



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

MAYOR'S AND COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Report from: Councillor Olga Liberchuk

Subject: Report on Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee Activities in 2016

Council Agenda: February 6, 2017

Recommendation

That Council receive Councillor Liberchuk's report on the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee Activities in 2016 for information.

Background

It was a pleasure to serve on the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee (VFCYJC) representing Esquimalt. This is a region-wide committee composed of municipal councillors or representatives from 13 municipalities as well as a number of representatives from youth oriented service providers. The mandate of this committee is to "be aware of the circumstances of youth and families who come in contact with the justice system."¹ All meetings are open to the public and residents of the region are encouraged to attend to learn about the work taking place in our communities and some of the barriers service providers are facing when working with vulnerable populations.

I am attaching the 2016 Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Annual Report for more information as well as a letter from committee Chair, Cynthia Day outlining a summary of speakers that presented to the committee in 2016.

Notably, the committee has undertaken two new initiatives in 2016:

1. Forming a sub-committee on the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

Following the publishing of Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015, the VFCYJC recognized that 2016 was an important year to continue working through the reconciliatory journey with First Nations. As a result, a sub-committee was created to review the 95 Calls to Action and report back with recommendations. The sub-committee made recommendations on 17 Calls to Action that were most relevant to the mandate and work the VFCYJC is doing. For more details on the 17 recommendations please see p.55 of the 2016 Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Annual Report or see attachment titled "2016 Truth and Reconciliation Recommendations to VFCYJC".

¹ www.victoriafamilycourt.ca

2. Funding for Sister Herd Program at Mary's Farm & Sanctuary

In 2016 the VFCYJC approved \$3500 to sponsor one youth to participate in the Sister Herd program at Mary's Farm & Sanctuary (located off Millstream Rd). "This [program is focused on] a small group of female youths ages 13-17 experiencing social anxiety, depression or isolation and may or may not be attending school. The girls spend Mondays from 10am-3pm immersed in the beauty of nature, animals, art and mindful being at Mary's Farm and Sanctuary. A strong emphasis is placed on creating a safe, positive and supportive environment for each girl to thrive." More on this program can be found at: marysfarm.ca/girls-youth-group.

Thank you to Council for appointing me to serve on this committee. It was an eye opening experience as I learned about the various organizations and many dedicated people that work towards improving the level of support for youth and their families as they go through our justice system.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Olga Liberchuk

Attachments