4, 2020, as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Tribesty Nguyen absent for the vote.)

3. Chair Updates

The Co-Chair, Brooklyn Fowler, informed the Committee that Shawnessy Luke has resigned.

4. Street Lighting Motion

MOVED by Eddy Elmer
SECONDED by Kyle Demes

WHEREAS

1. The 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee is appointed by Vancouver City Council to provide advice on enhancing access and inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, and queer communities so they may participate fully in civic life;
2. Numerous local and international reports emphasize the importance of street and sidewalk lighting for maintaining personal safety (real and perceived), reducing pedestrian collisions, and promoting use of public spaces;
3. Poorly maintained and inadequate street lighting is especially problematic for vulnerable groups such as 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, women, seniors, and persons with disabilities;
4. The City of Vancouver website states that “keeping our streets, sidewalks, and green spaces safe and clean for everyone to enjoy is a City priority”;
5. The City of Vancouver is seeking ‘Global Age-Friendly City’ status from the World Health Organization, which requires cities to ensure an increased standard of safety in all public spaces;
6. In October 2019, City Council passed a motion regarding the prioritization of public realm maintenance;
7. In 2013, the Seniors’ Advisory Committee passed a motion calling for improvements to identification and repair of non-functioning streetlights, as well as the addition of lighting in poorly lit areas;

8. This motion was supported by the 2SLGBTQ+, Women's, and Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committees;
9. City Council, in response to this motion, called on staff to report on the current level of service for non-functioning lights and any progress made on installing additional lighting for pedestrian safety;
10. In response, staff committed to reducing repair time from an average of 21 days to 7 days;
11. Our committee's examination of data reveals that lights are repaired in accordance with this new standard, but only if/when they are brought to the attention of City staff;
12. The City largely relies on citizens to identify non-functioning lights and report them using 311 or VanConnect;
13. Members of our communities have observed that many lights are in disrepair for several months, especially those near commercial areas, parks, or 'dead zones' (e.g., between buildings);
14. Our examination of 311 incident reports confirms that some lights are in disrepair for long periods, but are repaired shortly after a first report is made;
15. Many people are unaware of the 311 and VanConnect systems, or experience difficulty using them (e.g., requirement for too much information, disappearance of service requests); and
16. Members of our communities remain concerned that there is insufficient or obstructed lighting in several areas throughout the city, which affects their sense of safety and curtails their nighttime activities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee ask Council to direct staff to report on, or explore the feasibility of, the following:

- i. An analysis of the effectiveness of relying on 311/VanConnect to report lighting outages (e.g., percentage of citizens that know 311/VanConnect can be used for reporting and, of those, percentage that are actually willing to use it; the percentage of citizens who would need to be knowledgeable about 311/VanConnect and willing to use it in order for this tool to be sufficiently effective in identifying outages in a timely manner);
- ii. A renewed public education campaign, based on the analysis above, to encourage citizens to report lighting outages using 311 or VanConnect (e.g., ads on social media, bus shelters, and TV/radio);
- iii. Encouraging 311 staff to streamline the reporting process as much as possible (i.e., do not request too much information);

- iv. Encouraging city crews (e.g., sanitation workers) to report outages during nightly shifts, especially in areas where citizens may be unlikely to report (e.g., commercial areas, parks, and 'dead zones' between buildings);
- v. Installing new lighting in poorly lit areas, especially sidewalk-level and alleyway lighting in areas identified by residents as being at higher risk for public safety concerns; and
- vi. Reducing the obstruction of lighting (e.g., from overhanging tree cover).

FURTHER THAT this motion be sent to relevant advisory committees for their consideration and support, including the Seniors' Advisory Committee, Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee, and Women's Advisory Committee.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Tribesty Nguyen absent for the vote)

5. Bathroom Motion

MOVED by Sylvia Machat
SECONDED by Nazanin Moghadami

WHEREAS

1. The 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee is appointed by Vancouver City Council to provide advice on enhancing access and inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, and queer communities so they may participate fully in civic life;
2. Access to public washrooms use is a basic human need that promotes health and dignity, especially for those with limited access to private sanitation facilities;
3. Sexual and gender minorities are overrepresented among homeless individuals and street-based sex workers who rely on public washrooms for health and safety;
4. As recognized in a motion passed by Council in 2016, older adults, persons with disabilities, and those who suffer from incontinence require access to safe and accessible public washrooms so they may go about their daily lives and not be confined to their homes;
5. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical importance of good hygiene in maintaining public wellness and preventing disease transmission;
6. A lack of public washrooms has been cited as a reason for the increased presence of human waste in streets, alleyways, and parks, including the Jim De va Plaza in the heart of Vancouver's queer community;
7. Most businesses restrict bathroom access to paying customers only, which is a barrier for many marginalized people;

8. The City has been installing permanent and temporary public washrooms throughout the city, but many more are needed to serve the growing population of marginalized people living and working on the streets, along with the needs of older people and those with disabilities;
9. Access to some public washrooms has been reduced (e.g., closure of washrooms at Oppenheimer Park);
10. Due to safety concerns, currently available public washrooms are not open 24 hours; and
11. Some washrooms can be out of service for extended periods due to malfunction, misuse, or vandalism.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee calls on Council to ask staff to:

- i. Work with relevant advisory committees, including the 2SLGBTQ+, Seniors', and Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee to identify locations where additional temporary and/or permanent public washrooms could be located;
- ii. Ensure that all existing and new public washrooms follow appropriate universal accessible design specifications;
- iii. Ensure that all existing and new public washrooms are inspected and cleaned on a regular basis (at least twice per day); and
- iv. Consider steps to increase safety of these washrooms (e.g., improving exterior lighting; co-locating the bathrooms near community organizations serving marginalized groups.)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Tribesty Nguyen absent for the vote)

6. Motion Supporting Urban Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee's Statement

The Committee agreed to draft a motion in support of the Urban Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee statement regarding anti-racism and reconciliation efforts by the City of Vancouver, and present to the Committee for consideration at the next regular meeting, November 26, 2020.

7. Hate Crime Incident Reporting Motion

MOVED by Eddy Elmer

SECONDED by Kyle Demes

WHEREAS

1. The 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee is appointed by Vancouver City Council to provide advice on enhancing access and inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, and queer communities so they may participate fully in civic life;
2. The City of Vancouver website states that the City “makes significant investments to ensure that the entire city, and everyone in it, remains as safe as possible at all times”;
3. Vancouver’s *Healthy City Strategy* aims to “increase residents’ sense of belonging and safety by 10%, and make Vancouver the safest major city in Canada”;
4. Despite increased public acceptance of 2SLGBTQ+, this population remains at heightened risk for hate-based crimes and hate incidents;
5. Council recently considered a motion calling on the City to launch an anti-racism/anti-hate campaign, with specific reference to the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee;
6. Research consistently shows a strong link between the experience of hate crimes/hate incidents and poorer mental and physical health among 2SLGBTQ+ individuals;
7. Those who experience hate crimes and hate incidents can become fearful and hyper vigilant when going about their daily lives, thus impeding their sense of inclusion and ability to participate fully in civic life;
8. Detailed and reliable data on the prevalence and incidence of hate crimes and hate incidents related to sexual orientation and gender identity are critical for allocating prevention efforts and measuring the effectiveness of anti-hate initiatives;
9. Many 2SLGBTQ+ individuals are unclear about the definitions of hate crimes and hate incidents and may therefore be reluctant to report these issues;
10. Some individuals do not know who to contact to report a hate crime or hate incident;
11. Owing to past negative experiences with law enforcement, some 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, especially those who are racialized, are afraid to report hate crimes and hate incidents to police or other government agencies;

12. Some 911 operators and police officers may forget about the difficulties inherent in reporting hate crimes/incidents, thus discouraging reporting (e.g., operators asking questions that can be interpreted as minimizing a hate crime/incident; officers conducting interviews in a manner that is not sufficiently tactful or sensitive); and
13. Some 2SLGBTQ+ individuals may feel that police do not take their reports seriously.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee ask Council to consider and support the following steps to facilitate robust reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents:

- i. Ask the City and the Vancouver Police Department to provide clear information on their websites on how to report hate crimes and hate incidents (e.g., phone numbers for specific individuals; online reporting forms; information on when to call 911);
- ii. Encourage the Vancouver Police Department to move forward with a campaign to educate residents about the definitions of hate crimes and hate incidents and to encourage reporting (e.g., by reminding people of the value of this type of information in allocating resources);
- iii. Work with the Vancouver Police Department and other relevant agencies to re-emphasize the continued need for officers to be cognizant of the barriers to reporting and to be sensitive in their manner of interacting with 2SLGBTQ+ individuals;
- iv. Work with relevant partners to guide E-Comm 911 operators in the effective handling of hate crime and hate incident calls;
- v. Work with community partners to provide alternative means for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals to report hate crimes/incidents (e.g., train staff/volunteers at social service agencies on how to receive reports and provide guidance on forwarding information to appropriate authorities if needed/requested; support community-based reporting systems like the Racism Incident Reporting Centre run by Project 1907);
- vi. Work with community members, relevant agencies, and City of Vancouver advisory committees to conduct a detailed survey to identify barriers to the reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents;
- vii. Support a community forum in co-operation with grassroots community organizations to identify barriers to reporting and offer practical solutions;
- viii. Provide public data about the prevalence of hate crimes and hate incidents at the neighbourhood level to show that data are being accurately recorded and tracked (e.g., hate crime/incident heat-maps, which might be incorporated into the Vancouver Police Department GeoDash system); and

- ix. Ensure that public data about hate crimes and hate incidents is made available as quickly as possible (i.e., reduce lag time in reporting) so that preventative efforts can be explored as quickly as possible.

FURTHER THAT this motion be sent to relevant advisory committees for their information and consideration, including the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee and the Urban Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Tribesty Nguyen absent for the vote)

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VARY AGENDA

MOVED by Linnea Strom
SECONDED Jutta Kolhi

THAT the 2SLGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee vary the agenda to consider items 9 and 10 as the next order of business.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY
(Tribesty Nguyen absent for the vote)

Note: For clarity, the minutes are recorded in chronological order.

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9. Liaison Updates

Constable Dale Quiring, Police Liaison, informed the Committee he has been working full-time on the street preachers' incidents in the Davie Village.

10. Hate in Davie Village

Constable Dale Quiring, Police Liaison, provided an update on the street preachers in the Davie Village, which included working with District 1 Commanders on a plan of action. He also informed the Committee members that if the street preachers come back to the Davie Village, they can be arrested for disturbing the peace.

Committee members discussed the incident and shared pro-active ideas. Kyle Demes provided feedback on Council's work on this subject, and suggested the Committee wait to hear back from the Council Liaison on next steps.

8. Update – Conversation with Councillors Hardwick & Dominato regarding Conduct at Prior Meeting

Tribesty Nguyen provided an update on the meeting with Councillors Hardwick and Dominato, which included re-education with the Committee. Councillor Hardwick also shared she is an ally to the Committee. Tribesty Nguyen and Linnea Strom welcome further suggestions from the Committee by email on the subject.

11. New Business

a) Jim Deva Plaza

The Committee discussed the concerns raised with the plaza, and will reach out to different community groups on the various issues, and will report back at next regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Rob McDowell
SECONDED by Linnea Strom

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Meeting:

DATE: Thursday, November 26, 2020
TIME: 5:30 pm
PLACE: WebEx Online

The Committee adjourned at 7:34 pm.

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