

**UNADOPTED MINUTES
OF THE TOWN OF OKOTOKS
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024
IN THE OKOTOKS MUNICIPAL CENTRE
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS
PRESENT** Brandon Bailey, Chair
 Councillor Heemeryck
 Angela Barber
 Peter Burrell
 Rachel Molcak
 Dan Proctor
 Dongsheng Song
 Dhriti Thiru
 Jenna Vervoort

STAFF PRESENT Sian Anderson, Community Wellness Team Leader
 Nikki Hamilton, Community Wellness Administrator
 Bethany Pizani, Community Wellness Administrator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bailey called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and provided a traditional land acknowledgement.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: By P. Burrell that the agenda for the January 16, 2024 Family and Community Support Services Committee be adopted as presented.

Carried Unanimously

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3.1 Family and Community Support Services Committee - December 6, 2023

MOTION: By D. Thiru that the minutes of the Family and Community Support Services Committee meeting held December 6, 2023 be adopted as presented.

Carried Unanimously

4. CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: By R. Molcak that the meeting go into Closed Session as the matters to be discussed during this portion of the meeting are within one of the exceptions to disclosure in Division 2 of Part I of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act.* at 5:35 p.m.

Carried Unanimously

4.1 Funding Discussion (*FOIP s. 23(1) and 24(1)(g)*)

In Attendance

Committee Members Brandon Bailey, Peter Burrell, Rachel Molcak, Dan Proctor, Dongsheng Song, Dhriti Thiru, Jenna Vervoort
Angela Barber (arrived 5:37 p.m.)

Community Wellness Team Leader Sian Anderson

Recording Secretaries Nikki Hamilton and Bethany Pizani

MOTION: By D. Proctor that the meeting come out of Closed Session at 5:45 p.m.

Carried Unanimously

5. MOTION(S) ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: By A. Barber that the application for funding submitted by Storify Therapy Services be considered by the Committee.

Carried Unanimously

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Christ the Redeemer Separate School Division - The Connection Program

Stephanie Wieler, Procurement Officer & Grant Writer, and Shanna Shepherd, Coordinator of Mental Health, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$20,000.00

The core elements of the Connection Program are therapeutic in-school suspensions, school connectedness, restorative practices and mentoring. The primary goals of the connection program are to reduce truancy, keep students in school through to graduation, increase student-school and student-community connection and engagement, and provide students with an adult mentor. FCSS funding will be used to support staff salaries.

6.2 Christ the Redeemer Separate School Division - Family School Liaison Program

Stephanie Wieler, Procurement Officer & Grant Writer, and Shanna Shepherd, Coordinator of Mental Health, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$25,000.00

The Family School Liaison Program addresses the social, emotional, and mental health of students and their families from kindergarten through grade 12, helping students flourish in both academic and social environments. Staff or counsellors collaborate with administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and often external agencies to develop support plans to address specific and general concerns of children within the schools. FCSS funding will be used to support staff salaries.

6.3 Eunoia Equine Assisted Learning - Eunoia Equine Assisted Learning Program

Alexandra Dunn and Pauline Hogan, Owners and facilitators, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$9,180.00

Eunoia offers a safe space for individuals and groups to develop emotional, physical, and mental well-being through the horse and human connection. The program develops social/emotional skills, improves mental health and overall wellness, by allowing individuals to show, and work through 'big emotions', without any judgment or expectations. This is facilitated through the horse and human connection, being in nature, and mindful activities. Through a partnership with Foothills School Division, students who are at risk of expulsion, drug involvement, self-harm, depression, anxiety, managing trauma/crisis, poverty, loss, and grief will attend equine assisted learning sessions. FCSS funding will be used to offset transportation and facilitation costs so students can participate at no cost.

6.4 Calgary Catholic Immigration Services - Foothills Community Immigrant Services (FCIS)

Lisa Degenstein, Rural Settlement Program Manager, Nancy Risdon, SWIS/Settlement Counsellor, and Paula Deris, Community Resource Worker, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$1,650.00

FCIS is an organization providing settlement and integration services to immigrants and refugees in Southern Alberta. This program addresses a need for newcomers to be aware of indigenous history and strengthen newcomer youths' connection with Canada. The FCSS funding will be used to support staff costs and programming expenses.

6.5 Foothills Country Hospice - Volunteer Services Program

Bonnie Palmer, Coordinator of Volunteers, and Shanon Maksymich, Fund Development Officer, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$18,465.00

The Foothills Country Hospice utilizes volunteers to support clinical staff, patients and their families. Grief support services are provided, including telephone support offered to families by volunteers for up to a year following the death of a loved one. FCSS funding will be used to help support staff costs and programming expenses.

6.6 Foothills School Division - Family School Liaison Counsellor Program (FSLC)

Lindsay Boucher, Foothills School Division Counselling Coordinator, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$50,000.00.

The FSLC Program provides support to meet the needs of individuals, schools, and families to address psycho-social, emotional, and behavioural concerns. FSLC staff work collaboratively with schools and agencies in the community to help students and families develop and strengthen positive coping skills to deal with disruptive, stressful or challenging events. FCSS funding will be used to support salaries for Family School Liaison Counsellors.

6.7 Inclusion Foothills - Family Support Program

Heather Pfeil, Inclusion Foothills President, and Orvella Small, Inclusion Foothills Executive Director, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$18,000.00.

Inclusion Foothills serves individuals with pan-disabilities of all ages and diagnoses, and their families in Okotoks and the surrounding area. Inclusion Foothills works with the community, individuals, and families to support special needs individuals become fully included in all areas of the community. FCSS funding will be used to support staff costs and programming expenses.

6.8 Nurtured by Nature Mental Health and Wellness Society - Building Resilient Parents/Caregivers for Enhanced Family Wellness

Carrie Watson and Jennifer Kuntz, Program Facilitators, and Nicole Bowerman, Board Chair, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$9,758.00

Nurtured by Nature Mental Health and Wellness Society uses holistic and traditional healing approaches, which are inclusive of nature and animal assisted wellness practices. The Building Resilient Parents/Caregivers for Enhanced Family Wellness Program, develops family wellness and resilience through focusing on supporting the parent/caregiver to enhance their parenting skills and abilities. It provides a safe space for parents/caregivers to debrief challenges, practice skills and engage in a community of acceptance. FCSS funding will be used to support staff costs and programming expenses.

6.9 Okotoks & District Seniors Club - Program Facilitator

Sharon Anderson, Okotoks and District Seniors Club President, and Bev Seitz, Okotoks and District Seniors Club Vice President, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$8,000.00.

The Program Facilitator oversees all the programs and provides seniors with information on available resources and community connections, and works with members to create an environment that encourages social contact and physical activity. Seniors are encouraged to be involved in the Club and in the community, to further the understanding that their contributions are valued and appreciated. FCSS funding will be used to support staff and program expenses.

6.10 Rowan House Society - Preventative Education Program

Linette Soldan, Rowan House Society Executive Director, presented the organization's 2024 funding request of \$18,000.00.

The Preventative Education Program is an evidence-based approach designed to provide education and awareness regarding domestic violence and abuse helping the participants recognize the signs of an unhealthy relationship and empower them to make choices that lead to lives free from violence and abuse for themselves, or those they care about. Rowan House provides presentations, workshops, and education/awareness displays on topics related to family violence. FCSS funding will be used to support community and in-shelter preventative education.

6.11 Funding Requests Less than \$2,000.00

Sian Anderson, Town of Okotoks Community Wellness Team Leader, provided information about the following 2024 funding request:

- Okotoks Meals on Wheels Society - Volunteer Appreciation
 - Funding Request of \$1,000.00.
- Solace Grief Support Society – Group Grief Counselling
 - Funding Request of \$1,920.00

Okotoks Meals on Wheels Society (OMOWS) provides the timely delivery of hot, nutritious meals to persons who have difficulty procuring food and/or preparing food. The meals are prepared in a “food safe” environment using the Canada Food Guide. OMOWS is operated entirely by volunteers who use their own vehicles to deliver meals five days a week. FCSS funding will be used for volunteer recognition.

Solace Grief Support Society offers grief counselling and support online and in-person in Okotoks and High River. Group sessions provide a safe place to release emotions. Trained professional counsellors guide participants, teaching them coping skills that help them to be more resilient. Sessions are drop-in and open to all members of the community. FCSS funding will be used for group sessions.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Family and Community Support Services Committee is January 17, 2024.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: By D. Proctor That the Family and Community Support Services Committee meeting adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

Carried Unanimously