



SENIORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

January 17, 2014

A meeting of the Seniors Advisory Committee was held on Friday, January 17, 2014, at 9:30 am, in the Town Hall Meeting Room, Main Floor, Vancouver City Hall.

PRESENT: Chris Morrissey, Chair
Eddy Elmer
Sharon Fenton
Clemencia Gomez
Dellie Lidyard
Carol Oreck
Rowena Tate
Eva Wadolna

ABSENT: Colleen McGuinness, Vice-Chair (Sick Leave)
Tom Brunner (Sick Leave)
Scott Graham

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Tony Tang, Vancouver City Council
Dane Doleman, Engineering Services

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Lori Isfeld, Meeting Coordinator

Leave of Absence Requests

No leave of absence requests were received.

Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Rowena Tate
SECONDED by Carol Oreck

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting on November 15, 2013, and special meeting on December 13, 2013, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED by Eva Wadolna
SECONDED by Eddy Elmer

THAT the notes of the October 18 and December 13, 2013, working sessions, be approved (with typographical corrections to the October 18, 2013 notes).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. Business arising from the previous meeting

a. Pearson Dogwood - Follow-up

Sharon Fenton reviewed a letter received from Vancouver Coastal Health. It was noted the Pearson Dogwood Policy Statement is on the agenda for the Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment meeting on Wednesday, January 22, 2014.

Following discussion regarding the Policy Report, the Chair requested that any comments and concerns be sent to her for discussion at the next meeting. She also agreed to speak at the Standing Committee meeting on behalf of the Committee.

* * * * *

The Committee agreed to vary the order of the agenda to deal with Items 3 and 4 before Item 2. For ease of reference, the minutes are recorded in numerical order.

* * * * *

2. Presentations

a. Casa Mia

Grant Miller reviewed the application for a new residential care facility at the Casa Mia site on Southwest Marine Drive, and responded to questions. The Committee provided comments on various features of the proposed development.

Councillor Tang noted the importance of providing a response to staff prior to referral to Public Hearing. The Chair requested that comments be provided to her by January 27, 2014.

b. Compass Card Briefing

Postponed.

c. Dementia Actions - Staff Update

Postponed.

3. Committee Liaison reports

Councillor Tang provided an update on the status of the motion regarding integrated care. Councillor Tang and Sharon Fenton agreed to work together on next steps in putting the motion forward to Council and the UBCM.

4. Subcommittee Reports

a. Communication and Outreach

Eddy Elmer provided an update on recent Subcommittee activities. He advised The Subcommittee will be providing outreach to the West End Seniors' Network and Jewish Seniors' Centre.

Concern was expressed regarding loss of support and funding for seniors centres. Following discussion it was agreed that Clemencia Gomez will conduct research on the matter and work with Eddy Elmer and Colleen McGuinness on a report setting out the issues.

It was noted Chris Morrissey and Colleen McGuinness are working on the New Horizons grant proposal.

b. Housing

Postponed.

c. Transportation and Mobility

Following discussion regarding TransLink's Custom Transit Service Review, it was

MOVED by Dellie Lidyard
SECONDED by Clemencia Gomez

A. Opposition to Implementation of In-person and/or Telephone Application Process for HandyDART Users

WHEREAS:

- i. The process discourages persons from applying for HandyDART service because it can be embarrassing, invasive and intimidating, and thus will unfairly reduce the number of applicants. (In cities where this process has been introduced, reductions of applications between 20 and 50% have been reported.)
- ii. The process discriminates against the frailest and most vulnerable users, including those with mental health conditions or cognitive disabilities, and persons with English language barriers.
- iii. The process is very expensive and the funds allocated would be better used for much needed improvements to the HandyDART service itself.

THEREFORE be it resolved that the City of Vancouver Seniors Advisory Committee recommends that TransLink continue to use the existing paper-only application process.

B. Measures to Improve TransLink System Accessibility and HandyDART Cost-Effectiveness

WHEREAS:

- i. The funding for all public transit is very limited, so efficiency measures are urgently needed.
- ii. HandyDART rides are the most expensive part of the public transit system.
- iii. The current need for HandyDART rides exceeds the supply, and this need will continue to rise substantially as the population of seniors increases.
- iv. Many of the actions needed to improve cost-effectiveness and efficiency and increase the supply of HandyDART rides are simple and do not require additional funds.

THEREFORE be it resolved that the City of Vancouver Seniors Advisory Committee recommends that TransLink promptly implement the following measures:

- a. Increase the real accessibility of the conventional bus system, so more persons with disabilities can use the bus instead of the more expensive HandyDART system by:
 - i. Implementing a clear policy that bus drivers must load seniors and persons with disabilities first on conventional buses. Ensure that this policy is communicated to all drivers and supervisors, and that implementation is monitored and enforced.
 - ii. Implementing a clear policy that the two wheelchair positions on the bus are reserved for persons using wheelchairs, and that drivers should

ask anyone in those locations without a wheelchair to vacate the seat if a person using a wheelchair wants to board. People with other disabilities and seniors seated in those seats must be provided with other seats closest to them. Ensure that this policy is communicated to all drivers and supervisors, and that its implementation is monitored and enforced, and further ensure that there is adequate signage in place to this effect.

- iii. Ensuring a “no trip denial” policy for persons with disabilities using conventional buses, including the requirement to allow persons with wheelchairs to board at all bus stops whether they are labelled accessible or not.
 - iv. Implementing a free conventional bus ride system for persons with disabilities, similar to the free ride program currently in place for persons who are blind.
- b. Increase the number of Custom Transit rides available without increasing funding by:
- i. Increasing the use of taxis within the HandyDART system to at least 50% of the service. This would increase the total number of rides by about 50% and would likely eliminate the trip denial rate.
 - ii. Decreasing the user fee for TaxiSavers from 50% to 25% and increasing the value of TaxiSavers that can be purchased monthly from \$100 to \$300. This will divert significant number of rides from the more expensive HandyDART system, and still provide rides at a lower cost than HandyDART. It will also provide users with access to spontaneous rides.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Pets and Apartments

Postponed.

5. New business

a. Carnegie Seniors Safety Concerns

The Committee discussed safety concerns for seniors being harassed outside of Carnegie Centre. Following discussion it was agreed that Clemencia Gomez and Carol Oreck will draft a letter for Councillor Tang and VPD Chief Jim Chu.

b. Canada Post

The Committee discussed potential impacts of upcoming change in postal service. It was noted that majority of mailboxes in the West End will not be affected as most of the apartment buildings have mail boxes already installed.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Carol Oreck
SECONDED by Eddy Elmer

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Regular Meeting

DATE: May 9, 2014
TIME: 9:30 am
PLACE: Town Hall, Main Floor, Vancouver City Hall

Next Working Session

DATE: Friday, February 20, 2014
TIME: 9:30 am
PLACE: Town Hall, Main Floor, Vancouver City Hall

The Committee adjourned at 12:46 pm.

* * * * *