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SOCIAL HOUSING ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Meeting Start Time and End Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Region of Durham
605 Rossland Rd E, Whitby | Room 1-B

In Attendance (26)

Alyssa Skan	Cornerstone
Amona Bisson	Sarah McDonald Place
Beverly Kueper	Region of Durham
Brynn Harlock	Region of Durham
Christine McGee	Cornerstone
Dawn McBride	Unity Village
Dawn Richardson	CHF
Ellis Nofle	Manning Mews
Frederick Wind	Durham Christian Homes
Harvey Mitchell	Sunrise Seniors
Kathy Andreopoulos	Unity Village
Kevin Bradley	Ajax Municipal
Laura Lavoy	Region of Durham
Lillian Igel	Sunrise Seniors
Lisa Roy	Durham County Seniors
Lori Barber	Region of Durham
Megan Hueser-Shields	Region of Durham
Monica French	Legion Manor
Nancy Oortwyn	Durham Christian Homes
Nicole McClughan	Durham Non-Profit
Paula McAllister	Gateway Community Homes
Renee Stayner	Region of Durham
Roberta Jagoe	Region of Durham
Sandra Thompson	Sarah McDonald Place
Selena Blake	DAFRS
Shirley Rogers	Durham County Seniors

Regrets (3)

John Hill	Northview Meadow
Stacey Leadbetter	Otter Creek

Vera Bala

YWCA

Guests (4)

Sally Barrie
Nora Landry
Nataliya Wijesinghe
Sherril Belille

Community Care Durham
Region of Durham, Social Services
Region of Durham, Social Services
Region of Durham, Housing Services

Discussion Items

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Business arising from previous minutes

- Results of the Scheduling Survey:
 - SHAG will continue to hold meetings every 3rd Wednesday in January, April, July and October of every year.
 - SHAG is a forum made up of staff from the Region of Durham, community housing providers and Board members. The [Terms of Reference](#) can be found on the Region of Durham's website.

3. Community Care Durham – Seniors' Hubs in Community Housing

- Presentation by Sally Barrie from Community Care Durham who provided an overview of their services.
- Community Care Durham offers a variety of community support services throughout Durham Region. Some of their services include Help at Home, Wellness, Food & Nutrition, Transportation, and Support and Education.
- For more information on their programs and services, please visit their website www.communitycaredurham.on.ca.

4. Free Tax Clinics and Process of Co-ordinating On-site Clinics

- Community Volunteer Income Tax Program
 - Free tax clinics are available year-round to low income households throughout the Durham Region under the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP). Through this program, certified Chartered Accountant volunteers can prepare and e-file simple taxes situations for households who meet the eligibility criteria.

- Staff from the Region of Durham have hosted Free Tax Clinics through CVITP to help tenants file their taxes on time. In 2019, 91 tax returns were filed and over \$500,000 in returns were claimed by tenants.
- Housing providers can contact the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) through the Canada Revenue Agency. To learn more about registering your organization, please visit [Community Volunteer Income Tax Program](#).
- Mobile Tax Teams
 - Money Makes Cents is a mobile tax team that is set up through Durham College's Enactus Program.
 - Money Makes Cents is available year-round to provide tax services.
 - For more information on Money Makes Cents, please contact Lorraine.Closs@durhamcollege.ca.
- The Region of Durham's website also provides a list of [local tax clinics](#) throughout Durham Region.

5. RGI Simplification

- Update on work group activities
 - Effective July 2020, Durham will be implementing the new RGI simplification rules.
 - The working group has met twice to discuss an overview of the new RGI changes and to identify best practices.
 - The Region is currently in the process of updating directives, forms and tools that will reflect the new changes moving forward.
 - Tenants/members will be required to file their income taxes every year to be eligible for RGI. Housing providers should begin to encourage tenants/members to file their taxes to ready themselves for RGI simplification.
 - Tenants/members can visit the [Canada Revenue Agency \(CRA\)](#) website to register their account. Having a registered account with CRA can provide quick and easy access for tenants/members to view their tax information.
- Half day training sessions will be scheduled for housing providers in May and June of 2020. If you have any questions prior to the training dates, please send them to:

- Brynn Harlock, Housing Co-ordinator: Brynn.Harlock@durham.ca
- Megan Hueser-Shields, Housing Co-ordinator: Megan.Hueser-Shields@durham.ca
- Roberta Jagoe, Policy Analyst: Roberta.Jagoe@durham.ca

6. Communication with DASH – new electronic forms

- The Housing Services Division has eliminated the DASH Communication Tool. Housing providers can now communicate with DASH using online forms in the [Resources for Social Housing Providers](#) section of the Region of Durham’s website under Communication with DASH.
- Housing providers will now be able to submit online forms which include:
 - Notice to DASH - Arrears
 - Notice to DASH – Evictions for Illegal Act
 - Notice to DASH – Outcome of Offer
 - Notice to DASH – Post Vacancy
 - Notice to DASH – Tenant or Co-op Member Changes
- Once housing providers have submitted an online form, the form will be directed to a dedicated mailbox which is monitored daily.
- Confirmation emails will be sent back to the housing provider once the form has been submitted.
- If you have any feedback with regards to the new online forms, please contact Roberta Jagoe, Policy Analyst at Roberta.Jagoe@durham.ca.

7. Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit

- The Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) will provide funding to low income households to assist with their housing costs effective April 1, 2020.
- COHB will target those who are victims of abuse, human trafficking, seniors and those who are at risk of homelessness.
- The benefit will be portable throughout the Province of Ontario.

8. Community Housing Transformation Centre – webinar presentation

- The Community Housing Transformation Centre (CHTC) webinar presentation from December 9, 2019 was played for attendees. The webinar provided an overview of CHTC programs that offer grants to community housing providers and other community housing organizations to support sector transformation.
 - To watch the webinar presentation, please click on the link below:
 - <https://centre.support/grants/>
- CHTC also provides a database of resources from different agencies across Canada for community housing providers.
 - To view their list of resources available, please click on the link below:
 - <https://centre.support/resource/>
- Housing providers are encouraged to share this information with their Board members.

9. Standing Items

- Landlord and Tenant Board Cases
 - On January 9, 2020, the Ontario Ombudsman announced their investigation into the delays and scope of issues at the Landlord and Tenant Board.
 - The Ontario Ombudsman is inviting anyone to provide any information about the issues they have experienced by filing a complaint online at www.ombudsman.on.ca.
 - To read the press release, please click on the link below:
 - [Ontario Ombudsman to investigate delays at landlord and tenant board](#)
- Community Housing Renewal Strategy
 - No update to provide

10. New Business

- None.

11. Next Meeting

- Wednesday, April 22, 2020 in Room 1-B at 605 Rossland Rd E, Whitby.