



Meeting: Community Safety and Well-Being Integration Table
Date: November 18, 2021
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Location: Webex

Attendees: Deb Mountenay, Elgin Workforce Development Network
Danielle Neilson, Housing and Homelessness Action Table
Chief Chris Herridge, Public Safety Action Table
Mayor Joe Preston, City of St. Thomas
Wendell Graves, City Manager – City of St. Thomas
Jeff Yurek, Elgin-Middlesex-London Member of Provincial Parliament
Delany Leitch, Member of Provincial Parliament – Jeff Yurek’s Office
Warden Tom Marks, County of Elgin
Julie Gonyou, Chief Administrative Officer – County of Elgin
Carolyn Krahn, Legislative Services Coordinator – County of Elgin
Terry Carroll, Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation

Regrets: Heather Stillitano, Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Steering Committee
Dan Logie, Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network

Minutes

1. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Chief Chris Herridge
Seconded by: Warden Tom Marks

RESOLVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

- Motion Carried

2. Delegation – Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation – Terry Carroll, Executive Director

Terry Carroll presented an overview of the work of the Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation. The Community Foundation was involved in the Community Safety and Well-Being planning process. Most donations to the Community Foundation are directed to a

specific fund. When a specific fund is not requested, the donation goes to the Great-EST Needs Funds, which supports charitable projects that address the most pressing concerns in Elgin-St. Thomas.

The Community Foundation would like to rely on local data to determine where these funds should go, and they are exploring using the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan as a guide for directing the Great-EST Needs Funds.

Terry Carroll is retiring in November of 2021. The new director may request a seat at the Integration Table.

3. Services for Older Adults – Elgin and St. Thomas

The Integration Table received the St. Thomas and Elgin Services for Older Adults Studies.

4. Aylmer-Elgin-St. Thomas Housing and Homelessness Forum

The Integration Table received the Elgin County Housing and Homelessness Needs Assessment.

5. Rural Response to COVID-19 Survey Update

Carolyn Krahn provided a verbal update on the Rural Response to COVID-19 Survey. The digital survey is in its last two (2) weeks. Leith Deacon will be speaking on the *Fields to Forks* program on CTV tonight to talk about the importance of rural mental health. Currently, there are 709 completed digital surveys, and 15,000 paper copies for the entire project. The 15,000 paper copies also include surveys from other communities, and Elgin's numbers will be available in the New Year.

6. Roundtable – Action Tables

i. Education and Skills Development – Elgin Workforce Development Network, Deb Moutenay

Across the region, there are currently around 6,000 jobs that are open. Employers are experiencing frustration in trying to attract workers. The service industry is not experiencing the return of workers to the labour force. There is no consensus as to what is holding people back from re-entering the workforce. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) has closed, but that does not seem to have had a big impact in getting people back into the labour market.

There have been some unexpected reactions to the program that the Workforce Development Network is currently running with manufacturers. People are coming out and participating in the training program, but when they get to the placements, some people decide that they do not want to go into a placement after all. We are also hearing that people are booking job interviews and not keeping them. There seems to be a general attitude out there that people are declining to work.

The message right now is that if people have been looking for work in a particular sector, now is the time to go out and pursue it because employers are interested in giving opportunities to anyone who is showing an interest in that sector or employers.

The Workforce Development Network is doing exit interviews with the people who have declined work placements, but there does not seem to be a specific reason that people are declining to work. The program has had its success stories too, and it is working well for those individuals who want to work.

ii. Housing Security – Housing and Homelessness Action Table, Danielle Neilson

The group formerly known as the Housing and Homelessness Action Group went dormant in 2019 and stayed dormant in 2020. It was revived late summer of 2021 and part of the work to revive it included a rebrand to inspire a new sense of motivation and commitment to do this hard work in the community. The group has changed its name to the Housing Stability Alliance which members of the committee felt more reflected the role of this group's ability to support the work in the community.

The committee also updated their terms of reference. The changes include a clear definition of the vision, which is housing stability for everyone in St. Thomas and Elgin County, and the mission, which is about advising and guiding plans. The mission is not necessarily about decision making although the group does have the opportunity to vote through or endorse specific plans or new policies or procedures related to how we match people in our community who are vulnerable to housing opportunities.

The membership structure was also updated so that people can sign up as an active member or an associate member. Active members attend meetings

regularly and have voting rights, whereas associate members attend meetings as desired/available but do not have voting rights.

The Committee has formal commitments from supportive housing providers in the community to really work through the coordinated access system and the by-name list to ensure that we are matching people who need housing the most to the opportunities when they come up. An example of this partnership would be the work to match people to the new supportive housing, which is Railway Cities, under the Indwell umbrella.

Since late October and into November, they have matched around fifteen (15) individuals in the community with the highest need to housing and it was done specifically through coordinated access in the by-name list. Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, high hospital recidivism, high acuity, indigenous status, and youth status were prioritized. The goal is for the Committee to work through similar projects with some of the other supportive housing providers.

Danielle also reported that the construction fences have gone up to support the construction at 16 Queen Street. This project is in partnership with Indwell and will bring another 45 units of supportive housing to the community.

iii. Mental Health and Well-Being – Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network, Dan Logie

Dan Logie sent his regrets. In an email update to the Integration Table, Dan notified the group that the Elgin Mental Health and Addictions Network is meeting on December 6, 2021. They will continue to discuss how they can support the Community Safety and Well-Being Table, and Dan will provide an update at the next meeting.

iv. Public Safety – Public Safety Action Table, Chief Chris Herridge

The provincial government recently announced two (2) grants for City Police. One (1) of the grants was for the Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) for an additional addictions clinician to be added to the outreach and support team. City Police have met with Dan and his team at CMHA to discuss the MCRT program. At some point, City Police, Aylmer Police, and the OPP would like to sit down together to discuss how their different teams out in the field can work together to maximize resources and enhance entire County coverage.

The second grant is the ongoing Community Safety and Policing grant. Funding from this grant will be used to support the salaries of the Downtown Foot Patrol Team and the mental health worker who is working with the MCRT team. These funds will help support the crisis in the downtown area.

Dan Logie met with City Police to talk about mental health and about what to expect when dealing with persons experiencing a crisis in the downtown area. The conversation included compassion and empathy. The response is not just about enforcement.

Discussions continue about expanding the CCTV program. This program has had benefits not only for the city core, but also in the city outskirts and County. There are eight (8) cameras in the downtown, and there have been a lot of successes. Recently, there was a break and enter near Ross Street, and they were able to identify the suspects using CCTV. Last week, there was a dangerous driving charge and they dumped the vehicle downtown and fled on foot. CCTV also led to the suspect being identified. This afternoon, the discussion will focus on expanding the program into the industrial zone.

Police are planning a Christmas season RIDE program. The staff sergeant covering the program has reached out to the OPP and Aylmer Police to coordinate a joint RIDE program to ensure that roadways are kept safe.

Chief Herridge also let the group know that the Thomas Valley District School Board has paused the school resource officer program. This mentorship program has contributed to the area's low youth criminal justice charges, and it is important that officers continue to have a presence in schools.

v. Substance Use and Addiction – Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Steering Committee, Heather Stillitano

Heather sent her regrets and shared the following update via email:

The Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy has engaged with a consultant firm, Collective Results, out of Guelph to assist the Elgin Drug and Alcohol Strategy Steering Committee with the completion of their community strategy. This firm has been working weekly with Heather Stillitano, and in consultation with the Steering Committee to prepare community consultation materials. The goal of the community consultation will consist of four (4) pathways of data collection:

1. A community survey,
2. A Front Line Staff Survey (for various organizations in the community),
3. Peer interviews with persons with lived expertise, and
4. 25-30 key informant detailed interviews.

These survey materials are being presented to the Steering Committee this week for review and approval, with the aim to begin data collection the week of December 6, 2021. The Steering Committee will also be working this week to approve and solidify the list of key informants in the community that will be approached for a more in-depth consultation. The Steering Committee intends to present to St. Thomas City Council in December.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

St. Thomas/ Elgin County Labour Market Consultation

Raw Whiteboard Responses



St. Thomas/ Elgin County Local Labour Market Consultations

Whiteboard Questions and Attendee Answers

Monday, October 4, 2021

1. **What should be done to improve LM results of the population groups at risk? How do we foster equitable and inclusive regional job opportunities? (Youth, NEET, Indigenous, females, immigrant, visible minorities, etc.)**
 - a. Training opportunities
 - b. Partnerships with community groups/facilities that serve youth
 - c. Promotion of in-demand career paths
 - d. Discussing with employers' ways to make their workforce more diverse- providing supports to groups at risk, accommodations, job carves
 - e. Engaging people from the populations that are underrepresented in the labour market
 - f. Engaging people from the populations that are underrepresented in the labour market
 - g. Diversity training at workplaces to better support immigrant and visible minorities in the workplace (retention)
 - h. Subsidies, scholarships, etc. for in-demand career paths. For subsidies, etc. that already exist, communicate these programs to applicable groups better
 - i. Discussions with employers to provide opportunities for those that may initially need more mentoring
 - j. Broad marketing program to reach newcomers, women, youth
 - k. Host targeted forums to determine their needs
 - l. It's best to hear what their needs are from them directly. We've done this before, but their needs may change. We need targeted forums based on the priority groups to hear their needs directly. We want to think about the person as a whole, not just as a working person. That will better prepare them for the labour market.
 - m. Forums should be regularly scheduled so there are ongoing opportunities to hear from people
 - n. Single source to find training
 - o. Contextualized programming that leads to LM involvement
 - p. People may feel more comfortable when they're within like-groups of people. If we had support to offer target populations, we could see if that would make it more comfortable for them to come. If we can contextualize things into people's culture, they may be more likely to be involved. We would need more funds to isolate the targeted populations to hear them directly.
 - q. Employers not expecting grade 12 for entry level position. Grade 12 doesn't necessarily bring a loyal and hardworking staff.
 - r. Transportation (check of agreement from another attendee)
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- s. Hands-on training added to existing programming, so people get a real sense of what the jobs are like
 - i. One of the things we keep hearing is that people get into programs and then it's not exactly what they expect/ what it's like on the job. This provides them with the opportunity to manage their expectations beforehand.
- t. Housing opportunities for workers recruited from outside of the community (check of agreement from another attendee)

2. With what do we replace the federal and provincial financial support in the region?

How?

- a. Concentrated training i.e., PSW in short amount of time
 - b. Transportation assistance. Several unfilled rural full-time factory positions
 - c. Paid training
 - d. As the funding is ending, we can access those lists or can they be provided with learning and employment opportunities
 - e. I'm not sure we can supply/replace government support funding, but we can seek to understand better why people don't go back to work. The jobs are there for sure! Is there COVID fear still- for instance?
 - f. Change edibility rules: programming that is currently being offered is incredible. It's hard to access it though, where is it? Just applying can be restrictive. We need to broaden some of the eligibility rules because there are some populations being missed. Some young men are struggling to uplift for some standard Second Careers and other programs. We should make it more accessible. Right now, it's a bit confined. Accessing the free dollars that are available for free training, in class training, etc. There is a lack of participation, and this could help that because they are all a bit connected.
 - g. I agree. There's a lot going on and it would be great to have a list and short blurb of training opportunities for employment counsellors and community service providers.
 - h. I wonder if there are opportunities for job seekers to talk to employers in other settings than a job fair. Pillar Non-Profit has a fair of sorts that invited people interested working in non-profits to understand networking and other points of importance in NPs. I'm wondering if there are opportunities like this to help the awareness around certain jobs and the interesting things about them that are unique to the field. Going to the job seeker, being creative and innovative as to how to recruit and educate job seekers. Sharing ideas with how to get people involved in our community- increase uptake.
 - i. We must find a way to make sure that as people go into occupations and sectors, they need to be the ones that are in demand. We need to encourage people to go into programs that are for occupations that are in demand. If there is a way to expose people to the industry, not necessarily them going into the industry, but a standardized way for them to understand what it's about. We need to connect
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people to industries, so they understand what it's like to work in these industries. Experiential learning. Standardized way to expose people to certain industries (in demand industries)

3. What should we do to maintain the entrepreneurial spirit in the region? (Business and job creation and self-employment)

- a. Providing opportunities for those considering opening their own business-workshops, opportunities where to start, how to start. Individuals are doing a complete pivot but there's a lot of hesitation due to our economy right now. In the meantime, let's plant seeds that this can be done. Increase anticipation for post-covid. Simple things: how to create a business plan, how to get it up and running.
- b. That could be handled with referrals to Elgin Business Resource Centre or Small Business Enterprise Centre unless there is a gap they are not supporting and are unaware of
- c. I think the idea of workshops for entrepreneurship is a great idea
- d. Access to interpretation service for immigrants looking to start a business
- e. Create a list of resources for those willing to enter Entrepreneurship
- f. Continue celebrating businesses through the Small Business Centre and Elgin Business Resource Centre
- g. More opportunities to give profile to new start businesses through established websites and social media
- h. Elgin has very successful centres to help businesses get started
- i. Reinstate funding for people on EI to investigate entrepreneurship. The provincial government used to provide funding for Elgin Business Resource Centre- funding that was for people who were on EI, if they were thinking of starting a small business, they could stay on EI during the planning process. It was cancelled, but very effective in the London ER
- j. Rental subsidies for new businesses
- k. It's been a long-standing strategy to develop a small business mentoring program. The mentoring program often comes up in discussion, but taking it on is extremely challenging
- l. SWIFT is the group that is overseeing the expansion of connectivity in SW Ontario. They have a website with information on their progress. They look specifically at having more connectivity across SW Ontario. The recommendations they're doing is through government funding through SWIFT. The website tells you where the expansions are happening/ the timeline.

4. What can be done regionally to improve the quality of the regional talent? (SAOs, micro-credential programs, etc.)

- a. Reskilling program for women/ on-binary people. This population was affected greatly by the pandemic. There's data analysis, cyber security, and other specific training for specific industries to reskill the population over the next few years.
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Ryerson has a program, but it can be drastically expensive, making it unrealistic for some populations. These organizations work in partnerships to reskill this population.

- b. Uplift Program- Manufacturing/hospital upskilling- looking for people with some training/experience in a variety of sectors. This program covers full cost, laptops, etc. Remote learning has advanced this learning. It won't all be remote, but some. Next year will be focused on advanced manufacturing.
 - c. Investments in digital literacy -and digital education- strike me as extremely important, especially since working-from-home now plays a dynamic roll in the labour market.
 - d. Keep working with employers to get more specific understanding to their needs to make programming as relevant as possible.
 - e. Some ways of engaging people in workplaces will have to change. People are reevaluating what they want from the workplace, and this must be a consideration going forward.
 - f. Being a rural, manufacturing, "blue collar" employer, we're having trouble finding workers. We have great wages, full benefits, and pension, and we can't find anyone. They only need to understand English, need to be able to read and write, no high school necessary. The future seems uncertain because if we're struggling right now, we will be in the future too.
 - g. There is a difficulty getting people into manufacturing and many other industries as well. People tend to look very short term, on a day-to-day basis, rather than a long-term, down the road perspective.
 - h. We've approached a few companies to see if they had potential staff who didn't make the cut to see if they could refer them to our training to gain skills and upgrading i.e., Build Your Skills. It has not been successful so far.
- 5. How much can remote work help the recruitment retention challenge of the regional employers? Should employers be more involved in training and personal development to solve their recruitment retention challenges?**
- a. For office level positions, remote work is an excellent attraction and retention strategy. However, in the manufacturing industry, it is not an option for our General Labourer and Welder positions.
 - b. Remote work is not really an option for more of the sectors identified as having the most difficulties in the earlier presentation
 - c. Gradual transitions are always an option as well. The first period can be done on site, then transition into a remote working environment
 - d. Employers may have to step away from that classic managerial approach to their hiring process. Job seekers/ employees are looking at their workplace, workdays, and their contribution. Their looking for employers who are going to spend time developing them and if young people especially don't see their potential to climb the latter, they're less likely to pursue that industry
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- e. Remote work can create a great work-life balance for employees, but they can then miss out on being a part of the company culture, and lack of loyalty to the company if they're not involved in the workplace

6. Why did the Apprenticeship Program enrollments drop so dramatically? What labour market signals makes this career choice more attractive? (Construction and Home Renovation flourished post pandemic)

- a. Apprenticeship school terms and tests were delayed significantly during the pandemic
 - b. Demand for licensed skilled trades is high but to have licenced people they need to have served an apprenticeship
 - c. The possibility of a career is important. I work with many people who are looking for the security and personal growth that come from knowing they can pursue a career with long-term security and benefits
 - d. Employers not accepting 1st and 2nd year apprentices
 - e. Employers should offer the opportunities within their organizations
 - f. Perhaps increase or re-run previous apprentice marketing videos
 - g. Difficulties finding sponsors
 - h. Once people drop out it's hard to get them back and apprentices would have been lower in seniority during the pandemic and may have been the first laid off
 - i. Apprenticeships take a long time to complete. About 4 years of schooling and experience. Perhaps condensing this would help make it more attractive.
 - j. Lack of stable opportunities- Once people drop out, it's hard to get back. With the lay-offs and being without seniority, they would've been laid off. It does take 4 years of school, training, and experience to gain your journeyman. Are employers keeping folks there? If they spend a couple years with one employer, they must go find someone else to take them on. Finding an employer to take them on in general can be very hard. The ratios of journeyman and apprentices is a struggle. After finishing their education, they can just not find an employer to take them on.
 - k. So much depends on the relationship between the employer and the apprentice. An apprentice at any stage in their program is snapped up by other employers.
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