

The Town of Oakville

Department of Recreation & Culture

Seniors' Working Action Group (SWAG) - We're Age Friendly

Minutes – Wednesday, November 27, 2024 via ZOOM

In Attendance: Darlene Cox, Ruth Sheridan, Ted Lambert, Micheline Wheeler, Bev Cathro, Pierre Wong, Pat Moore, Tom Carruthers, Rachel Fraser, Julie Pennal

Regrets: Michelle Nichols, Stephanie O’Keefe, Councillor Duddeck, Margaret Kirwin

Guest: Sabrina Aziz and Erin Lind – Sheridan College, Centre for Elder Research - Intergenerational Homesharing focus group

Minutes: Kelly Meeussen

1.	Call to Order: by Darlene Cox – 1:30 p.m.
2.	Guest Speaker: Sabrina Aziz and Erin Lind – Sheridan College, Centre for Elder Research - Intergenerational Homesharing focus group. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sabrina presented five questions to the committee to gain insightful information into their opinions and experiences with homesharing.○ Consent forms were signed and the discussion was recorded.○ Discussion points included: benefits and challenges, expectations, boundaries, short term vs. long term, trial stays, vetting process, understanding lifestyle differences, ensuring security, all age groups to be considered, resolution process if the match is not successful, create a contingency plan, outside support to ensure success, introduce third party mediation if necessary, location of homeshare is important (close to educational institutions and transportation), focus on mature students not first year.○ The group identified that the housing concerns are different today. Rents are high, homesharing is happening in families already, seniors are more fearful due to scams, mistrust, cultural differences with international students.○ Personal stories: made assumptions that turned out to be wrong, important to establish formal boundaries, established lifelong friendships as a result.○ Factors to consider: living in an apartment or condo, parking, bi-laws, incentive program to change your home, such as adding a bathroom, separate entrance, widening driveway etc.
3.	Attendance / Regrets – Regrets as noted.
4.	Acceptance of previous Minutes / Agenda Ted Lambert, seconded by Pat Moore. Carried.
5.	Introduction and welcome to Rachel Fraser, Recreation Manager – Iroquois Ridge, Oakville Trafalgar Community Centre, White Oaks Pool and Seniors Services. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Worked with the city of Mississauga, Meadowvale Centre for Seniors and part of building the Older Adult Plan for the city.○ Worked for the City of Cambridge, and other business lines within the city.○ Has a love for working with seniors.

6. **Standing Agenda Items**

a. **Councillor Cathy Duddeck update:**

While the opening projections for the Town's 2025 budget was at 3.92 % the regional tax increase of 13.4 % (they have a threshold of 4 % that they are to aim for – last year they came in over 9 %). This drastic increase is due to the increase in population and the increase in crime (home invasions are up and the automobile theft continues to play an issue). This would provide 26 more officers to the police department. Due to that increase our Town budget is now looking at a 4.92 % increase. The budget deliberations continue, and the ultimate decision will rest with the Mayor's budget being presented next month (he will take into consideration what Council and the public have recommended) will submit his budget. This process is as a result of the Strong Mayor's Act that introduced by the provincial government.

The province is now releasing its plan for the Midtown area under what is called the TOC process. The TOC or Transit Oriented Community is headed by Infrastructure Ontario. The province works with a developer in arriving a "their" vision for the Oakville Midtown area. This is done without input from either the community or Oakville Town Council (they basically take over the entire process and tell us what they want to see there). This process is not the OLT (Ontario Lands Tribunal) which is formerly the Ontario Municipal Board who heard appeals from the development industry at judicial hearing process. Tonight, the town will present the Town's Official Plan Amendment for the Midtown area, and the public is encouraged to attend. The TOC's plan will be presented at a date in December. I would encourage everyone to make their views know with their provincial members (either Steven Crawford or Effie Triantopolus) if they support and oppose the TOC process and the province taking over the planning process.

There have been several tree lighting ceremonies in the BIA's and Kerr Village will host their tree lighting this Saturday, November 30th, at Westwood Square on Kerr St.

The Region is moving forward with the household waste improvements and several areas in the town will be part of this process. Basically, the process is to improve the waste pick up process by providing bins for household and recycled waste that can be put on the waste trucks with an automated lift versus handling of bags/waste. There were pilots taking place in all 4 municipalities and they results were favorable and that is why they are broadening the zones in each municipality.

The town, like other institutions, reminds residents that although mail delivery is not available currently – they are still responsible for ensuring their tax bills and other remittances are paid on time regardless of the postal strike.

b. **Meals on Wheels – Michelle Nichols**

- No update

c. **Senior Connector Update – Pat Moore**

- No update

d. **enVISION Oakville Update – Ruth Sheridan.**

November 5 Meeting #201 (In Person)

13 attended

- The additional half hour again worked wonders. We had plenty of time to distribute the goodies that were brought in by many members to celebrate the 200 meetings of the past seven years.
- We had an inspiring group check in and received positive reviews of our river cruise.
- We sang happy birthday to John. We distributed the tickets for the Oakville Wind orchestra performance on December 7.
- I directed a smaller version of the game we are going to play during our December Christmas party. Veronica will bring hot chocolate to our December Christmas meeting!

November 19 Meeting #202 (Virtual)

Participants = 9

- The two main housekeeping items were the two Christmas Concerts and the organization there off.
- During check-in, 3 group members talked about their recent decline in their vision and the associated challenges, also mentally and psychologically.
As a result:
 - ✦ Learn about the mental impact of vision loss, how to cope with it and what kind of support is out there.
 - ✦ A technology class/training with regards to technology and apps, such as be my eyes, Seeing, AI Lazarillo
 - ✦ Learn about "be my eyes" being now available on Rayban Meta glasses
 - ✦ Find out whether the Brontë yacht club will conduct another blind sailing event in 2025.

<p>e.</p> <p>f.</p> <p>g.</p>	<p>OAAC- Darlene Cox</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OAAC Communications meeting included learning 811 is the number to call for health advice or information. It is the new Telehealth number to call. ○ A copy of the Home Maintenance & Repair Referral Program Presentation by Sydney Botelho Program Leader, Links2Care was discussed and shared with the committee. This is a service that the user pays for but at a hopefully lower rate than normal rates but there are no special rates for low-income seniors. The website has all the information https://links2care.ca <p>Halton Age-Friendly – Julie Pennal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Julie is not able to attend the meeting due to the SWAG presentation. ○ A date has been confirmed for the Information Fair at QEPCCC. Tuesday, April 29 from 9-noon and will include community organizations, Policy Review, SWAG and Seniors Services (Try It options will be available) Julie asked for volunteer support from the committee. <p>WOW/Links2Wellbeing – Kelly Meeussen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WOW: No update ○ Links2Wellbeing: No update
<p>7.</p> <p>a.</p>	<p>New Business Arising/Information Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Halton National Right to Housing Day Forum: November 22 – impressions/next steps: Ted shared that there were two speakers, Dr. Dunn (the Senator William McMaster Chair in Urban Health Equity and Associate Dean of Research, McMaster University) and Daryl Kater, Director of Housing Services Halton Region. The audience were provided five questions to discuss in small groups. Daryl outlined the region's situation. Dr. Dunn indicated that affordable housing is a worldwide problem, social assistance is limited, income is low, rental to ownership is almost impossible, cost of land is a big issue. ○ Committee agreed that all three levels of government must be involved along with the re-establishment of the housing coalition. Presentations were very focused on youth and not seniors. ○ Halton CARP – Tom indicated that funding has been received for the Halton Elder Abuse network to support community presentations. Halton CARP gave them \$1000 in 2024. They are also focused on patient centred care in LTC. Will share information about the Information Fair in their newsletter, FB page and share poster.

b. Canada Food Bank Report for 2024 – condensed summary provided by Micheline.

Condensed Summary from the Food Bank Report 2024

Reasons for increased demand across Canada in 2024

1. 6% Increase usage from 2023
 2. March 2024 - 2 million visits across Canada (highest ever reported)
 3. 18% of clients reported work as their main source of income in 2024 compared to 12 % in 2019.
 4. The one-two punch of Housing and food inflation hits the low income earners the most.
 5. In 2024 the food bank usage represents a 90% increase over the use in 2019, thus causing a crisis in the delivery of services.
 6. 70 % of food bank clients live in market rent housing.
 7. Inadequate provincial social assistance remains the most common source of income for food bank clients.
 8. 1/3 of food bank users are children.
 9. 32% of food bank clients are new comers to Canada and have lived here 10 years or less.
 10. The effect of the affordability Crisis & cumulative impact of high inflation are major concerns.
 11. The parallel between the rise of unemployment and food bank usage is of concern.
 12. Record high food insecurity = high food bank usage which is influenced by high rent increases.
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Policy Recommendations

For immediate use:

1. Rapid interest rate hikes and tightened the financial conditions to decrease the decades-high rates of inflations.
2. Increase affordable housing units across Canada
3. Return income supports like CERB & one-time affordably federa and provincial short term buffers.
4. Increase the pressure to offer higher wages and create a more more inclusive labour market.
5. Increase the social infrastructure to absorb the rapid growth in population.
6. Rebuilding Canada's social network for seniors, people with disabilities, families with children ^{or} singles. (Refer to page 92)
7. Resolve the affordable housing Crisis (refer to page 95)
8. Helping workers with low incomes make ends meet. (Refer to page 98)
9. Addressing Northern and remote Food Insecurity and poverty. (Refer to page 101)

Reminder: SWAG presents: Financial Frauds and Scams: Thursday, November 28, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. at Trafalgar Park.

Thursday, January 23 – Frauds and Scam Virtual Presentation from the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

NOTE: SWAG Christmas Luncheon – Thursday, December 19 at noon at the Firehall located at 2390 Lakeshore Road. Please RSVP with Julie – 905-815-5960 or email julie.pennal@oakville.ca

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 22 at 1:30 p.m. in person or via Zoom at Sir John Colborne Centre boardroom with a Zoom presenter.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.