

From: Seniors Outreach [mailto:seniorvi@telus.net]
Sent: July 8, 2009 4:21 PM
To: Sharon Shepherd
Cc: 'Harry Grossmith'; 'Leanne Hammond Komori'
Subject: re Seniors Advocate

Hi, Sharon,

Thank you for the inquiry that you sent re the request from the BC Seniors Advocacy Network.

I personally don't see the value in creating another level of bureaucracy as a way to help seniors. I understand that seniors are an underserved population and that government funding has not been re-directed to this age group even though both this population and their needs are growing in numbers and complexity. I agree that the system is 'overburdened and often confusing' for seniors and that there are 'instances of neglect and abuse', certainly.

I also believe, however, that what is needed is more funding directed at programs and services for seniors where it will have a direct impact on the ability of agencies like ours to help those who need it most. We do an incredible amount of work with the funding we do receive, but it is not enough to meet the growing need we face. Government ministries provide funding streams for children and youth services, women's services, but not for seniors, yet we know that in Kelowna we now have more seniors than youth. What I believe is needed is for governments to re-distribute their funding dollars with an acknowledgement of that fact. I also hope to see our local community foundation (COF), the United Way and the City's Social Development Grants consider this fact and perhaps target some of the available funding to seniors specifically, as they did in prior years to children and youth programs.

So, whereas I understand and agree with the need to provide more direct services to vulnerable seniors, I do not support the funding of either a senior's Advocate nor this resolution to the UBCM. I do however support more funding dollars being targeted at seniors programming so the many organizations like ours throughout the province can access operating and program dollars to enable us to do our work. We are already here, we are available to help seniors navigate the 'wide array of services' available, to continue to provide crisis counseling, support and direct help, to work to prevent abuse and neglect and protect seniors, to help them find and maintain affordable and appropriate housing and to find value and purpose in their lives and to link them to appropriate resources. I would rather provide services from a preventative perspective, than create another level of bureaucracy for seniors to have to try to navigate after harm has been done.

Since Kelowna has the largest senior's population in the country, perhaps Council might wish to consider bringing their own motion to the UBCM, to ask the provincial government to review their funding priorities in light of the changing demographics to ensure that funding is provided to support programs and services that directly assist seniors in all communities. Over the next decade the population of those over 65 will rise dramatically. Most of those will live independently throughout their lives, not in residential care facilities as they might have in prior years. They will require supportive services for their complex needs, and we need to plan for that. Our City has an opportunity and a responsibility to show leadership in this area, since we are what the rest of the country/province will look like a decade from now.

Again, thank you for seeking our input.

Vi Sorenson, BSW

Seniors Outreach Services Society
202-1889 Springfield Road
Kelowna BC V1Y 5V5
www.seniorsoutreach.ca
www.elderguide.ca

3.1 (a.m.)

Arlene McClelland

From: Arlene McClelland
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2009 5:04 PM
To: Karen Needham
Subject: Council Resolutions from Monday, June 15 A.M. Regular Meeting
Importance: High

This will confirm the following resolution was adopted at the Regular A.M. Meeting held on Monday, June 15, 2009:

3 ISSUES ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNITY CONCERNS

3.1 Mayor Shepherd, re: Independent Seniors' Advocate in BC

THAT Council receives for information the correspondence dated June 1, 2009 from the BC Seniors Advocacy Network requesting an Independent Seniors' Advocate for BC;

AND THAT this correspondence to the Seniors Outreach Services Society for more information and comment be provided.

For your appropriate action.

Thanks!

Arlene

3.1 A.M.

June 1, 2009

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

The BC Seniors Advocacy Network (BC SAN) wishes to acknowledge your record of support for seniors' issues and your commitment to Age Friendly Communities. It is for this reason that we are calling on you to consider the need for an Independent Seniors' Advocate in BC.

In this province, seniors and their families are facing the many challenges that result from dealing with an overburdened and often confusing system. The wide array of services is not only confusing but can also lead to omissions, overlaps, and an overall lack of service. At the same time, there are appalling instances of neglect and abuse of seniors due to the lack of standards, regulations, and enforcement to provide adequate protection for seniors at risk.

The BC SAN is asking municipalities to endorse the request for the establishment of an Independent Seniors Advocate as an officer of the legislature by:

- 1) Passing a motion of support in principle for an Independent Seniors Advocate (see attached resolution);
- 2) Forwarding their expression of support of this resolution to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention in the Fall of 2009;
- 3) Requesting the UBCM to obtain the provincial government's support for this initiative; and
- 4) Forwarding their resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to obtain the federal government's support for this B.C. initiative.

Your support can provide the leverage to bring forward a resolution at the UBCM and ultimately at the FCM. Thank you for considering the endorsement of this resolution.

Sincerely,
Joyce Jones
Chairperson
Seniors' Advocacy Steering Committee.
411 Dunsmuir St
Vancouver, BC., V6B 1X4
www.411seniors.bc.ca



TITLE: Independent Seniors Advocate

WHEREAS there are no coordinated seniors' advocacy services funded by any level of government to properly investigate issues and concerns raised by seniors and their families;

AND WHEREAS the seniors' population is increasing dramatically at the same time that government funding cutbacks are severely impacting seniors;

AND WHEREAS this gap in social policy is leading to potential abuse of seniors, causes unnecessary anxiety to seniors and their families, and places additional stress on municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities support the establishment of an Independent Seniors Advocate as an officer of the legislature.

City of Kelowna



Office of the Mayor

July 7, 2009
File: 0230-01

Seniors Outreach Services Society
202 - 1889 Springfield Road
Kelowna BC V1Y 5V5

Dear Sir or Madam:

Re: Independent Seniors' Advocate in BC

At a Regular A.M. meeting of Council on Monday, June 15, City Council received a letter from the B.C. Seniors Advocacy Network requesting support for an Independent Seniors Advocate for British Columbia.

I am writing on behalf of the City of Kelowna Council to request more information and comment by the Kelowna Seniors Outreach Services Society with regards to this issue. I have enclosed the correspondence that was considered by Council, and would greatly appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharon Shepherd".

Sharon Shepherd
MAYOR

Enclosure

*City Hall, 1435 Water Street, Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 1J4
Telephone 250-469-8980 Facsimile 250-862-3399*

June 1, 2009

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

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In this province, seniors and their families are facing the many challenges that result from dealing with an overburdened and often confusing system. The wide array of services is not only confusing but can also lead to omissions, overlaps, and an overall lack of service. At the same time, there are appalling instances of neglect and abuse of seniors due to the lack of standards, regulations, and enforcement to provide adequate protection for seniors at risk.

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From: Leanne Hammond Komori [mailto:leanne_cof@shaw.ca]

Sent: July 21, 2009 2:31 PM

demographics to ensure that funding is provided to support programs and services that directly assist seniors in all communities. Over the next decade the population of those over 65 will rise dramatically. Most of those will live independently throughout their lives, not in residential care facilities as they might have in prior years. They will require supportive services for their complex needs, and we need to plan for that. Our City has an opportunity and a responsibility to show leadership in this area, since we are what the rest of the country/province will look like a decade from now.

Again, thank you for seeking our input.

Vi Sorenson, BSW

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Cheryl Miller/Grants Manager

Central Okanagan Foundation

#217-1889 Springfield Road

Kelowna, BC V1Y 5V5

E:cheryl@centralokanaganfoundation.org

W:www.centralokanaganfoundation.org

Tel: 250-861-6160 Fax: 250-861-6156

Central Okanagan Foundation | member of Community Foundations of Canada

From: Leanne Hammond Komori [mailto:leanne_cof@shaw.ca]

Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2009 12:15 PM

To: 'Sharon Shepherd'; 'Karen Needham'

Cc: Cheryl Miller

Subject: RE: re Seniors Advocate

Hi Sharon,

Yes – I have included Cheryl Miller in this email because I think there is a group on the west side that you should also ask. She has their contact information. With the new boundary issues and West Kelowna being separate from Kelowna it complicates things – but they deal with many of our Westside seniors. Sandi Oloffs always felt they were a much stronger, more active, and well informed group than Seniors Outreach but I don't have hard data to back that up.

I know that neither group seem to be well versed in how to deal with reports of senior abuse and have a grasp of the broader issues ... I will let Cheryl comment on that. While both groups may be well intentioned and do some good work – the big picture thinking and proactive capacity building necessary to provide service for our growing seniors population does not seem to be evident at first blush. Their input would be a good idea but does not present the whole picture of how to best serve our community's seniors.

I'll let Cheryl add her thoughts on where else to ask. Thanks for including us in the dialogue,

Leanne Hammond Komori | Executive Director

Central Okanagan Foundation

#217-1889 Springfield Road

Kelowna, BC V1Y 5V5

Tel: 250-861-6160 Fax: 250-861-6156

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From: Sharon Shepherd [mailto:SSHEPHERD@kelowna.ca]

Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2009 11:07 AM

To: Leanne Hammond Komori; Karen Needham

Subject: RE: re Seniors Advocate

Leanne

Seniors Outreach was the only group that council recommended. Do you have a more comprehensive list?

Thanks

Mayor Shepherd

From: Leanne Hammond Komori [mailto:leanne_cof@shaw.ca]

Sent: July 22, 2009 11:05 AM

To: Karen Needham

Cc: Sharon Shepherd

Subject: RE: re Seniors Advocate

From: Cheryl Miller [cheryl@centralokanagantoundation.org]
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2009 1:11 PM
To: 'Leanne Hammond Komori'; Sharon Shepherd; Karen Needham
Subject: RE: re Seniors Advocate

Hi Sharon: there are a couple of organizations that do similar, if not the same work as the Seniors' Advocacy Steering Committee – Council of Senior Citizens of BC (COSCO) www.coscobc.ca and Canada's Association for 50 Plus (CARP) www.carp.ca. local contact: Nigel Brown 250.860.5408. Wondering if they have been in touch(?).

As Leanne mentioned the Westside Health Network works with seniors in West Kelowna

Address	2300 Carrington Rd, #160 Westbank, BC V4T 2N6 View MapQuest Map
Located In Community	Westbank
Site Location	Acorn Plaza
Office Phone	250.768.3305
Fax	250.768.9813
E-Mail	whns@telus.net
Website	www.westsidehealthnetwork.com

and Peachland Wellness Centre –

Address	4426 5th St Peachland, BC V0H 1X6 View MapQuest Map
Located In Community	Peachland
Office Phone	(250) 767-0141
After Hours Phone	(250) 767-9150, (250) 212-9105,
Fax	(250) 767-0141
E-Mail	wellnesscentre@shaw.ca
Website	www.peachlandwellnesscentre.ca

All organizations have the best intentions; unfortunately my experience has been the lack of knowledge or training of staff and volunteers regarding available resources and appropriate referrals.

Hope this is helpful!

Cheryl

Thank you Karen,

This is very helpful in painting a much broader picture of the issue and the suggested handling of it. Do you know if Sharon consulted with any other seniors groups for their view other than Seniors Outreach?

My gut tells me the idea of an independent seniors advocate is good and provides a voice where it can keep seniors issues on the agenda and influence government at the provincial level.

Thank you!

Leanne Hammond Komori | Executive Director

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