



PUBLIC AGENDA

STREET ACTIVITY STEERING COMMITTEE

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015, 11:00 A.M.
COMMITTEE ROOM "E"**

Mr. B. Penner, Chair
Mr. R. Pshebylo
Ms. V. Charles
Ms. S. Marchildon
Inspector R. Friesen
Ms. E. Miller, Senior Planner

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**
3. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
 - 3.1 **Minutes of regular meeting of the Street Activity Steering Committee held on January 14, 2015.**
4. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR (File No. CK. 225-74)**
5. **COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM**
 - 5.1 **Community Support Program Supervisor's Report (File No. CK. 5605-3)**
Update attached – L. Prefontaine
6. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Report to the Street Activity Steering Committee
March 18, 2015**

5.1

1. Summary of Reporting Period January – February 2015

The first two months of 2015 were very busy for the Community Support Program (CSP). The staff attended 249 calls for service assisting 420 individuals. In addition to the calls for service, this reporting period there were 557 connections and 22 updates completed on individuals that are known to the CSP staff. In January and February the CSP team contacted 224 businesses within the three Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to reinforce connections, collect information, and share any information on current issues. Patrol duty statistics also indicate that business information and directions were provided 24 times and there were 50 contacts that resulted in program information being shared.

January and February 2015 showed a marked increase in an existing trend that was first reported to the Street Activity Steering Committee (SASC) in July of 2014. In that report, and each subsequent report, the CSP reported an increase in calls for service regarding aggressive or coercive panhandling as well as individuals who were panhandling in groups. The following is a summary of the actions taken by the CSP since July 1, 2014:

- 12 Panhandling tickets were issued throughout the 3 BIDs since July 2014 when the rise in aggressive panhandling and panhandling in groups was cited as a concern;
- The CSP worked in collaboration with businesses to identify hotspots where activities such as problem panhandling, groups of individuals drinking, individual(s) causing a disturbance and harassment issues were occurring;
- Proactive measures were taken that included increasing patrols where reported activities being witnessed and/or experienced by concerned business owners, management and employees occurred; providing presentations and additional information to businesses; and encouraged reporting information to CSP and Saskatoon Police Service when necessary (especially to individuals who were reluctant); and
- Contacted Saskatoon Police Service to provide information regarding CSP concerns and work in consultation with them in hotspot areas that were identified; intercepting groups of panhandlers; dealing with aggressive panhandlers; drinking in public.

Despite seeing some success with identified hotspots, individuals assisted and enforcement procedures taken, there are still concerns being reported. This January and February, alone the CSP attended 27 Bylaw calls; 23 of those calls were for the Panhandling bylaw. Concerns included coercive panhandling and/or panhandling in groups and the activity was frequently occurring in the same area(s).

One of the challenges facing the Community Support officers is that with the type of activity being reported, mainly panhandling, and the staff need the cooperation and witness statement of the person who is being solicited in a manner that violates the panhandling bylaw. In addition, there were also 59 calls for disturbance that involved 115 individuals in total and of those 21 were for groups of individuals. The individual or

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groups identified on many of the disturbance calls were often members of the same group, incidents occurred in the same locations and callers were also duplicated.

Window clings were ordered in February and will be distributed to all the businesses in the 3 BIDs. This activity is part of the program's marketing plan to increase awareness of the program for the general public as well as business. Community Support officers will start distributing the window clings, along with their regular patrol duties, in March 2015.

2. Statistics

The following tables include information gathered from the calls for service attended in January and February 2015. Table 1 lists the number and origin of calls for service that were generated and the individuals involved. Table 2 includes data specific to the individuals served and the types of actions taken.

Table 1		
Calls Received by the Community Support Program		
Monthly Statistics		
	JAN	FEB
Number of Occurrences	101	148
Individuals Served	138	282
Involvement		
Business Involvement	87	184
Community Involvement	65	92
Vulnerable Persons	112	250
Call Origin		
Office	57	79
Patrol	31	32
Police	14	33
Self-Initiated	5	10
Follow-up	0	0
Outcome		
Successful*	78	100
Could not locate	13	32
Not able to assist**	10	16
Bylaw Enforcement		
Information	52	39
Ticketed	3	3
Warned	6	0

Table 2		
Call Type	JAN	FEB
Addictions	44	133
Bylaw	14	13
Disturbance	42	73
Housing	1	3
Mediation	2	2
Other	15	19
Suspicious Person	20	39
Referrals		
On Scene/Immediate	41	70
Independent Referrals	11	40
Organization		
City Police	18	23
Community Support Program	4	8
EMS	4	4
Larson House	1	7
Lighthouse Shelter	1	2
Lighthouse Stabilization	5	9
Lighthouse Van	5	21
Mobile Crisis	2	0
MSS - Income Assistance	0	1
Other	5	7

* Successful includes identifying specific issue that exist at the time, assessing the scenario and assisting the individual(s) the supports they need (i.e. housing or shelter, mental health concerns, nutrition, transportation, etc.);

**Not able to assist includes a call in which an individual refuses service, Police or other services providers are in attendance, there is concurrent calls.

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3. Key Indicator update

In July 2014 the CSP Supervisor consulted with the City of Saskatoon CGIS department to create and implement a database system that would allow more efficient data management. A mobile app was developed for staff to use in the field as well as a database that tracks the key indicators identified in the July 2014 report to City Council. In November the CSP staff began to input call data into the new database system on a daily basis. When time allows, previous information will be entered into the database. Information from the database will be the basis for the CSP Supervisors' reports to the Street Activity Steering Committee and track the metrics of the CSP. This reporting period the data captured the following:

- 136 (55%) of the calls for service were calls to the directly to the CSP office followed by 63 (25%) on view or patrol calls and 47 (18%) were police dispatches indicating a steady increase in the use and support of the CSP especially from the business community and general public;
- 420 individuals were assisted this reporting period and the CSP cleared 309 of these calls on their own; no additional assistance was needed;
- 111 individuals required on scene or immediate referrals and there were 51 independent referrals suggested to individuals for their own follow-up;
- Of the 249 calls for service 41(16%) required Police assistance; this included 11 Police dispatch calls and 30 calls encountered by the CSP; this number is higher than previous reporting periods because of the initiative taken by the CSP aimed at targeting groups of panhandlers; dealing with aggressive panhandlers; drinking in public; and harassment;
- A total of 224 business connections were made; there is an increased awareness among the businesses within all 3 BIDs with the majority of businesses no longer requiring program information details such as brochures; and
- There were 7 hotspot areas identified in collaboration with the businesses in the 3 BIDs, the CSP targeted patrols in the area, Police were notified of any persisting or criminal issues, recommendations about deterring behaviour were suggested and safety information was provided, all actions that successfully deterred the activity from continuing.

4. Looking Forward

Based on the information gleaned from the last reporting period the CSP will be focused on the following activities in addition to their regular duties. These activities will include:

- Working in collaboration with a number of businesses to identify and intervene in areas of concern and hotspots;
- CSP Supervisor will continue to contacting property management companies to make them aware of activities that are happening on their property as well as the CSP.

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- To increase awareness of the program for the general public as well as business Community Support officers will start distributing the window clings, along with their regular patrol duties in March; and
- Stronger focus on bylaw enforcement, with the upcoming warm weather, targeting the Bicycle Bylaw, the skateboarding and jaywalking sections of the Traffic Bylaw and the Panhandling Bylaw as the pedestrian traffic increases within the 3 BIDs. Addressing inappropriate and unsafe behaviour early in the season will help reinforce that this behaviour is not appropriate and will not be tolerated in the patrol areas.

Following eight months of report data identifying both coercive panhandling and panhandling in groups ranging in size from two to six or more the CSP Supervisor would like the SASC to consider submitting a review of the City of Saskatoon Panhandling Bylaw #7850. As stated in the purpose of the bylaw Section "2 (b) to ensure that panhandling does not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of streets, sidewalks and other public places by members of the public." Evidence suggests that the behaviours witnessed interfere with the purpose as set out. Further information and detail can be submitted in subsequent reporting should bylaw be considered for review.

March 12, 2015
Lesley Prefontaine, CSO Supervisor
Community Support Program