

Community Safety Council

Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2019, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

York Lanes, Room 280N

In attendance: Lorne Foster, Samina Sami, Adam Brihmi, Michael Mahon, Teresa DuCroix, Scarlett Farquhar, Daryl Nauman, John Mayberry, Richard Haigh, Molly Hu, Ross McMillan, Graeme Stewart, Baolinh Dang, Michelle Pham, Eric Mezin, Melanie Howard, Joanie Cameron Pritchett, Swati Rai, Tara Berger, Andrew Little, Yanni Dagonas, Joseph Sanguedolce, Maria Aurora Nunez, Susan Seaby, Aldo Altomare

1. Opening Remarks

Lorne Foster, Chair, welcomed members.

2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved without revisions.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

It was moved, seconded and carried that the August 27, 2019 meeting minutes be approved.

4. Business Arising from Previous Meeting

4.i. Terms of Reference

Lorne Foster reported that the President has approved the new mandate and terms of reference as recommended by the Council.

4.ii. Community Safety Week

Susan Seaby provided an update on Community Safety Week events. Over the course of the week, there were numerous tabling events at Keele and Glendon campuses, and raffles to encourage community members to download the Safety App. So far, over 31,000 community members have downloaded the App. Susan thanked Council members who assisted with Community Safety Week activities, including the YFS, USAY, GCSU/AECG and Bethune College Council, for volunteering at the events and helping with the raffle prize draws; and Teresa DuCroix for promoting the events during Healthy Workplace Month; and Joanie Cameron Pritchett and others from Student Services for sponsoring booths.

4.iii. Co-chair position

Swati Rai, Chair of the United South Asians at York, put her name forward to be the new Council student co-chair. Swati is in her final year of a Bachelor of Arts in Children's Studies and Humanities. Over the past four years, she has worked for the Student Centre and other services at York to create a more inclusive, safe space for students.

It was moved, seconded, and carried that Swati Rai is the new Council student co-chair. Lorne Foster welcomed Swati to her new role.

4.iv. Glendon Community Safety Working Group

Susan Seaby provided an update on the Glendon Community Safety Working Group which will hold its inaugural meeting in December.

4.v. Wildlife Safety

As follow-up to the discussion at the last meeting about safety when interacting with wildlife on campus, the Community Safety Department has created a section on its website on "Wildlife Safety Tips". Michael Mahon indicated that the safety tips were "excellent", however, he noted that a community member was recently bitten by a raccoon, and emphasized the need for continued public education, particularly at this time of the year, when there are coyotes, skunks and deers on campus.

4. vi. Icy Walkways

As follow-up to the discussions at the last meeting about icy walkways, Teresa DuCroix informed Council members that the Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being team has created new posters with tips on how to avoid winter slips, trips, and falls. The posters are available in English and French. The team will be issuing regular Y-File reminders and is open to other ideas for encouraging safe behaviours to reduce injuries from falls. Joseph Sanguedolce indicated that Facilities Services is also working on a communications plan, which will include Y-File articles.

4. vii. Construction Site Safety

Concerns were expressed that students, staff, faculty, and visitors continue to take shortcuts in construction areas which is dangerous. It was noted that strategies are needed to (i) encourage community members take safety more seriously and (ii) ensure that the University does not re-hire contractors that have a record of safety violations. Scarlett Farquhar noted that managers should be posting notice of construction, but often don't do so.

It was noted that this issue has already been raised with the Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being team. Therese DuCroix will report back on results of those discussions at the next Council meeting. Susan Seaby will send Teresa copies of the public education

messaging/signage posted by the University of Calgary on its construction projects. It was agreed that this topic would be revisited at the next meeting for a follow up discussion.

4. viii. President's Community Safety Leadership Awards

Lorne Foster reported that the President's office has agreed that the Community Safety Leadership Awards discussed at the previous Council meeting, will be issued as "President awards", and encouraged Council members to join the award planning sub-committee. He also asked Council members for their suggestions on ways to promote the award program. Council members suggested (1) Engaging central communications and utilizing "this week at York" resources; (2) targeting Glendon campus resources; (3) emails to union groups (4) posters for after-hour staff who do not have routine access to York emails; (5) Y-File; (6) emails to Colleges; (7) Moodle or the L.Technology Services part of IT; (8) have award details appear on computers when community members log in; and (9) create an incentive to have people nominate others, such as an invitation to an award dinner. Community Safety will send the award nomination materials to Council members so that they can circulate the information to their constituencies.

5. Community Safety Survey

Samina Sami spoke about the benefits of the proposed community safety survey which will provide baseline information on awareness of and the use of safety services on campuses, as well as, information on satisfaction with services and perceived gaps in services. It will be repeated in a few years to track progress on improvements and will be inclusive and accessible.

It was noted that according to the Institute for Social Research, which has been consulted on the survey, the survey should be no more than 40 questions long. The survey will primarily be quantitative, but will also have a few qualitative questions, and will be available in English and French.

Susan Seaby indicated that Community Safety is planning to engage an expert organization to assist the working group, and asked Council members to get back to her with suggestions of organizations that could also be considered for this role. It was noted that the Institute for Social Research is one of the largest groups of this kind in the country and it is experienced in surveys, including surveys that have been done at York.

It was noted that it would be useful to repeat a few of the questions from the original METRAC (2010) survey to see if responses have change over the years. Council members who were involved in the original survey were asked to check their files to see if they have a copy of the survey instrument used by METRAC. Scarlett Farquhar indicated that YUSA may have a copy in their files which she will send to Community Safety.

It was also noted that the survey must accommodate different people, including those who may not have access to computers to complete an online survey (e.g. grounds and

custodial staff), and it was suggested that mechanisms be developed to ensure that the survey is accessible.

Council members were asked to contact Susan Seaby if they were interested in joining a working group to assist in developing the survey.

6. Roundtable – Information Sharing/Emerging Issues

6.i. Homelessness/afterhours safety incidents

Mike Mahon expressed concerns that staff members who work nights are often intimidated by homeless persons who sleep on campus.

Samina Sami noted that Streets to Homes has been contacted and will follow-up with homeless people on campus, including at nighttime to provide offers of support and information on shelters and other services. Currently, there is a pilot outreach initiative through which local service providers are coming to the campus once per week. She noted that there are related issues: (1) door propping—even if there are access criteria, people prop doors open; (2) building policies—if the University community wants certain buildings to be open 24/7, the risk is that unaffiliated people may enter the buildings, and (3) tail gating—authorized community members may let unauthorized people into the building. Michelle Pham noted that break-ins were a problem in the past at the daycare, and since then, it has been necessary to constantly remind parents that they should not be holding doors open for unauthorized people.

Council members made several suggestions for addressing this issue including (1) public education on door propping; (2) having a slogan, such as “a stick in the door, is a lost computer”; (3) more alarms if a door is open for too long; (4) an increased culture of saying “no, I don’t have authority to let you in;” and (5) tailgating education/slogans, such as “if you can get in, so can everybody else” or videos on what to say to a tailgater.

6.ii SVRO Plans

Council members were encouraged to participate in the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women events being planned by a working group formed by the SVRO. There will be several events, including a memorial, presentation on health relationships, a film screening, and an art installation “Shades of our Sisters” to raise awareness about missing and murdered Indigenous women.

7. Closing Remarks

Lorne Foster thanked members for their participation in the discussion and invited members to email him if they had any suggestions for future agenda items.