

**Task Force for the Elimination of Poverty Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 24, 2014, 4:00 - 6:30 PM**  
**Willow Room, Boyle Street Plaza**  
**9538-103A Avenue**

**Present:**

Members: Mayor Don Iveson (Co-Chair), Minister Heather Klimchuk, Councillor Ben Henderson, Justin Archer, Jeffrey Bisanz, Kate Chisholm, Yvonne Chiu, Dr. Joseph Doucet, Dr. Louis Francescutti, Mark Holmgren Councillor Amarjeet Sohi, Eugene Ip, Carman McNary, Zahra Somani, Sarah Eadie, Sandra Huculak, Tiffany Linke-Boyko, Maria Mayan, Janice Melnychuk, Anne Smith, Dr. Daniel McKennitt

Guests: Gord Johnston, Keith Gacek

COE Staff: Lyall Brenneis, Kate Gunn, Patricia Waisman, Walter Trocenko, Patricia Waismann, Ward Antoniuk, Lucenia Ortiz, Spela Crnic, Kris Andreychuk, Gord Stewart, Jay Freeman

Guests: Laura Templeton, Catrin Owen, Corinne Saad, Sofiat Akinola

**Regrets:** Bishop Jane Alexander (Co-Chair), Lisa Weber, Councillor Amarjeet Sohi

**Minutes**

**Discussion**

**1. Call to Order**

- Mayor Don Iveson called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.
- Mayor Iveson welcomed Minister of Human Services, Hon. Heather Klimchuk and Anne Smith from United Way Capital Region to the Task Force.
- Mayor Iveson also reported that the Task Force Update Report to City Council last September 23 was well-received by Council.
- The Sept. 24 agenda and the July 17 minutes were approved.

**2. Appointments to the Task Force**

A motion to appoint Anne Smith, Fiona Cavanagh, Lisa Weber and Dr. Daniel McKennit was carried.

**3. Updates**

**A. Communications and Engagement**

The Communications and Engagement Committee (CEC) will now be a blended committee recognizing that their work is pivotal and cross-cutting in accomplishing the mandate of the Task Force. Calder Bateman was introduced as the consultant who will be supporting the work of the Engagement and Communications Committee. This work entails developing and delivering a detailed communication and engagement approach, providing ongoing strategic communications advices and conducting a solutions and actions-focused engagement with key stakeholders and people with lived experience of poverty.

Justin and Sandra presented a branding message to give the Task Force its own identity: “End Poverty Edmonton” and gathered feedback from the Task Force. Over-all the branding

message was well-received; it is simple and drives home the vision of the Task Force strongly.

A few suggestions were put forward: consider a multilingual translation of the branding message, gather inputs from those with lived experience of poverty and move it on Twitter as soon as we can.

The joint Communications and Engagement Committee (CEC) will commence working on the detailed communications and engagement plan, including key messages for the Task Force.

**Action:**

Communications and Engagement Committee will be present updates and plan in the Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**B. Round Table Updates**

A joint Round Table Learning Workshop between the Aboriginal Round Table and the Information and Research Round Table was held last Sept. 11. The Learning Work Shop focused on relationship building, presentations on poverty through various lenses, and action planning for the months ahead. A critical path was presented to show the key activities in the Task Force and how each of the Task Force structures (Round Tables and Working Groups) support the work.

**Action:**

A copy of the Critical Path be provided to the Task Force members.

**C. Edmonton Poverty Profile**

The Edmonton Social Planning Council was contracted to develop a profile of poverty in Edmonton. The poverty profile will set out the major facts on poverty and examine the pattern of poverty in the city to see how it varies across demographic characteristics, neighborhoods and social and/or cultural communities. The profile is also intended to provide benchmarks to monitor progress of the Task Force's End Poverty in Edmonton Plan. A draft to be circulated to the Round Tables for the beginning of October.

#### **4. Families First Edmonton Presentation**

Presented findings and analysis of their longitudinal study of experience of low income families, including factors that enable them to move out of poverty. Specifically, the presentation included data and discussions on patterns of poverty among low income families, changes in depth of poverty over time and patterns of service usage of low income families. The presentation identified the following key learnings that have implications in the work of the Task Force:

- Confirmed that female employed lone parent families constitute the largest number of the study participants which aligns with current statistics on who are most impacted by poverty
- Families living in poverty are diverse and solutions to move them out of poverty should be sensitive to their needs, capacities and circumstances
- Access to social services lead to better health outcomes which means that how we deliver social services is more significant than what services are provided
- Predictive factors can be identified that influence depth of poverty; these factors include mentoring relations and social supports (friends and family) that impacts reducing barriers to participation, gaining self-esteem, addressing mental health issues and improving general

health.

## 5. Review of Draft Assumptions

Re-schedule for next meeting.

### Action:

A quick poll/survey be undertaken to gather Task Force feedback on the draft assumptions before the Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> meeting to facilitate review and discussion of the draft assumptions.

## 6. Confirm definition of poverty and focal areas

### Working Definition of poverty

The revised definition of poverty discussed for confirmation. A motion to add the phrase “or the lack” in the definition was presented and the motion was carried. The updated definition now reads:

*“Edmontonians experience poverty when they lack or are denied the economic and social resources to have a quality of life that sustains and facilitates full and meaningful participation in the community.”* (For the full definition, please see Attachment 1)

This definition covers not only people who are actively denied resources but also those where appropriate resources simply are not available because of cultural practices, lack of appropriate policies, or lack of funding.to an individual.

### Focal Areas

The updated focal areas were presented by the Task Force. It was suggested to include physical and mental disabilities in the demographic lenses.

An issue was raised which focal area would include access to legal protection or should there be a need for another working group to cover a broader area of democratic and civic rights where legal protection could be one of the key elements.

### Action

A Sub-Group composed of Sarah Eadie, Carman McNary and Maria Mayan will meet to discuss this suggestion further and provide recommendations to the Task Force at the next meeting.

A motion to accept the working definition of poverty and focal areas as modified was put forward. Motion was carried.

## 7. Wrap-up

- October meeting- Homeward Trust will do a short presentation on their related work
- Poverty Profile is due to be launched in October, so it will be a busy month as our 6 Working Groups get rolling and our Communications and Engagement work gets underway.
- We will begin to define our goals and further develop our key approaches (advocacy, engagement & communication, asset-based, investment etc).
- The Round Tables will provide us with their recommendations on poverty measures.

### **7. Adjournment**

- Meeting adjourned at 6:40pm.
- Next Task Force meeting: Tuesday, October 21 from 4:00 to 6:30 pm
- Location: Boyle Street Plaza

**Working Definition of Poverty  
Adopted on September 24, 2014**

**“Edmontonians experience poverty when they lack or are denied economic, social and cultural resources to have a quality of life that sustains and facilitates full and meaningful participation in the community.”**

**Context**

Our definition of poverty reflects the Task Force’s understanding of the historical roots and systemic causes of poverty in Edmonton and how it impacts the ways we seek solutions to end poverty. We view poverty beyond the lack of material resources to conditions that limit people’s capacity to build trusting and helping connections with each other and with their communities. This definition affirms our commitment to tackle the roots of poverty, address the immediate effects of poverty and to engage those with lived experience with dignity and in meaningful and authentic ways.

**Key assumptions on the definition of poverty**

1. The definition reflects the community experience of poverty and includes key aspects that can be measured.
2. The definition aligns with the definition of the Provincial Poverty Strategy the United Way’s Creating Pathways Out of Poverty and with those of other Canadian cities.
3. Diverse and comprehensive perspectives representing Aboriginal people, newcomers, single parents, and others living in poverty should be embedded in the overall approach of the poverty elimination plan as it is developed.

**Measuring Poverty**

No single measure of poverty can completely describe, explain or assess poverty in Edmonton. In keeping with our definition of poverty, the Task Force will explore and consider using a variety of measures of poverty which may include:

1. Economic Resources (Income and Expenditure Measures) – Low Income Measure (LIM) after Tax, Consumption Indicators etc.
2. Social Resources ( Deprivation Indices)
3. Quality of Life Indicators (FCM’s Quality Of Life Reporting System, Canadian Index of Well Being)
4. Prosperity Measures (Genuine Wealth measures)

**Key elements in the definition**

1. Edmontonians –individuals, families and groups who live in Edmonton and reflects diversity in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, life stages, ethnicity, culture, abilities and socio-economic status
2. Economic resources –the sum of all monetary and material resources that individuals have control of to meet their daily needs including wages and salaries, income transfers, value of assets and earnings from other sources
3. Social resources –both non-monetary and non-material resources that individuals have control of to function effectively at home, at work and in their community including access to services, social supports and the capacity to build social connections and relationships
4. Cultural resources –sum of values, beliefs and practices as well as the historical and social experience shared by a group of people. It means that understanding the causes of poverty must consider the historical roots of the poverty among Aboriginal peoples and the cultural nature of the poverty among ethnic and cultural minorities. More importantly, the solutions to poverty must incorporate the values and perspectives of

Aboriginal culture as well as harness the talents and skills of people from culturally and linguistically diverse cultures.

5. Quality of life – individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns.(WHO, 1997)
6. Full and meaningful participation – the ability, a sense of belonging and confidence to take part in the community's social, economic, political and civic life
7. Community – social unit that shares a common identity, values and relationships