

Community Services Standing Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM

Members Present:

Councillors

Ward 2 - Councillor Fabio Costante

Ward 3 - Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Ward 4 - Councillor Mark McKenzie

Ward 5 - Councillor Ed Sleiman (Chairperson)

Ward 6 - Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

PARTICIPATING VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE ARE THE FOLLOWING FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Robert Martini, Municipal Gaming Analyst

ALSO PARTICIPATING IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ARE THE FOLLOWING FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Andrew Daher, Commissioner, Corporate Services

Michael Chantler, Commissioner, Community Services

Dana Paladino, Acting Commissioner Human & Health Services

Kirk Whittall, Executive Director, Housing & Children's Services

Tanya Antoniw, Executive Director, Employment & Social Services

James Chacko, Executive Director, Parks & Facilities

Alina Sirbu, Executive Director, Long Term Care / Administration

Linda Higgins, Manager Intergovernmental Funding-Employment Social & Health

Kelly Goz, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Support

Stephen Lynn, Manager Social Policy & Planning

Jennifer Tanner, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Support

Diane Wilson, Manager, Social & Affordable Housing

Michelle Oake, Project Manager, CDHS

Anna Ciacelli, Deputy City Clerk

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair calls the meeting of the Community Services Standing Committee to order at 9.00 o'clock a.m.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None disclosed.

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

3.1. Adoption of the Community Services Standing Committee minutes of its meeting held December 4, 2024

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

That the minutes of the Community Services Standing Committee meeting held December 4, 2024 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.

Report Number: SCM 389/2024

7. COMMITTEE MATTERS

7.1. Minutes of the Age Friendly Windsor Working Group of its meeting held January 31, 2025

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

Decision Number: **CSSC 274**

THAT the minutes of the Age Friendly Windsor Working Group of its meeting held January 31, 2025 **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

Report Number: SCM 70/2025

Clerk's File: ACO2025

7.2. Minutes of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee of its meeting held March 13, 2025

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

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Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

Decision Number: **CSSC 275**

THAT the minutes of the Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee of its meeting held March 13, 2025 **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

Report Number: SCM 85/2025

Clerk's File: ACO2025

7.3. Minutes of the Committee of Management for Huron Lodge of its meeting held March 4, 2025

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

Decision Number: **CSSC 276**

THAT the minutes of the Committee of Management for Huron Lodge of its meeting held March 4, 2025 **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

Report Number: SCM 100/2025

Clerk's File: ACO2025

7.4. Minutes of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan's Regional Systems Leadership Table of its meeting held December 11, 2024.

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

Decision Number: **CSSC 277**

THAT the minutes of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan's Regional Systems Leadership Table of its meeting held December 11, 2024 **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

Report Number: SCM 121/2025

Clerk's File: ACO2025

4. REQUEST FOR DEFERRALS, REFERRALS OR WITHDRAWALS

None requested.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

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None presented.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

6.1. Annual Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan and Next Steps - City Wide

Michelle Oake, Project Lead, Human & Health Services appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the administrative report dated April 17, 2025, entitled “Annual Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan and Next Steps – City Wide” and provides a brief overview of the Progress Report for the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan including achievements. Ms. Oake provides details regarding the History & Legislative Framework developed by the Provincial CSWB Planning Framework to guide municipalities in planning efforts; 2022-2026 Plan & Priority Areas; Cost Benefit & Return on Investment of proactive and focused on social development and prevention; Current Funding Model shared by the City of Windsor, the County of Essex, and collaborations and partnerships; Highlights: 2022-2026 Plan Accomplishments including development of a Regional System’s Leadership Table; promotion of safe, healthy, and connected neighbourhoods and communities; increased early interventions to reduce overall service need and crisis intervention; identifying existing gaps in the social safety net; expand or develop new programs to promote employment, training, and apprenticeship opportunities; 2026-2029 Plan Revision Strategy – Engagement Path and Important Timelines

Councillor Fabio Costante inquires whether Windsor is in line with other municipalities in the province when it comes to funding or other resource help. Ms. Oake indicates that she is a part of the Ontario Municipalities Social Services Association (OMSSA) Community Safety & Well-Being Working Group that is advocating for funding from the Ministry of the Solicitor General to help fund municipal programs. She also states the priorities for community safety and well-being are relatively consistent across municipalities in Ontario, as the framework of the plan is provincially legislated.

Councillor Fabio Costante asks if the WERCSRB could see a partnership with the city’s Strengthen the Core initiative in the future. Ms. Oake replies that the WERCSRB works collaboratively with many strategies, including Strengthen the Core, and they will be working together with their partners to maintain complimentary goals.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino inquires whether community centres and activities for youth play a factor in reducing youth-related issues. Ms. Oake indicates that WERCSRB partner programs providing youth diversion are valuable, however the results of such work is not seen immediately, but rather years into the future, over the course of multiple plans.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino inquires as to how much of an impact the loss of the downtown community center has affected the area. Andrew Daher, Commissioner, Corporate Services appears before the Community Services Standing Committee Meeting regarding the administrative report entitled “Annual Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well Being

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Plan and Next Steps-City Wide” and indicates that there is definitely an impact when community centers are removed, especially in the downtown core. The City and the WERCSRB continue to advocate to upper levels of government and partners to pursue funding for community programs to help mitigate the loss of the community centers.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac comments that she would like to see more data included in future reports. She would like to see the correlation between the dollars spent on initiatives and partnerships and the impact it is having, to ensure that the most effective programs are being funded. Mr. Daher replies that funding through the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is contingent on certain performance indicators being met, and those data points can be included in future reports.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac asks if provincial and federal funding sources are making specific expectations and outcomes known or if they are requesting detailed data and evidence. Stephen Lynn, Manager, Social Policy & Planning appears before the Community Services Standing Committee Meeting regarding the administrative report entitled “Annual Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well Being Plan and Next Steps-City Wide” and indicates that part of the role of the Community Safety and Well-being program was to identify community needs and fill the missing gaps between sectors such as health, crime prevention, and mental health. He cites the example of recent funding received from the Building Safer Communities Fund required academic evidence-based programming to show that the proposed programs would be effective in the long term. He states that reports with more detailed key performance indicators can be produced for Council as necessary.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac hopes that the funding sources give clear direction to municipalities and their partners to ensure the success of these programs.

Councillor Mark McKenzie asks what is being done to support youth in the 16- to 17-year-old age brackets. Ms. Oake replies that support services are currently provided for this age group through three programs: New Beginnings Youth Diversion, Sandwich Teen Action Group, and the Windsor-Essex Children’s Aid Society. These programs focus specifically on prevention of crime.

Councillor Mark McKenzie inquires whether these programs include housing support as well. Ms. Oake replies that there is a housing initiative/life skill support program for youth 18 and older, but housing support for 16 to 17-year-olds is not provided.

Councillor Mark McKenzie asks if there is the possibility to provide funding for housing support and life support to include teens in the 16- to-17-year-old age group. Kirk Whittal, Executive Director of Housing and Children’s Services appears before the Community Services Standing Committee Meeting regarding the administrative report entitled “Annual Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well Being Plan and Next Steps-City Wide” and indicates that there is a partnership with Community Housing and the Children’s Aid Society for transitioning precarious youth that does provide housing for that age group.

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Councillor Mark McKenzie asks if the recent financial struggles of the Children's Aid Society have affected any of these programs. Mr. Whittall replies no, the program is still being actively supported and is doing very well.

Councillor Mark McKenzie asks how many individuals this housing program can hold. Mr. Whittall indicates between 18 and 22 individuals are being served by this program, ranging in ages from 14 to 17, and the program is seeing success so far.

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Decision Number: **CSSC 273**

THAT City Council **APPROVE** the Progress Report of the Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being Plan and its submission to the Province of Ontario's Ministry of the Solicitor General before December 31, 2025; and further,

THAT City Council **AUTHORIZE** the Commissioner of Human & Health Services to develop a revised Regional Community Safety and Well-Being Plan in the format required under the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 and bring back to Council for approval; and further;

THAT City Council **AUTHORIZE** the Commissioner of Human and Health Services to apply for grant funding available relative to community safety and well-being through the provincial or federal governments provided that City funding is not required, or is available within existing budgets, and timeframes will still allow for City Council to ratify the application for the grant funding prior to a point when a withdrawal from the program would no longer be possible.

Carried.

Report Number: S 61/2025

Clerk's File: SS/14026

8.2. Response to CR 433/2023 re: Homelessness Outreach Updates - City Wide

Bryan Rock, Manager of Community Programs, Family Services Windsor-Essex

Bryan Rock, Manager of Community Programs, Family Services Windsor-Essex appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the administrative report dated April 17, 2025, entitled, "Response to CR 433/2023 re: Homelessness Outreach Updates – City Wide" and is available for questions.

Moved by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Seconded by: Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac

Decision Number: **CSSC 279**

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THAT the report of the Manager of Homelessness and Housing Support dated April 17, 2025 entitled "Response to CR 433/2023 re: Homelessness Outreach Updates" which provides an update on the homelessness outreach program and related data from 311 **BE RECEIVED** ; and further,

THAT City Council **RECEIVE** an update as to how the Administration will attempt to draw the various organizations together to collaborate and capitalize on the programs that they are prepared to offer. Carried.

Report Number: S 63/2025

Clerk's File: GM/7755

8. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

8.1. Emergency Shelter Winter Planning Update and One Time Funding for Encampment Responses

Councillor Renaldo Agostino states that he is happy to see funding for encampments but is concerned that closing the encampments will have a negative impact on downtown core service providers, and the downtown core in general. He asks administration how many people are being supported per day. Mr. Whittal replies that on a daily basis through multiple support services, the number would be roughly 400 to 500 people. He adds that the Winter Planning funding provided approximately 30 people access to permanent housing through rent subsidies.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino inquires whether it is known how many people came from the encampments to the downtown shelter. Mr. Whittal replies that very few people would leave encampments to go back into shelters, and if the encampments were closed, they would move on. He states that permanent housing options would be the best solution in terms of trying to house individuals, versus being placed in the shelter system.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino asks how much more the shelter system can take if the encampments are closed, in terms of capacity versus how many people can be supported. He wants to know if the city is reaching the threshold. Mr. Whittal replies that at the time of the report, the city was below capacity in the shelter system. He adds that through Windsor-Essex Housing Connections and other funding partners, 50 to 60 people are being permanently housed per month.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino asks administration if they believe supporting the rent subsidies and shelters was more successful than providing the warming bus over the winter, or if a hybrid option would be considered for next winter if the funds are there. Mr. Whittal replies that funding is considered on a continual basis to keep improving the system, and those types of decisions would be made depending on funding. Mr. Daher adds that the shift in funding from the warming bus last year to the H4 this year has allowed the city to serve more people. There were approximately 35 people on a bus any given night compared to approximately 55 people being served at the H4. He believes the funding went much further this year as compared to last year.

Moved by: Councillor Renaldo Agostino

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Seconded by: Councillor Mark McKenzie

Decision Number: **CSSC 278**

THAT the report of the Acting Manager, Homelessness and Housing Support and Manager of Homelessness and Housing Support, dated April 17, 2025, entitled "Emergency Shelter Winter Planning Update and One Time Funding for Encampment Responses" **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried.

Report Number: S 62/2025

Clerk's File: GH/11710

8.3. Response to Directive on Dog Park Policy - City Wide

Councillor Fabio Costante requests that administration comment on the framework used by Toronto and Mississauga and how it encourages dog parks in higher density, more mature neighbourhoods, and how neighbourhood associations are attached to those parks. James Chacko, Executive Director, Parks, Recreation, and Facilities appears before the Community Services Standing Committee Meeting regarding the administrative report entitled "Response to Directive on Dog Park Policy-City Wide and indicates that Toronto and Mississauga have different operating models from Windsor and a number of the other comparison municipalities. These cities look for opportunities to partner with developers through city-owned properties or private parklands as part of developments to share the initial cost of the parks with the cities, who then turn over ownership of the dog parks to a stewardship, such as a condo or neighbourhood association to maintain and operate those areas.

Councillor Fabio Costante asks about the cost to convert a parkette in the city to a dog park, recognizing that it would not have all the features of a large park. Mr. Chacko replies the conversion process would cost approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000, depending on the overall size, with fencing being the biggest expense. The ongoing operational cost would be approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Councillor Fabio Costante mentions that should Council implement dog parks that deviate from the current policy, the park would have to be selected and a funding source identified. He asks if the policy itself could be amended to match the Toronto or Mississauga models instead. Mr. Chacko replies that should Council wish to change the policy they could choose to do so, and a future budget or future Council could direct administration to implement the dog park policy in any form. At the current time, there is no funding in the 10-year Capital Budget for any dog park, no matter the size.

Councillor Fabio Costante inquires whether Ward funds could be used for any type of capital enhancements for these parks. Mr. Chacko replies that this is his understanding, yes. This would be considered a capital project if a member of Council wished to fund the installation of a dog park compliant with the dog park policy in effect at the time.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac inquires if the Council of the day, at any time, can request administration to bring forward the current policy to make amendments. Mr. Chacko indicates yes.

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Councillor Gignac inquires whether any portion of the fees collected for dog licensing are directed towards dog parks. Mr. Chacko replies that the funds from dog licensing remain with the Licensing Department, and the maintenance of dog parks remains under the Parks Department operating budget.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac inquires whether other municipalities utilized funds from licensing to help pay for their dog parks. Mr. Chacko replies that the data collected for the report did not specify where the funds for such projects came from, only that they were paid out of the municipality's base budget.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino inquires whether there has been an opportunity to partner with a private property owner to create a dog park, similar to the creation of Community Gardens in the city. Mr. Chacko is not aware of any community groups coming forward with such a request, but should it be the will of Council, such opportunities could be pursued.

Councillor Renaldo Agostino inquires whether corporate sponsorship for a dog park has ever been pursued. Mr. Chacko replies that the city has had success with sponsorship for other park amenities but has not pursued sponsorship specifically for a dog park. Should Council request it, dog park sponsorship is something that could be considered.

Moved by: Councillor Fabio Costante
Seconded by: Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Decision Number: **CSSC 280**

THAT the report of the Executive Initiatives Coordinator, Community Services, dated March 21, 2025, entitled "Response to Directive on Dog Park Policy - City Wide" **BE RECEIVED**; and,

THAT administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to the Community Services Standing Committee with amendments to the dog park policy to mirror the framework utilized by the City of Toronto and the City of Mississauga; and,

THAT administration **BE DIRECTED** to investigate whether a portion of the revenue collected from dog licensing could be used to provide additional funding for dog parks.

Carried.

Report Number: S 45/2025
Clerk's File: SR2025

8.4. Response to CQ 43- 2024 Barron Bowl Fundraising Update - Ward 2

Terry Barron, Father of the late Ryan Barron

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Terry Barron, father of the late Ryan Barron, appears before the Community Services Standing Committee regarding the administrative report dated February 28, 2025, entitled, "Response to CQ 43-2024 Barron Bowl Fundraising Update – Ward 2" and is available for questions.

Moved by: Councillor Fabio Costante

Seconded by: Councillor Renaldo Agostino

Decision Number: **CSSC 281**

THAT the report of the Executive Initiatives Coordinator, Community Services, dated February 28, 2025, entitled "Response to CQ43-2024 Barron Bowl Fundraising Update-Ward 2" **BE RECEIVED**; and,

THAT administration **BE DIRECTED** to provide matching funds of up to \$59,261 from the Parks Community Partnership Initiative Capital Project (7129015) to move forward with improvements at the Ryan Barron Memorial Skate Park located in Atkinson Park; and,

THAT administration **BE DIRECTED** to make any and all necessary amendments, take any action required, including the signing of any agreements and contracts, and to move forward with the spending of the donations raised, ward funds, and the matching Parks Community Partnerships Initiative Capital Project (7129015) for the purposes of the new surface features as outlined in the Discussion section of the report, subject to future community consultation.

Carried.

Councillor Jo-Anne Gignac was absent from the meeting when the vote was taken on this matter.

Report Number: S 25/2025

9. QUESTION PERIOD

None registered.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting of the Community Services Standing Committee is adjourned at 10:04 o'clock a.m. The next meeting of the Community Services Standing Committee will take place on June 4, 2025

Carried.

Councillor Ed Sleiman (Chairperson)

Deputy City Clerk / Supervisor of Council Services