



STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Monday, February 24th, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Oxford County Administration Building

Room 129

1. Call the Meeting to Order

Chair Marcus Ryan began the meeting at 10:04 a.m. **No quorum was present.**

Attendees:

Marcus Ryan, Tony Hymers, Peter Heywood, Ayesha Sajid, Sarah Hamulecki

The members in attendance discussed the following items:

Business Arising from the Minutes

- Area Municipalities DEI Charter follow-up – Norwich
 - Norwich staff will be reporting back to Council to request further direction.
 - The CAO position in Norwich Township is still vacant. Current approach is to follow up following the hiring of the new CAO.
 - M. Ryan discussed the option of returning to do another delegation.
 - Speaking with individual Councillors may be a more effective approach.

- 2025 Summit: Location and date determination
 - Oxford Centre worked well for the event in 2024.
 - T. Hymers commented that the event should move around Oxford for it to be truly representative of the whole County.
 - Potential dates to consider: October 17th and November 7th

- Website Update & Communication Plan
 - Upcoming training between City of Woodstock staff and Oxford's Web Team to facilitate the posting of minutes and agendas.
 - Communications Team sourced out a potential new logo for updated Plan.

Logo options were circulated with the agenda. S. Hamulecki will work with Communications for selection.

- Use of Space Policy Update
 - Resolution was passed at last meeting.
 - Sarah has not received feedback from the Area Municipal Clerks.
 - Could provide virtual link for meetings on the website for ease of public attendance.
 - It is discussed to have Steering Committee meetings throughout the County. To what extent/cost is there a benefit?
 - Suggested to add this item to the next meeting with a quorum.

Action Coalition Updates (Round Table)

- Oxford Housing Action Collaborative (*TBD*)
 - The Committee has been paused until the Housing and Homelessness Plan is complete.
- Oxford Mental Health and Addictions Action Coalition (*Peter Heywood*)
 - The OMHAAC met on January 30th
 - Update from CMHATV
 - Some members have expressed concern about the accessibility and availability of programs and services offered by CMHATV in Oxford County
 - As a result Pam Tobin the CEO of CMHA Thames Valley Addiction & Mental Health Services was invited to provide an update to the Action Coalition to address these concerns
 - Pam highlighted the organization's shift in supportive housing from a lease and landlord model to an ownership model - the organization is investing in themselves by having ownership over their properties.
 - Pam mentioned the creation of five new supportive housing units in Ingersoll, which will be available for clients this year. This is part of the broader effort to enhance supportive housing in the region.
 - There were concerns highlighted from some members about the reduction in concurrent case managers and its impact on service delivery, particularly for medium to high acuity patients. Pam acknowledges of some challenges in this area mostly related to the amalgamation and the movement that comes along with that. There will be further discussions between interested parties to address this.
 - Megan Hostland explained the walk-in counselling program, which provides short-term counselling services. The program is expanding and will be fully funded by CMHATV, allowing United Way to allocate funds to other organizations. Walk-in counseling was able to grow with United Way's support.

- OHT Strategic Plan: Update on published Strategic Plan
 - Strengthen and Expand out OHT Partnership
 1. Advance the Primary Case Network to inform and champion OHT decisions and initiatives
 2. Improve Board to Board communication and engagement
 3. Facilitate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultural training for an all-partnerships providers
 4. Increase and diversity community member representation within OHT leadership, planning, and decision-making
 - Create and sustain integrated, comprehensive Team-Based Primary Care Across Oxford
 - Provide the community with access to in-person, episodic primary care to address the gap in Tillsonburg
 - Working closely with the Town of Tillsonburg

- FamiliesCARE
 - A 12-week educational support group brought to you by family members with lived experience supporting those with substance use concerns.
 - This 12-week model is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and also includes a one-year membership to valuable safety and de-escalation training.
 - Families CARE is a group-based program that helps family members cope and relate effectively with the person who has a substance use concern.
 - Very successful in Oxford County. Pattie is speaking about how we can get this program to Elgin and Middlesex.

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Coalition (*Ayesha Sajid*)
 - The monthly DEI Action Coalition Meeting will take place on 24th Feb after the Steering Committee Meeting in the late afternoon. So, there will be no updates for this meeting.

- Domestic Abuse Resource Team (*Diane Harris*)
 - DART is currently undergoing a restructuring process to enhance our ability to respond to high-risk cases of gender-based violence. A key focus of this restructuring is the development of a high-risk table, which will operate using a multi-agency risk assessment framework. This table brings together representatives from healthcare, youth services, justice, shelters, and other key sectors to collaboratively identify and support women at risk of femicide – before they enter the justice system.
 - The high-risk table is currently working toward:
 - Establishing a shared understanding of femicide risk factors across sectors
 - Developing a memorandum of understanding and terms of reference
 - Aligning with privacy commissioner guidelines to ensure safe and

ethical information sharing

- These tables have been strongly recommended in domestic violence death review inquests following the murder of women in Ontario by current or former intimate partners. Across Southwestern Ontario, similar tables have been developed, with fully operational Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Model (MARAM) tables in Huron and Perth. This work is guided by Western University's Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children (CREVAWC), which will play an integral role in both the implementation and evaluation phases.
- This high-risk table meets on the first Thursday of every month. For a full list of participating agencies, please contact amaddress@ingamohomes.com
- DART is awaiting the results of a grant proposal to the Ontario government to secure funding for the development of this table. If successful, the funding would support a full-time coordinator and a comprehensive training plan, ensuring the table operates effectively and sustainably.
- While the high-risk table is a new focus, DART continues to run its awareness campaigns, educational events, and advocacy initiatives through separate monthly meetings. Each DART member agency has designated a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Specialist to participate in these meetings. The role of the GBV specialist is to:
 - Develop capacity within their organization to recognize, respond and refer disclosures of intimate partner and gender-based violence
 - Understand the process for referring service users to the high-risk table for risk assessment
 - Serves as both internal knowledge holder and an external representative at the MARAM table and in the broader community
- In addition to their core responsibilities, GBV specialists have formed ad-hoc working groups focused on specific areas of prevention, such as:
 - Sexual violence
 - Elder abuse
 - MMIWG
- These groups will meet on an as-needed basis, as campaigns and events arise.
- Current working groups and initiatives:
 - Sexual Violence Prevention and Awareness Month (May). The sexual violence prevention group is working on a campaign strategy to raise awareness about available resources
 - Anti-human trafficking Awareness StoryWalk. In partnership with the Woodstock Public Library System, the anti-human trafficking awareness group is developing a StoryWalk to educate community members on how trafficking happens locally and what resources exist for those seeking to exit exploitation. The StoryWalk is designed to spark discussions and build public awareness.
 - Youth Groups at Wellkin Brightside Youth Hub – DART runs bi-annual eight-week youth groups at Wellkin Brightside Youth Hub, each spring and fall. This will be our fourth series, beginning in April, with a focus

on assertive communication styles to help youth build healthy relationship skills.

- Snapshot – every year, DART develops a community Snapshot, gathering local data from IPV partner agencies to identify systemic gaps and advocate for policy changes at all levels of government. This initiative is part of a larger regional project, with Snapshots from Oxford and other regions available on the Building a Bigger Wave website.

2. Next Steps & New Business

- Household Food Insecurity – Income Intervention (Erica Arnett)
 - P. Heywood - Some municipalities have been declaring an emergency within their respective communities regarding household food insecurity.
 - M. Ryan – comments Action Coalition would be best course to bring to the Steering Committee.
 - It is mentioned that food insecurity isn't necessarily in the current scope of the committee.

The discussion concluded at 11:09 a.m.