



Community Liaison Committee (CLC) Meeting Agenda

Monday, June 26th, 2017

SCHEDULE

CLC Meeting 6:00p.m.-7:30p.m. (Refreshments & Dinner will be provided by LOFT Kitchen)

Special Guests: Adam Varro & Joe Marando, advocates and Osgoode law students from *Fair Change Community Services*, will be joining us to talk about the unique service they offer to Toronto homeless populations and the repealing of the *Safe Streets Act*

AGENDA

Community Update:

- 1 Welcome & Review of May 30th 2017 meeting
 - Feel free to reach out to Jason from the Ministry of Housing for any other info
- 2 Update on shelter and drop-in operations
 - From Greg: 9 new residents in the shelter, 9 residents have moved on (2 into permanent housing and 2 into program services [rehab]). Of the 9 new residents, 1 refugee, 1 new to Toronto, and 2 long term homeless.
 - Request to change lights out time from 10pm to 9pm has been denied. Consensus says 9pm is too early. Lights out time remains unchanged.
 - Book club – steady attendance, enjoyed by participants. If you are throwing out books, bring them in!
 - Volunteer ESL teachers available to support newcomers.
 - 70 referrals to Breaking Barriers program – very pleased with outcome.
 - Biggest need remains TTC tokens; desperately need tokens! It is very frustrating when we cannot support participants with their transportation expenses.
 - Success update: former resident states they are thankful to CONC for support through immigration process and they are in a positive place.

3. Adam Varro & Joe Marando from [Fair Change Community Services](#)

- Fair Change Community Services (FCCS) is a student run legal clinic offering pro bono services by volunteer 1st year law students at Osgoode. Criteria: clients need to be financial insecure enough to not be able to pay the full ticket; many times, there will be a payment plan
- began in 2008 after Parkdale Ticketbuster program shut down because clients could not reach their office (precarious living situations, difficulty accessing space, unawareness of program) so students involved in the Parkdale program decided to offer portable resources
- Currently, there are 20 first year advocates, but they are hoping to expand the clinic so they can devote equal resources to outreach, early resolution tickets, speaking to prosecutors, etc
- FCCS focuses on provincial offenses (basically the sort of tickets you might get living/working on the street: soliciting, TTC tickets, panhandling, loitering, bylaws, highway traffic)
- Offenses come up at the least ideal times in underhoused peoples' lives; usually, the ticket does not matter immediately and go unpaid because people cannot afford it, but come up down the road and presents a barrier.
- Ex: client who received tickets while underhoused and ended up with \$4500 in unpaid tickets after they found employment/stable housing; legal group negotiated this down to community service hours. FCCS also got over \$60k worth of tickets taken away for one client! Great examples of successful advocacy
- Charter challenge: group is arguing that the laws are unconstitutional so people are not ticketed/charged in the first place. Illegal: people asking for \$ for TTC. Not illegal: an agency asking for \$ for TTC and then turning around and giving it to a person in need
- Group wants to repeal the Safe Streets Act instated under Harris in 1999. Costs 2 million a year to prosecute offenses but they only receive \$8k in paid fines. Safe Streets Act does not make sense and does not target the intended issue but serves to further marginalize and endanger people.
- FCCS wants to inform the law about the true reality of marginalized/underhoused people in Toronto. Group is aware that bigger societal changes are needed in terms of police, understanding of homelessness, available resources for underhoused people, etc.
- FCCS works out of Fred Victor on Fridays – people come to them and they do intakes. Found the intake at FV is slow, but they know there is a need. Group is looking at figuring out the demand in other areas of the city. Right now, they are focused on downtown locations but hoping to expand to other intake locations eventually
- Support group by spreading the word as much as possible! Referrals welcome. Group trying to leverage upcoming election year and get the law repealed quickly.
- Group will be at CONC once every few weeks – feel free to stop in and say hello

4. Committee Member Forum for questions or concerns relating to shelter operations

- ED of Sistering Patricia O'Connell wants to come to CONC to discuss and figure out what's going on; CLC members interested and requested 24th of July to avoid cutting into long weekend. Patricia unavailable in August.
- Patricia said since becoming a 24/7 drop in, they've seen an increase from 100 people a day to 500 people a day
- Someone made complaint to Public Health about smoking under the awning so they have begun to group on the sidewalk in large numbers; BIA also complains about cigarette butts on the sidewalk.
- Doubling participants, changing staff, new hours, 2 Sistering lifers recently left – Sistering in a transition period, experiencing some growing pains.
- Agency overtaxed and unable to handle numbers? Too many participants, all stuffed into a small space and put on mats to sleep. Also concerns around adequate support for participants with mental health issues
- No women-only spaces like Sistering in the city – many other places are co-ed and women do not feel comfortable. There just aren't enough women-only spaces in Toronto. A lot of different (competing?) energies in Sistering contributes to the overall vibe of agency.

5. Scheduling of July meeting

- Set for Monday July 24th; Samantha will invite Patricia.

**5 Minute Break*

Community Integration:

6. Continued Organization of Volunteer Projects:

- Volunteer Opportunity for the Summer: looking for replacement bread volunteer for summer (July and August); pick up bread from Cobbs on Monday at 8pm and bring the drop-in. Samantha will email posting to CLC members for distribution; low barrier opportunity for someone who has a car. Usually about 2 bins of bread, sometimes more or less
- Another possibility: Seneca College approached about research on NIMBYism and how it affects neighbourhoods and why; wondering if CONC will offer support through interviews, community liaison. Project in very initial stages. CLC members open to participating; suggestion that we will be part of the study with the understanding that CONC will have access to data, especially around how community sees CONC
 - Confirming Bloorcourt Festival Schedule: based on discussion, decided to do fewer low barrier events with live music and dancing as main events; all day inside LOFT is adult colouring book – left behind coloring will be used to create communal art piece; face painting.
 - Dovercourt House gave 5 contacts for dance instructors – Samantha working on this list, but probably salsa.

- Live music: both bands confirmed (one perform at 12 noon to kick off event, one perform at 3 to end event; 45 min set each), one a rock n roll type, the other is a singer-songwriter with keyboard (may be solo, may bring band – TBC); need to contact Long and McQuade to request sponsorship. CLC member will follow up with Samantha about electricity needs for bands.
- Event runs from 12p-10p, but ours will be 12p-4p due to nature of program. LOFT kitchen will also make refreshments. Plan is to encourage people to drop into CONC and check it out, invite them in.
- Accepting donations of art supplies: colouring books, good markers, crayons, pencil crayons, face paints, etc

7. Closing Remarks

Next Meeting on July 24 2017