

REQUEST TO SPEAK TO A COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

4.7

If your request is for a specific committee meeting, this form must be received by NOON the day before the scheduled committee meeting. Requests for Monday meetings must be received the Friday before the meeting. Requests for meetings scheduled for the day after a statutory holiday must be received the last business day before the meeting.

Standing Committee Requested

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audit and Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development & Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Health | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency & Community Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committee of the Whole | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works |

Requestor Information

Name: John Schalkwyk

Organization: Domiciliary Hostel Advisory Committee and Coalition of Residential Care Facilities Tenants

Do you or your organization represent a lobbyist (voluntary) Yes No

Contact Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Reason(s) for delegation request: Advocate for Residential Care Facility Tenants

Will you be submitting a formal presentation? Yes No

Requests to speak to Council are forwarded to the Standing Committee for consideration. Once considered by Committee, and approved, you will be notified of the date for your presentation. Personal information collected on this form is authorized under Section 5.10(2) of the City's Procedural By-law No. 10-053 for the purpose of contacting individuals and/or organizations requesting an opportunity to appear as a delegation before a Standing Committee and will be published with the Committee Agenda. The Voluntary Lobbyist Registry is a public document and will be available for viewing in the City Clerk's office. The Procedural By-law is a requirement of Section 238(2) of the Municipal Act. Questions about its collection can be directed to the Manager, Legislative Services / Deputy Clerk, 71 Main St. W., Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5, 905 546-2424 ext. 4304.

**Coalition of Residential Care Facilities Tenants
City Council
Emergency & Community Services
Thursday, September 8th, 2011**

As a member of the Domiciliary Hostel Advisory Committee and as a member of the Coalition of Residential Care Facilities Tenants, I would like to advocate for Domiciliary Hostel Tenants.

Being in a Residential Care Facility means you will never be alone and will always be fed and have a roof over your head, the basics of human existence. As the most vulnerable of society, taking this away would be terrifying for many tenants. Also, Residential Care Facilities help with the issue of loneliness. There is always someone around. It should be noted that not everyone can go on to independent living, either by choice or because of a lack of opportunity.

For most tenants of Residential Care Facilities, the monthly Personal Needs Allowance of \$130.00 is their entire discretionary income. While some tenants supplement their Personal Needs Allowance with paid work, a study in January of 2009 of Domiciliary Hostel Programs in Ontario revealed only 4% were able to work in a paid position. This means that while food and lodging are provided, the Personal Needs Allowance must cover everything from hygiene products, clothes, shoes, entertainment and socialization.

It is a issue of quality of life. The key is little disposable income. It is harder to save when you have little money. Obviously, this is very demoralizing. This is an issue of dignity – to have a few dollars in your

pocket for your self-esteem. The Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) needs to be increased substantially. As a member of the Coalition of Residential Care Facility Tenants, a group of tenants and supporters, we have been advocating and lobbying for an increase in the PNA for many years.

SHS Consulting prepared a report on behalf of the Domiciliary Hostel Advisory Committee. In the report the researched suggested a figure of \$200.00 per month for the PNA would be more appropriate.

The report also suggests there are things which the city could do to help with the PNA. One would be to top-up the PNA or to provide additional discretionary income for things like clothing and transportation. Transportation is critical to allow participation in programs, support services as well as social interaction. These benefits help provide healthy physical, emotional and social spinoffs.

Further on on the issue of income, the report realized the importance of providing accurate information on the treatment of tenant earnings to operators and tenants. ODSP and OW recipients have a \$100.00 work related benefit if they have earnings and can exempt 50% of their earnings. Operators and tenants need better education regarding benefits.

The researchers found some facilities were not in compliance with standards. This is especially important because of security, it can be stressful not knowing if yourself or your belongings are safe.

The report also realizes that tenants have limited ways to have their voice heard, in fact there are none. To remedy this, the report advocates for an advisory committee which would include tenants. This committee would in turn report to council.

The report suggest that Residential Care Facilities should be person-directed rather than program directed. A person-directed approach means it is responsive to the needs of the person who uses them rather than the program dictating the person's needs.

I would like to quote from the report which I consider the essence of the study. This can be found on pages 20 and 21 of the report.

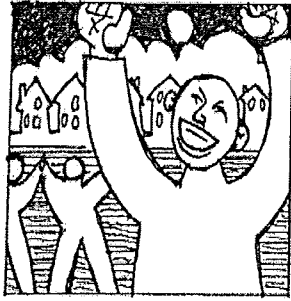
“To support residents in achieving their potential, residents would benefit from access to a resident support worker. It is envisioned that the resident support worker would work collaboratively with residents to facilitate the establishment and achievement of person goals directed and determined by the resident; provide information to residents and operators related to available support services, competitive employment and employment programs and the City's Licensing By-law; connect residents and operators with the City and other community services; and advocate on behalf of residents to address issues with their tenancy or support services.

The resident support workers would provide a linkage between the resident and the staff/operator as well as the City, and could lessen the power imbalances that currently exist. Resident support workers could also provide a neutral party who could identify more appropriate living arrangements as needs change. Further, resident support workers could conduct annual surveys/interviews with residents regarding their satisfaction with their Domiciliary Hostel, the quality of life supports they receive, and the assistance they are provided to help meet their potential. The provision of resident support workers could have one of the most significant positive impacts for residents.

It appears that the City is in the best position to explore and facilitate the provision of resident support workers. It is suggested that the City should explore the option of having City staff act as resident support

workers, as this would facilitate communication, integration, and accountability for the services provided. It is anticipated that this would require increased capacity within the City's Domiciliary Hostel Program to be able to take on this responsibility. The specific level of resources required to undertake this initiative should be explored further by the City. As an alternative, the City should also explore the possibility of contracting this to a community agency to provide such services. A component of residential supports may also include peer supports”.

These enhancements would go a long way from the model which is simply custodial care to rehabilitation focus.



Coalition of Residential Care Facility Tenants Newsletter

c/o Housing Help Centre 210 Napier Street, Hamilton, ON L8R 1S7
www.rcf.tenants.ca

September 2011 - Volume 11

An Issue on the Personal Needs Allowance for tenants living in Residential Care Facilities.



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A Message from Our Chair

Hello, my name is Lance Dignman. I am the chair of the Coalition. Our Coalition is a group of tenants, ex-tenants who self, and supporters who advocate for both the rights of the tenants living in Residential Care Facilities and the improvement of Residential Care Facilities standards in Hamilton.

I want to inform you that, in June 2011, our Coalition celebrated the 10th ANNIVERSARY of our **CAMPAIGN:**

"RAISE THE PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE". In June 2001, we worked with MPP David Christopherson to present a petition (supported with 3,200 signatures) to the Ontario Legislature at Queen's Park.

We have yet to succeed in our attempt to convince the provincial government to consider our petition. But our Coalition will continue to get support, raise awareness and work

towards policy change that rectifies the inadequacies of the current Personal Needs Allowance.

I also want you to know that the Domiciliary Hostel Advisory Committee is working with the City of Hamilton Housing and Homeless Division on a review of the Domiciliary Hostel Program (including RCFs). Included in the evaluation is how RCFs can be enhanced to assist tenants to achieve their personal potential (ie: rehabilitation versus custodial care).

Personal Needs Allowance Is Inadequate!

The PNA is a discretionary income received by people living in Residential Care Facilities. Tenants in these facilities are individuals who need supported housing and who cannot work due to mental illness, a physical or developmental disability, or because they are seniors.

The importance of the PNA for most people who live in Residential Care Facilities cannot be overstated. We believe that it is important for tenants to have an adequate monthly PNA to be able to participate on the most basic

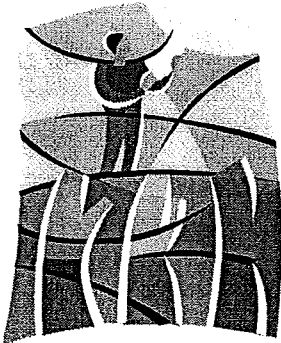
level. This is particularly true for RCF tenants who are isolated and have no family or friends to purchase personal items.

The PNA is currently valued at \$130.00 per month (or roughly \$4.33 per day). Although the provincial government raised the PNA from \$112.00 to \$130.00 over the last 10 years, we believe this increase must be set against the decade-long decline in the real value of the allowance. In real terms, we believe that people relying on the PNA have lost substantial ground against the

rising cost of living. Two years ago, our Coalition completed an inventory of the cost of the basic necessities for people living in the city's residential care facilities. Our Coalition arrived at an base estimate of roughly \$180.00 for an individual's monthly needs.

Our Coalition is concerned about the level of the PNA because it impacts the quality of life of a majority of tenants in Residential Care Facilities. We believe the inadequacy of the PNA requires urgent attention by the provincial government.

10th ANNIVERSARY OF "RAISE THE PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE" CAMPAIGN



For more information on the Coalition's work, please contact:

Lance at
905-577-9169

or

Henry at
905-526-8100 x
202.

Our Coalition is run by and for people who live in the city's Residential Care Facilities. Many people in these facilities rely on the Personal Needs Allowance as their primary or sole source of income. While food and lodging area provided for people in these facilities, the PNA must often cover everything else from hygiene products, clothing, shoes and entertainment.

Throughout the Coalition's history, poverty has always been a principal target of action. In January 1996, a few months after our creation, our Coalition developed a tenants' survey. Tenants were very concerned with the issue of the inadequacy of their Personal Needs Allowance. In 1997, Our Coalition started lobbying for an increase in the

PNA. At this time we sent letters to the Ministers of Community and Social Services to express our concerns.

In May 2,000, we decided to work on a petition to request the Provincial Government to increase the PNA. On June 14, 2001, after one year of hard work, representatives of our Coalition made our way up to Toronto to watch as more than 3000 signatures were presented in the Ontario Legislature at Queen's Park by Hamilton-West MPP David Christopherson.

One critically flagged point of concern was that the PNA had not been increased since 1991. We requested the Provincial Government to review and increase the PNA from \$112.00 to \$160.00.

Our Coalition has been advocating for an increase in the Personal Needs Allowance for the last number of years. Although the provincial government has raised the PNA from \$112.00 to \$130.00 over the last 20 years, we believe this increase it is not enough.

Our Coalition believes that the Personal Needs Allowance has to be at least \$200.00. Our Coalition will continue to press the Provincial Government for a fair increase.

Come and join our Coalition!

It will better you & your community. Together, we can make a difference!

One Phone Number to Express all your Complaints !

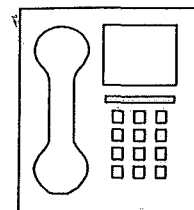
We would like to inform you that according to the new Residential Care Facilities by-law: All complaints about residential care facilities will now be received at:

905-546-2063

This is the intake number for Infectious Disease and Residential Care Facilities program staff. Staff will receive and log the complaint and forward it to the appropriate department for follow up.

All complaints will be confidential!

We recommend all residents of Residential Care Facilities to call.





We want to inform you that Kaz Klonowski, our friend and member of our coalition, passed away in March of 2011. HOMES (Good Shepherd Centre) organized a Memorial Service to Celebrate the Life of Kaz, and the well attended Service was held on March 28, 2011 at the First Pilgrim United Church at 200 Main Street.

REMEMBERING KAZ KLONOWSKI

Kaz was one of the founding members of our Coalition. Since the creation of our coalition in September 1995, Kaz attended systematically to our monthly meetings at the Housing Help Centre (both at the first Rebecca Street and then at Napier Street). Our Coalition will miss Kaz's ideas, support, sense of humor, and concern about the living conditions of tenants living at Residential Care Facilities in Hamilton.

To continue with Kaz's legacy, we want to invite you to join our Coalition. We meet the 3rd Saturday of each month at the Housing Help Centre at 210 Napier Street, Hamilton, at 11.30 am. Lunch is provided. Contact Lance Dingman or Henry Aviles

Contact information is on page 2 of this newsletter.

CITY OF HAMILTON

DOMICILIARY HOSTEL PROGRAM REVIEW

In November 2010, John Schalkwyk, a member of our Coalition, informed us that the Domiciliary Hostel Advisory Committee was going to work with the City of Hamilton Housing and Homeless Division's management team to guide the development and review of the Domiciliary Hostel Program. The Residential Care Facilities are part of this program.

Then in December 2010, John informed us that the Domiciliary Advisory Committee put forward a Request for Proposal for Consultants to Evaluate Residential Care Facilities in Hamilton. The scope of this report was not part of evaluating Schedule 20 or RCF By-law. The specific purpose of the evaluation was to assess Residential Care Facilities. Included in the criteria for evaluation is how the Residential Care Facilities can be used to enhance and assist

the tenants to achieve their personal potential. The two consultants from the SHS Consulting group contacted our Coalition and asked for our feedback. The consultants attended our March 2011 meeting at the Housing Help Centre. Their report will be released in May 2011.

Today, we want to share with you our answer to three questions the consultants asked us in that meeting.

1-Work of our Coalition:

Regarding this point, we told the consultant's that our Coalition would like to get our website up and going again to increase awareness of the work of the Coalition and to offer resources to tenants. The Coalition has made some progress in their advocacy work: if tenants move out, they now automatically get a start-up allowance and the get their money at the beginning of the month; the Coalition has been fighting for improved

security, including advocating for tenants to be able to lock their door and have a locker.

These things have been included in the revised by-law; and the personal needs allowance has increased marginally. The Coalition would like to work on: advocating for rehabilitation services, as opposed to Residential Care Facilities providing custodial care and advocating for increased PNAs.

2-What role are RCFs playing in the housing continuum in Hamilton? What role should they be playing?

Our Coalition believes that RCFs play an important role. They provide a roof over people's heads, food, and a chance to be around other people. RCFs can also assist with transition (this was the original purpose of RCFs in Hamilton). However, a lot more can be done to move RCFs to a rehabilitation focus.

"A lot more can be done to move Residential Care Facilities to a rehabilitation focus".



**COALITION OF
RESIDENTIAL CARE
FACILITIES
TENANTS**

Housing Help Centre
210 Napier Street
Hamilton, ON L8R 1S7

Phone: 905-526-8100

Fax: 905-528-1448

E-mail:

coalitionrcf@hotmail.com

We are on the web!
www.rcftenants.ca

**Directions to the
Housing Help Centre:**

210 Napier Street,
Hamilton

Located:

2 blocks north of
King St West,
between
Locke St North &
Pearl St North

Together we can make a difference!

Ways you can get involved:

Join the Coalition!

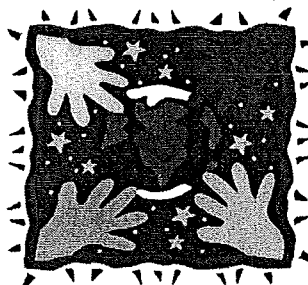
We meet the **3rd Saturday of each month** at the

Housing Help Centre
210 Napier Street, Hamilton

At 11:30 am

Lunch is provided.

Contact Henry Aviles (905-526-8100)



DOMICILIARY HOSTEL PROGRAM REVIEW continued

3-What should be improved to better meet residents' needs?

Our Coalition believes that people going into RCFs have rehabilitation needs. There is a need for better food. Operators are not always following the diet plans. Also, clothing must come out of personal needs allowances, which results in a low quality of dress. In addition, a lot of people are not able to get out and get their clothing themselves.

The by-law is good and has set out requirements for improved food, privacy, room sharing, and private phones, but the requirements have not been enforced. One example is that in one of the RCFs, tenants don't have access to a private phone.

There should be a mandatory annual inspections to ensure the by-law is being enforced. It was also suggested that there be surprise inspections.

Conclusion:

We believe there is a need for someone to assist tenants transitioning out of RCFs when they are ready. Graduated steps through the residential care facility system is important. Perhaps there should be compensation for operators to focus on these rehabilitation needs.

