MINUTES
FOOD & SHELTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 13, 2011 - 2:00 p.m.,
Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, 2nd floor
28 Athens St., Hamilton

Present: Chair: Don Jaffray
Vice-Chair: Alexander Ramirez
Members: Anne Wilson, Carmen Salciccioli, Denise Arkell, Fernando Forero, Loretta Hill-Finamore, Medora Uppal, Larry Huibers, Robert Foster

Absent with Regrets: Maria Pelaez, Thayra Marting

Also Present: Molly Elliott, Senior Policy Analyst and Michele Attard (minute taker), Program Secretary/Housing Services Division; Carolin Anderson, Program Manager/Employment and Income Support Division; Guests: Jennie Vengris, Senior Policy Analyst/Housing Services Division and Renee Wetselaar, Social Planning & Research Council

1. WELCOME

Don thanked Denise for hosting the meeting at Neighbour to Neighbour and welcomed Jennie and Renee to the meeting. Introductions were made around the table.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Presentations: - item #6 to item #5 being first on the agenda before business arising form the minutes.
Discussion: - item #7 – Presentation to Council (Molly), First Unitarian Church Event (Anne) and Bed Bug Initiative (Larry)

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Declarations of Conflict of Interest)

None

CARRIED
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING  
(Denise Arkell/Medora Uppal/Carried)  
Food & Shelter Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, dated September 8, 2011 were approved as presented.

5. PRESENTATIONS  
5.1 Housing & Homelessness Action Plan (Jennie Vengris)  
Jennie distributed a FAQ sheet on the Housing & Homelessness Action Plan. Ontario’s new Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy requires that municipalities develop comprehensive 10-year plans to address local affordable housing and homelessness needs. Jennie gave an overview of the Housing & Homelessness Action Plan development process and their planned engagement strategy, several focus groups, key informant interviews and forums that will be held in the community. Information will be posted on the website which will be up and running soon. Jennie asked members for some of their input regarding housing issues in Hamilton.  
Action: Molly will send members the link when available.

5.2 Women’s Homelessness Service (Medora Uppal/Renee Wetselaar)  
Since the late 1980’s homelessness in Canada among women has been rising, both the absolute numbers and in the complexity of the issues facing homeless women.  
The report attempts to give at least a partial picture of the conditions faced by homeless women in Hamilton with the aim of bringing more attention to the challenges they face and to help agencies in their planning of services for this population.  
There is an urgent need for the community to come together and talk about this crisis.  
Medora reiterated the urgent need in the women’s shelters for more support services, homeless women have died in Hamilton this year; maybe this could have been prevented.  
Members were in agreement that this is an important issue. Medora spoke of the group that has been organized to work on some planning. It was suggested that supporting the development of a strategy for adequate Women’s Shelter services, be a priority for the FSAC. Also, it was suggested that a presentation to council on these issues be given on the December 7th annual FSAC activities report by this committee.  
Action: Medora will prepare a report on the work of the women’s sector to date. Don, Medora and Molly will work together to include some context regarding this issue in the presentation to council dated for December 7th.
6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

6.1 Orientation & FSAC History Information
Molly distributed a document with the structure of Council, Community Services Department and Housing Services Division with a brief housing continuum & key stakeholder descriptions for members as an orientation piece. The history of the Committee will be deferred to meeting in November.
Molly mentioned that one of the accomplishments for 2011 was a request to Council in the amount of $350,000 for Emergency Food Banks, which was for the summer shortfall and the Christmas Hamper Program.

Action:
Molly will email the orientation document to members and a copy of the report to Council for the request for Food Banks.

6.2 Appointment of Vice Chair
Members nominated Alex because he had shown an interest of being involved at the last meeting, Alex accepted the nomination.

(Denise Arkell/Carmen Salciccioli/Carried)

Motion:
Approval of the nomination to appoint Alexander Ramirez as Vice Chair person was carried. Members look forward to working with Alex.

6.3 Action Log
A copy of the action log was distributed to members via email. Michele asked for any feedback regarding the log; members were in agreement with the log.
It was suggested that the log be an excel document so that it can be sorted. Also members asked to include an inventory of presentations below the log.

Action:
Michele will change the action log and have a copy for the next meeting.

6.4 Revision of Terms of Reference
Deferred to November meeting

6.5 Membership & Voting Members
Deferred to November meeting

6.6 Process Recommendations to Council
Deferred to November meeting

6.7 OW/ODSP Stats Reporting
Carolin gave an update on the OW stats for the month. Carolin mentioned the Utility Arrears program as another program for clients and can bring back more information to the next meeting.
One question that arose was, “What is the cost to administer the OW benefits for clients?”

Action:
Carolin will bring back estimates of the administrative costs for the OW program and information regarding the Utility Arrears Program. Attached is the link to Hamilton’s Community Wellness Indicators: [http://www.hamilton.ca/CityDepartments/CorporateServices/FinanceBudgetTaxes/CommunityWellness.htm](http://www.hamilton.ca/CityDepartments/CorporateServices/FinanceBudgetTaxes/CommunityWellness.htm)

6.8 Plan for presentation on transportation barriers
Anne gave a few examples of the barriers that people with disabilities can face. Services need to be improved in Hamilton. One of the suggestions was to have the DARTS pass used as a bus pass to address transportation issues.

Action:
Anne will consider what the key linkages to Food & Shelter’s mandate are and bring recommendations forward regarding what Food & Shelter’s role can be on this issue. Molly will explore what other advisory committees to council may be relevant to these issues and report that back to FSAC in November.

6.9 Distribution of Membership Contact List
Molly asked members if the contact list can be distributed if there were no concerns with sharing the information between members. Members were in agreement with sharing the information.

6.10 Budget Update
Molly informed members that the Committee’s budget of $500 for meeting expenses for 2012 will be the same as 2011.

6.11 Women’s Homelessness Services
See item #5.2

7 DISCUSSION ITEMS
7.1 Presentation to Council
Molly will prepare a draft presentation to Council for review by Committee members, for the next meeting.

8 GENERAL INFORMATION & OTHER BUSINESS
8.1 Let’s Do Lunch
Anne distributed flyers for “Let’s Do Lunch” at the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton being held Tuesday, October 18th, 11:30 – 1:30 which is $1 or a donation. Next lunch is Tuesday, November 15th, everyone is welcome.

8.2 Bed Bug Initiative
Larry informed members of the Bed Bug Initiative at Housing Help Centre. This is for low income clients requiring assistance with unit preparation, subsidies are available. Website for information is: [www.hamilton.ca/bedbugs](http://www.hamilton.ca/bedbugs)

9 ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm.