



County of Simcoe
Social and Community Services
Children & Community Services Department
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Comté de Simcoe
Services sociaux et communautaires
Services à l'enfance et à la communauté
1110, autoroute 26,
Midhurst, Ontario L9X 1N6
Ligne principale (705) 722-3132
Région de Beeton: (905) 729-4514
Télécopieur: (705) 725-9539

MEETING DATE: 4/30/2020

MEETING TIME LOCATION: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Microsoft Teams; On-line Meeting

ATTENDANCE: B. Collins (Georgian College for L. Palson); A. Dubeau (County Councillor); M. Dunot (LIP); A. Fletcher (South Simcoe Police Services); K. Fraser (Lakehead University); C. Gagnon (MTCS-RSB-CID); E. Garcia (Enrique N. Garcia Translations); R. Griffiths (LIP, recording secretary); G. Hall (COS, Library Cooperative); D. Hamilton (for J. McGee-YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka); H. Hie (Georgian College, Employment Services); E. Jara (Credit Canada Debt Solutions); B. Laurin (OPP); S. Lee (LIP); Y. Levesque (CCSMV); I. Oliveria (BICS); I. Pavlik (pavliks.com); J. Rajalingam (SMCDSB); A. Ratnasingham (Welcome Centre); A. Scavarelli (COS, OW); A. Schroeder (Barrie Public Library); I. Toor (SCDSB);

REGRETS: A. Dunning (OPP); B. Grbic (BCHC); M. Kuzma (Nottawasaga Futures) L. Moorhouse (Barrie Police);

ABSENT: K. Manners (Simcoe County Coalition); S. Sarin (EMA); L. Wild (City of Barrie); M. Wynia (COS, Long Term Care)

SUBJECT: Local Immigration Partnership Meeting

1. Welcome/Introductions

Andrew Fletcher welcomed the group

2. Community Updates & Other Business

B. Collins – All staff at Georgian college are working remotely, using online platforms. International Students will be able to commence learning in their home country until travel restrictions are relaxed. Some international students have returned to their home country while others have been unable to secure flights. Co-op opportunities and jobs have been greatly impacted by the shutdown. Private donations, received in support of students, were dispersed to students in need. The need is still great. Local resources are being shared. The International Department is continuing to work from home, using skype and phone to connect. Many temporary measures are in place through IRCC to support international students. The staff continues to advocate to IRCC on behalf of student issues. Social isolation for immigrant students is a concern. Social media platforms are being utilized to reduce isolation using group chats, movies, and other social activities.

K. Fraser – All staff working from home while trying to maintain consistency. Lakehead, Thunder Bay International Center is working with the Orillia campus to develop wellness programming to support international students. Student residence has adapted to students not able to return home and are billing on a daily or weekly basis, as needed. The Lakehead food pantry is assisting students with food security. Summer orientations are being completed on line and will continue in this format as long as needed. Spring/summer classes start online May 1st including ESL classes. A temporary grading system was put into place to allow flexibility due to the circumstances. A

student relief fund, sponsored with donations from staff and faculty, was established and applications for assistance continue to be received on a daily basis. Travel and food security are the primary challenges for students. Decisions regarding fall courses have not been confirmed at this time.

C. Gagnon – Due to current situation, funding for 2019/2020 programs has been extended. Staff is managing many calls regarding government programs. Community Grant Infrastructure Grant decisions will be released in June. Ontario government has allocated 680 million to stabilize non-profit organizations. These funds will be managed by Ontario Trillium Foundation. Ontario community support program investigating ways to help residents. Ontario Together, a program requesting ideas from the public to deal with the pandemic, has received over 20, 000 applications. Spark.ca is a website dedicated to connect volunteers with opportunities to help.

E. Garcia- Some agencies are promoting remote translation however lawyers, insurance and doctors are tentative about working this way.

G. Hall – All libraries are closed. Most staff are working from home, working online or in the case of part-time staff, laid off. Most libraries across the county have seen a large increase of on-line access and membership. Planning discussions are occurring on how to re-open to public. Many of the multi lingual books are not on line, however circulation of those available has been very good.

D. Hamilton – all staff are working remotely using communication means that best suit the individual instructor. Zoom meetings, text messaging, email and phone calls are all being utilized. Staff identified social isolation of clients as a concern. The ESL team has reached out to individuals identified. Prior to lockdown there were 55 language learners, the team has successfully connected with 53 and continue to work with them. With County of Simcoe support, the first emergency childcare center has opened.

A. Scavarelli – Ontario Works saw an increase in short term financial assistance program applications in March to 1,000 applications. Numbers have gone down in April. Currently there are approximately 6,300 clients receiving assistance. South Simcoe sees the greatest numbers of foreign-born recipients of Ontario Works. The service delivery model has changed, making documentation and verification easier, to ensure individuals receive shelter and basic needs and people receive the support they require. Front line staff are doing wellness checks with their clients to see if there is anything, they require. MCIS has adjusting their service delivery to a three way calling model to provide interpretation services when required. Ontario Works offices are open 2-4 pm each day for those in need.

H. Hie – Job Finding Club for Immigrants – all staff are working from home. Zoom, WebEx, and Facebook all platforms are being used. Consideration of on-line networking is being developed. OSLT finished their semester utilizing their, already in place, on-line platforms.

E. Jara – credit counseling requests have seen an increase. Webinars have been developed discussing COVID 19 realities. Counsellors have been assisting with filing with creditors and filing for CERB. There is concern that, post pandemic, there will be a struggle for clients to fulfill obligations that have been deferred.

J. Rajalingam – Issues with technology were identified after a student survey. As a result approximately 400 families have received assistance with hardware. Issues with poor or no internet connections are currently being addressed.

A. Ratnashingham – all staff working remotely, primarily using phone and occasionally text and video. Staff still available 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

I. Pavlik – many employees are immigrants struggling to work remotely when the company philosophy is to meet together.

I. Oliveira– all staff working from home using Skype, on-line, text and telephone. Simcoe County Flex Fund available to residents of Bradford, Innisfil and New Tecumseth. CAPC is now providing food boxes for clients in need. This replaces grocery gift cards

A. Schroeder – All memberships and services available on line with immediate access to online content for new members. English conversation circles have moved to a virtual deliver model using telephone and video conference. Demand remains high with additional groups being considered.

I. Toor – Each school community is managing differently with the continuity of learning plan and guidelines for distance learning. Teachers are connecting with students in a variety of ways. Families feeling constant pressure to try and balance the needs and of children and family
Impacts are amplified for challenged populations.

I. Approval of Minutes –November 27, 2019

MOTION to accept the minutes as provided. 1St I. Oliveira; 2nd D. Hamilton; ALL IN FAVOUR.
Motion Carried.

J. IRCC/MCCSS Updates

S. Lee shared that there are several reports the LIP secretariat is currently working on for IRCC.

K. County of Simcoe LIP Secretariat Update

S. Lee shared the continued support of the Long Term Care facilities in Simcoe County with the re-deployment of non-essential staff. Homeless shelters have moved to a motel voucher model. In partnership with the YMCA, the County is preparing to open a daycare center for front line essential workers.

L. Sub-Councils/Working Groups



30APR2020Sub
Council Report.pdf

- a. Settlement Sub-Council will be meeting more frequently to facilitate sharing during this challenging service delivery situation
- b. Cultural competency working group
- c. #ITSTARTS – M. Dunot shared the attached presentation



30APR20_PPT.pptx

Community Projects

Updates provided in Community Updates

Next. Meeting – Wednesday May 27th 2020, 9:30 am to 11:30 am Location to be confirmed.
