



## **Mayor's Task Force on Community Safety, Security & Well-Being October 1, 2021 - Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Mayor Dan Carter, Chair Bob Chapman, Fred Eismont, Dr. Peter Stoett, Cindy Malachowski, Sandra Black, Steve Conaby, Todd Wilson

**Guests:** Hailey Wright, Director, Economic Development, City of Oshawa

**Staff:** Paul Ralph, Tracy Adams, Brenda Jeffs, Kevin Alexander, Haik Beglarov, Shannon McFadyen

**Regrets:** Noel Coppins, Audrey Andrews, Kelly Brown, Stephanie Skopyk, Dave Saliba, Matt Bowles

**Meeting Location:** Cisco Webex Meeting

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

### **1. Welcome**

Chair Chapman welcomed and thanked all Task Force members for joining.

### **2. Review and Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes from August 27, 2021 were reviewed and no changes were made.

### **3. Update on the Downtown Oshawa Virtual Town Hall**

#### **Hailey Wright, Director, Economic Development**

Provided an update on the Downtown Oshawa Virtual Town Hall held on September 23, 2021 indicating that 300+ businesses, property owners and downtown stakeholders were invited. The purpose of the Virtual Town Hall was to respond to the needs of the business community and the challenges in the downtown core. Presentations were made by the Region of Durham Social Services, Lakeridge Health, Durham Region Police Service (D.R.P.S.) and the City of Oshawa. There were questions for: the Region regarding service offerings, future plans and how they measure success; D.R.P.S. regarding immediate response to the state of safety in the downtown area; and to the City regarding clean up and by-law enforcement. A recording of the Virtual Town Hall along with presentations can be found on the Region of Durham website under [Downtown Oshawa Support](#).

The Region's Downtown Oshawa Support webpage outlines immediate actions that are being undertaken, lists supports, strategies and upcoming projects, and a link to the [Mayor's Task Force on Community Safety, Security and Well-being](#). The Region and the City are working diligently to address the concerns of local residents and businesses, and will continue to share information as it becomes available on the Region of Durham website under [Downtown Oshawa Support](#).

The City's Economic Development team distributed emails to those invited to the Virtual Town Hall to provide information on the Region's new webpage [Downtown Oshawa Support](#) as well as a survey to find out how often stakeholders would like to receive communications.

At the Monday, September 27, 2021 City Council meeting, the Plan20Thirty Steering Committee was formally endorsed including 13 individuals who will work with the City's Economic Development team to create a downtown action plan for economic revitalization.

### **Cindy Malachowski, Lord Simcoe Place**

The Virtual Town Hall was a very well moderated event and feels that many people were grateful to hear from the Region and the City. Cindy also shared her concerns regarding defining need versus creating demand.

Inquired about D.R.P.S. follow up process as incidents have been reported by various downtown businesses with minimal consequences to repeat offenders.

### **Chair Chapman**

Shared some D.R.P.S. statistics about apprehensions under the Mental Health Act and indicated that there have been individuals who require services who were released after assessment due to the lack of available mental health beds and unfortunately later caused harm to themselves.

### **Mayor Carter**

Advised that he sent a letter on August 24, 2021 to all of the Mayors in Durham Region requesting assistance in addressing the health and safety challenges that are being faced in downtown Oshawa. He indicated that Oshawa no longer has the capacity to care for the complex issues of the unsheltered population and the increased criminality on our streets. He requested that the Mayors support and help advocate for additional police resources to address the criminality and that extra resources are necessary from the Region's Social Services and Health Department to provide both on and off hour street assistance for the unsheltered population and to actively work on reducing the concentration of services in Oshawa. The issue is about capacity not compassion and we need others to do their part.

Stated that social services must be decentralized and will continue to advocate for the decentralization of services. It is anticipated that there will be a funding impact with the proposed changes to the 2022 provincial funding.

Provided an update on the Mayor's Community Clean Up event held on Saturday, September 18 where he had the opportunity to connect with unsheltered individuals. Based on the conversations, individuals are coming to Oshawa from other communities because they know someone or they are seeking services. However, with a new hub opening in Pickering, it is anticipated that individuals will begin seeking services at the new location.

Provided information on the average cost of an overdose call indicating that it is approximately \$4,000 for each call received. In Oshawa, there have been 600 overdose calls over a 12-month period. The Mayor is advocating to the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and the Minister of Health that the current system is not effective and that tax dollars must be utilized better with an emphasis on beds for mental health and addiction patients.

Proposed that a Summit should be held in Oshawa, where experts, as well as individuals who have community success stories, can bring their experience to the table in helping those unwilling to accept help.

**Peter Stoett, Ontario Tech University**

Supports Mayor Carter's call for a Summit in Oshawa and offered the University as a possible location. He also suggested utilizing D.R.P.S. officers who work with students at the University and have them focus on downtown public safety.

**Todd Wilson, Durham Regional Police Service**

Officers have been instructed to lean towards enforcement of repeat offenders, but noted that the answer is not always to place additional provincial offense notices on individuals as in some cases it will not solve the problem.

**Haik Beglarov, Corporate Security Manager**

Shared positive feedback received from a downtown business owner who was happy with D.R.P.S. response time to a recent incident.

**4. Update on City's actions**

**Fred Eismont, Resident**

Raised the issue of abandoned shopping carts in the downtown area indicating that it is difficult to establish a firm management plan for retail stores to put in place as identification has been stripped off shopping carts.

### **Tracy Adams, Commissioner, Corporate Services**

Clarified the reasoning behind establishing a new by-law surrounding the return of abandoned shopping carts indicating that the intent is for the property owner to have a proper shopping cart management plan for example, wheels that lock so carts cannot be removed from the property. There is research and due diligence that will be conducted before this item is brought forward.

Provided an update to Task Force members on the [Community Safety, Security and Well-Being in Oshawa's Downtown Area Action Plan](#) indicating that item 26 (Report on the inclusion of tiered and escalating Administrative Monetary Penalties in the Lot Maintenance By-law, Boulevard By-law and Waste Collection By-law) is on the Monday, October 4, 2021 Corporate Services Committee Agenda. In addition, internal meetings have taken place regarding advancing the other items in the Plan. There is lots of work on the list but the City is committed and items are being advanced as soon as possible.

### **5. Other business as brought up by Task Force Members**

#### **Chair Chapman**

Some businesses have reached out and requested the City supply no trespass signs. Signs will be developed and businesses will be reminded to provide authority to D.R.P.S. for assistance with trespassing issues.

Reminded Task Force Members about the "if you see it, report it" campaign indicating calls received are included in the statistics that are collected.

#### **Fred Eismont, Resident**

Pleased with the steps taken in phase 1 of the beautification of downtown and would like to erase the stigma associated with downtown with an effort to boost local businesses.

#### **Cindy Malachowski, Lord Simcoe Place**

Excited and optimistic to see the City's Action Plan moving forward and thanked Task Force Members for their hard work.

#### **Sandra Black, OCSS55+**

Believes the Task Force is on its way forward, thanked all Task Force Members for their participation and feedback.

#### **Shannon McFadyen, Manager Corporate Communications**

Advised Members that the City's Economic Development and Corporate Communications departments are meeting with the Region's departments on a bi-weekly basis to integrate communications and ensure messages are getting out to stakeholders.

## **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on October 22, 2021.