Al Wiebe's presentation to EPC

This is Al Wiebe chair of the lived exp Circle

Founder and co chair of the Canadian Lived experience leadership network.and on the steering committee of MPHM

In light of the tragic death in a camp the other day , I'd like to start on the encampments. This tragedy and even the camps need not have happened if all three levels of govt had invested in housing years ago rather than bandaid shelder solutions

That being said the city's actions towards the homeless have been very mixed.

The RFP to remove all encampments with NO where to place the residents showed a clear lack of empathy . The noise emitters under the Maryland bridges was an inhumane act that trampled on human rights. Last weeks response to the folks in bus shelter folks by a councilor showed a brutal insenitivity.

This requires the city to hire a community engagement specialist to bring understanding to the city staff and indeed the council .The city gave itself a black eye with some of these actions that would not have happened had a lived experience advocate been within the realm of city hall yet the city is content to self inflict wounds .

An extension is needed to come up with a formula that would work for this to happen.

I want to congratulate the city and Councilor Gilroy for it's offering of the 15 lots for $1. This is a step in the right direction in building new units. They should come with the caviat of being built for * Housing geared to income * That is the entire key to everything . We need low income folks to be able to access these units .

192 Sherbrooke is a case in point where the city can do incredibly good things .Instead of placing rent st 30% of income the city has marked it at 75% of market which eliminates those living below the poverty line .This should be a priority change and an extension would allow for this to be put in documentation.

Thirdly Transit. I had a meeting with transit and a few other gentlemen with an offer of 436k to fund the #3 bus.

I think health and safety concerns were understandably a barrier , that being said , allowing free ridership to those that can't afford a ticket should remain a string mandate that drivers have a good understanding on especially in extreme weather conditions .

The rumour has it that a * free* bus is coming the sooner the better applied here.

An extension is needed from my lived experience perspective to narrow the focus on a number of issues that the city would be willing to accept.

Why lived experience here today ? If you have ever watched any sporting event

The colour commentator is always a former player or coach with intimate details of the game . We are the ones who can provide that knowledge . We are the truth tellers and knowledge keepers when it comes down to homelessness and poverty , yet ignored for too long .

Again a strong lived experienced voice of advocacy or a LE liaison would have prevented the city's self inflicted black eye .

Please give the Poverty reduction team and advisors an extension to ensure that the points are focussed and complete.

I want to thank the police and those from city hall working with myself EHW and others in resolving issues we can re the homeless . It has been a great community effort keeping folks alive during this extreme weather period.

Please take time to reflect on the life that was lost . He was a peer to you a peer to me no more no less with family and friends to grieve.

Yours truly

Al Wiebe

*Of no fixed address *

Peer and community engagement

Lived exp and housing programming

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