

February 22, 2021

File: 0550-01

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities
Attention: Resolutions Coordinator
Local Government House
525 Government Street
Victoria, BC V8V 0A8
Via email: avicc@ubcm.ca

Dear Sir/Madam:

RE: 2021 AVICC RESOLUTION – OPIOID CRISIS

At the February 10, 2021 Capital Regional District (CRD) Board meeting, the Board of Directors adopted the attached resolution to submit for consideration at the 2021 AVICC Convention.

A similar resolution was considered and endorsed by District of Saanich Council on February 8, 2021 for submission to AVICC. Please note, the CRD Board is advancing a revised resolution - with the removal of "free" [supply] and addition of "UBCM".

Should you require further information or have any questions, please contact Marlene Lagoa at 250-360-3127 or by email at mlagoa@crd.bc.ca.

Yours truly,



Kristen Morley.
General Manager, Corporate Services
Corporate Officer

Attachments: (2)

- Certified Resolution
- Background Information



Making a difference...together

RESOLUTION

AVICC Resolution: Opioid Crisis

I, Kristen Morley, Corporate Officer for the Capital Regional District, hereby certify that the following is a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Capital Regional District Board at its Meeting held on February, 10, 2021 regarding a resolution to be submitted for consideration at the 2021 AVICC Convention.

WHEREAS it is understood that opioid addictions continue to cause an ever growing record number of heart breaking deaths and debilitations across the country, and

WHEREAS while we understand the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia have recognized these impacts, it remains critically important to advocate for a national public health emergency through the municipal voices provided by the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC), the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM requests the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency and develop appropriate comprehensive, holistic Pan-Canadian overdose action plans that include the legislative and funding frameworks for decriminalization, de-stigmatization, safe supply, suitable medical treatments and thereby function to holistically address the opioid crisis, mental health issues and their connections to homelessness and overdose deaths in municipalities across Canada.”

Dated this 22nd day of February 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristen Morley', is written over a horizontal line.

Kristen Morley
Corporate Officer



The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

Via email: crdchair@crd.bc.ca

February 1, 2021

Capital Regional District Board
c/o Colin Plant, Chair
625 Fisgard Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Chair Plant and the Capital Regional District Board,

Re: Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis

I would like to draw to your attention that on January 25, 2021 Saanich Council considered a Report to Council and endorsed motions in support of addressing the overdose crisis, including to encourage the Capital Regional District Board to take similar action.

Saanich Council endorsed the following motions:

"That Council:

- *Direct staff to engage in discussions with local health agencies and non-profit organizations addressing the overdose crisis to discuss whether Saanich could support safe consumption sites and to explore further potential actions Saanich/local governments could take to help, and to report back to Council with options;*
- *request the Government of Canada to declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency;*
- *reaffirm its earlier requests to senior governments on the overdose crisis and further request that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by the crisis and meet with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive Pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical*

alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use;

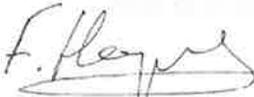
- *publicly voice its support to decriminalize simple drug possession; and*
- *share the report with all other municipal Councils in the Province of British Columbia, and write to all other municipal Councils in the Capital Region, and the Capital Regional District Board, requesting that they take similar action."*

A copy of the report dated January 11, an excerpt of the January 25 meeting minutes and a reply received on January 28, 2021, from the Director General, Controlled Substances Directorate, Health Canada office in response to previous correspondence of October 5, 2020, are attached for further information.

Today we see lives continuing to be lost in record-breaking numbers due to the overdose crisis. British Columbia has suffered a record breaking year for lost lives due to a toxic illicit drug supply. New approaches and additional actions are needed to address this crisis.

We hope that together our continued advocacy will aid in bringing the needed resources forward.

Sincerely,



Fred Haynes
Mayor of Saanich

Enclosures

cc: Saanich Council
Paul Thorkelsson, District of Saanich, CAO



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Notice of Motion

To: Mayor and Council
From: Councillor Ned Taylor, Councillor Karen Harper
Date: January 11, 2021
Subject: Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council direct staff to engage in discussions with local health agencies and non-profit organizations addressing the overdose crisis to discuss whether Saanich could support safe consumption sites and explore further potential actions Saanich/local governments could take to help, and to report back to council with options.
2. That Council request the Government of Canada to declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency.
3. That Council reaffirm its earlier requests to senior governments on the overdose crisis and further request that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by the crisis and meet with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use.
4. That Council publicly voice its support for the Vancouver's efforts to decriminalize simple drug possession.
5. That Council share this report with all other municipal councils in the Province of British Columbia, and write to all other municipal councils in the Capital Region, and the Capital Regional District Board, requesting that they take similar action.

BACKGROUND

On September 14, 2020, Saanich Council passed a motion advocating to senior levels of government for actions to address the overdose crisis. The motion read as follows:

"That Council write to the Offices of the Prime Minister, the Premier, and the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Finance, Health, Mental Health and Addictions and Municipal Affairs and Housing, requesting they commit to providing adequate funding, new policy frameworks and legislative changes to effectively and holistically address the opioid crisis, mental health issues and their connections to homelessness in the municipalities in British Columbia and Canada

and this approach include the decriminalization of controlled substances for personal use and the provision of a safe supply of opioids."

Lives continue to be lost at record-breaking numbers due to the overdose crisis. Therefore, it is critical that Saanich Council continues to advocate to senior levels of government for actions needed to address this crisis, and explore potential actions that we could take as a municipality to help.

On Dec 21, 2020, the BC Coroner Services reported that "There have been 1,548 illicit drug deaths to date in 2020 in B.C., and the number of deaths in each health authority is at or near the highest ever monthly totals." Furthermore, the BC Coroner Services reports "153 suspected drug toxicity deaths in November 2020, an 89% increase over November 2019 (81)". BC's Chief Coroner, Lisa Lapointe, stated "Tragically, as we reach the end of 2020, our province is facing a record-breaking year for lives lost due to a toxic illicit drug supply." The Chief Coroner also speaks to the significant impacts that COVID-19 has had for those experiencing problematic substance use. She states specifically that "Ensuring access to critical harm reduction measures including naloxone, supervised consumption sites, overdose prevention sites and drug checking services are essential if we want to prevent future deaths." This full press release from the BC Coroner Services is attached to this report as Appendix A.

The recommendations in this report are actions that Saanich can take to address the overdose crisis, along with additional advocacy initiatives. These recommendations were developed with input and feedback from numerous experts and non-profit organizations in the Capital Region that are currently addressing the overdose crisis.

Safe consumption sites

Safe consumption sites are an effective measure to reduce overdoses and other harms associated with substance use.

The Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research (CISUR) Co/Lab Team recently released a bulletin (attached as Appendix B) for the purpose of sharing evidence supporting critical substance use services and supports, including treatment and harm reduction programs that meet the needs of people who use drugs. They find that "Supervised consumption sites are being implemented across Canada as one public health measure to reduce the harms associated with substance use, including overdoses and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C (HCV). However, politically motivated attacks on supervised consumption sites have made it difficult for some policy makers and service providers to support this evidence-based public health intervention." Further, they find that "A wealth of evidence suggests that supervised consumption sites do reduce overdoses and other substance use harms, connect people with other health services, and reduce unsafe drug use practices."

It is clear, based on the evidence available, that safe consumption sites are an effective way to reduce overdoses and other harms associated with substance use. Through land use, the District of Saanich could potentially play a supporting role in implementing safe consumption sites as one measure to address the overdose crisis. Recommendation #1 in this report seeks to engage in discussions with local health agencies and non-profit organizations, who are addressing the overdose crisis, to explore whether Saanich could help support new safe consumption sites, and whether there are any other ways that Saanich and local governments can help address the overdose crisis.

Further advocacy

Saanich Council, as noted earlier in this report, has advocated to senior levels of government on actions to address the overdose crisis. It is important to continue this advocacy to senior levels of government, considering the urgency of this crisis.

Recommendations #2 and #3 have been originally developed by Moms Stop The Harm (MSTH), which is a network of Canadian families impacted by substance-use related harms and deaths. MSTH advocates for changes to failed drug policies and also provides peer support to grieving families and those with loved ones who use or have used substances. In November, MSTH wrote to municipalities and asked them to pass a resolution (similar to recommendations #2 and #3 of this report). Their letter, and original resolution, is attached to this report as Appendices C and D.

The City of Vancouver

In November, 2020, Vancouver City Council unanimously voted in favour of a motion, which seeks to decriminalize small amounts of illegal drugs (See Appendix E). In September, 2020, Saanich Council publicly requested senior levels of government to decriminalize controlled substances to address the overdose crisis.

It is important to continue to build support for these much needed initiatives. Recommendation #4 in this report seeks to publicly express support for the City of Vancouver's efforts to decriminalize small amounts of illegal drugs.

Other municipalities

We know that when we stand together with other municipalities and regional districts, our voice and our requests to senior levels of government can be strengthened. Recommendation #6 of this report seeks to share this report and its recommendations with all other local governments in British Columbia, and to directly request that the CRD Board and municipalities within the CRD take similar action.

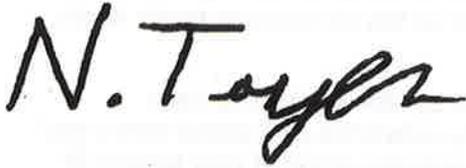
CONCLUSION

The overdose crisis continues to be an urgent crisis affecting people throughout the South Island, British Columbia, and Canada. In fact, well over 1,500 people have died in BC in 2020 as a result, a number that is substantially higher than deaths due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

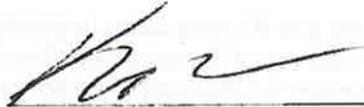
It is clear that new approaches and additional actions are needed to adequately address this crisis. The recommendations in this report are actions that Saanich can take to help, and have been developed in consultation with numerous non-profit organizations directly addressing the crisis, and experts with specific knowledge on these matters.

We ask that Council support the recommendations in this report, and continue to look for ways that we can help. This is a serious crisis that needs action now.

Respectfully submitted by:



Ned Taylor
Councillor



Karen Harper
Councillor

Attachments

Appendix A: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/news/2020/illicit-drug_news_release.pdf

Appendix B:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eb1a664ccf4c7037e8c1d72/v5f629f75f78751e69eba58f/1600298872589/Bulletin+Safe+Consumption+Sites.pdf>

Appendix C: MSTH Letter

Appendix D: MSTH Resolution

Appendix E: <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/drug-decriminalization-unanimously-endorsed-by-vancouver-city-council-1.5205625>

J. Soule, Victoria area

Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis

- There is a public health crisis; safe injection sites have the potential to save lives and could offer mental health services and social supports.
- Safe injection sites protect the community from unsafe drug usage.

J. Mahoney, Hartland Avenue

Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis

- Safe injection sites are necessary and are a vital part of harm reduction and recovery; over 50% of overdoses occur in private residences.
- It is a matter of saving lives.

C. Antrobus, Cordova Bay Road

Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis

- The overdose crisis is a provincial problem; safe injection sites saves lives.

1410-01
Council
Proceedings

The Manager, Legislative Services/Municipal Clerk advised that public input as presented by a memo dated January 25, 2021 noted all correspondence received before noon on January 25, 2021 and forms part of the public record.

MOVED by Councillor Taylor and Seconded by Councillor Harper: "That Council receive for information the correspondence for the Special Council meeting of January 25, 2021 addressing:

- **Actions to Address the Overdose Crisis; and**
- **86 Crease Avenue – Rezoning and Development Variance Permit Application."**

CARRIED

REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

2170-50
Overdose Crisis

ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE OVERDOSE CRISIS

Report of Councillor Taylor and Councillor Harper dated January 11, 2021.

MOVED by Councillor Taylor and Seconded by Councillor Harper: "That Council:

1. **Direct staff to engage in discussions with local health agencies and non-profit organizations addressing the overdose crisis to discuss whether Saanich could support safe consumption sites and to explore further potential actions Saanich/local governments could take to help, and to report back to Council with options;**
2. **Request the Government of Canada declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency;**
3. **Reaffirm its earlier requests to senior governments on the overdose crisis and further request that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by the crisis and meet with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive Pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use;**

4. Publicly voice its support for the City of Vancouver's efforts to decriminalize simple drug possession; and
5. Share the report with all other municipal Councils in the Province of British Columbia, and write to all other municipal Councils in the Capital Region, and the Capital Regional District Board, requesting that they take similar action."

Council discussion ensued with the following comments:

- More advocacy to senior levels of government to address the overdose crisis is needed.
- People from all walks of life are dying from overdoses on a daily basis.
- Safe consumption sites are an effective way to reduce overdoses and save lives.
- All levels of government should consider decriminalization of drugs for personal use; public safety and public health authorities are calling for decriminalization.
- We are in two public health emergencies – the Pandemic and the Opioid Crisis.
- There are economic benefits through fewer hospital and first responder costs, fewer economic losses due to lost time at work and lower costs to the court and prison systems.
- Saanich has a role to play in advocating and communicating to the community.
- Island Health Authority has advised that they are interested in having discussions with Saanich with respect to mitigating harm.
- It may be appropriate to forward the motion to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) as a late resolution.
- The report builds upon the earlier work of Council.

MOVED by Councillor de Vries and Seconded by Councillor Plant: "That the motion be amended that point #4 read: "publicly voice its support to decriminalize simple drug possession"."

The Amendment was then Put and CARRIED

The Main Motion, as Amended, was then Put and CARRIED

The Main Motion, as Amended:

"That Council:

1. Direct staff to engage in discussions with local health agencies and non-profit organizations addressing the overdose crisis to discuss whether Saanich could support safe consumption sites and to explore further potential actions Saanich/local governments could take to help, and to report back to Council with options;
2. Request the Government of Canada declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency;
3. Reaffirm its earlier requests to senior governments on the overdose crisis and further request that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by the crisis and meet with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive Pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly

- reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use;
4. Publicly voice its support to decriminalize simple drug possession; and
 5. Share the report with all other municipal Councils in the Province of British Columbia, and write to all other municipal Councils in the Capital Region, and the Capital Regional District Board, requesting that they take similar action."

REPORTS FROM DIRECTORS

2870-30

Crease Avenue

86 CREASE AVENUE – REZONING AND DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT APPLICATION

Supplemental report of the Director of Planning dated January 7, 2021. To rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to a site specific zone to permit two single family dwellings on one lot.

The Director of Planning noted that there is a typographical error on page 5 of the report under Option 1 and Option 2; the covenant to secure the size of the new building and its footprint has not been captured.

The Director of Engineering stated:

- Servicing requirements for items such as road widening for curb and gutter and drainage improvements, stormwater connection and onsite stormwater requirement are typical for rezoning applications.

In response to questions from Council, the Director of Planning stated:

- Garden suites were not permitted when the original application was submitted; the proposal is outside the scope of the Garden Suite regulations therefore a site specific zone is recommended.
- Staff are collecting comments with respect to the Garden Suite regulations and will report back to Council after one year.
- Setting precedence is not an issue as each application is considered on its own merits.
- The house on Lot A could have a gross floor area of up to 1905.1 square feet.

In response to questions from Council, the Director of Engineering stated:

- A stormwater connection is the only engineering servicing requirement for a Garden Suite.
- If Council wished to consider Option 2 at a Public Hearing, a Development Variance Permit to include variances for the total number of parking spaces, servicing levels for development, road improvements and onsite stormwater retention and treatment would be prepared.
- The cost estimates for the servicing requirements are unknown.

MOVED by Councillor Harper and Seconded by Councillor Chambers:
"That a Public Hearing be called to further consider the rezoning application and the additional engineering variances as outlined in Option 2 in the supplemental report of the Director of Planning and the Director of Engineering dated January 2, 2021 on Lot 8, Block 7, Section 24, Victoria District, Plan 877 (86 Crease Avenue)."

Rachel Mattiuz

From: Harris, Natasha (HC/SC) <natasha.harris@canada.ca> on behalf of CSD DGO / BDG DSC (HC/SC) <hc.csddgo-bdgdsc.sc@canada.ca>
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 8:08 AM
To: Rachel Mattiuz
Subject: (External Email) RE: Opioid Drug Crisis and Overdoses

This email sent from outside the District of Saanich. Use caution if message is unexpected or sender is not known to you.

Dear Mayor Haynes,

Thank you for your correspondence dated October 22, 2020, addressed to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Minister Patty Hajdu, and other federal and provincial leaders concerning the federal government's response to the overdose crisis. I also wish to acknowledge the previous correspondence received from Mayor Fred Haynes on October 5, 2020. We have carefully reviewed the report from the District of Saanich dated September 4, 2020, as well as the excerpt of Special Council meeting minutes from September 14, 2020. I have been asked to respond to you directly. I sincerely apologize for the delay in responding.

Thank you for sharing your concerns and recommendations with us. Our approach to substance use issues has been comprehensive and collaborative, guided by our federal drug strategy – the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy (CDSS). The CDSS takes a public health-focused approach, and lays out our framework for evidence-based actions to reduce the harms associated with substance use in Canada. It includes four key pillars – prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and enforcement.

Since 2016, the Government of Canada has taken urgent action to address the opioid overdose crisis through significant investments of over \$600 million as well as legislative and regulatory action. This includes working with provinces and territories to improve access to harm reduction services such as supervised consumption sites, increase access to pharmaceutical-grade medications, raise awareness of the risks of opioids, and remove barriers to treatment, including [stigma](#). Recently, we have provided an additional \$66 million over two years, starting in 2020-21, to support community-based organizations responding to substance use issues, including to help them provide frontline services in a COVID-19 context.

In addition, through Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program, the Government of Canada is supporting 11 projects in providing a flexible safer supply of pharmaceutical-grade medications for people with opioid use disorder in British Columbia, Ontario and New Brunswick. These investments will help provide pathways to care and treatment. Findings from these initiatives will contribute to the evidence base to support the scaling up of effective models. Examples of funded projects include:

- South Riverdale Community Health Centre and Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (Toronto, Ontario) were provided approximately \$1.6M to help people access pharmaceutical-grade medications and increase engagement with health care and social services to foster better health outcomes.
- The London InterCommunity Health Centre (London, Ontario) was provided more than \$6.5 million to deliver a safer supply program that will help reduce harms related to the toxic illegal drug supply by providing prescribed opioids to patients with opioid use disorder during the pandemic and beyond.

- The Vancouver Island Health Authority was provided approximately \$2 million for an innovative project that will provide pharmaceutical-grade medication as an alternative to the toxic illegal drug supply for people in Cowichan Valley who have not responded to other forms of treatment for opioid use disorder.

On August 24, 2020, the Minister of Health sent a letter to Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health and regulatory colleges to encourage them all to provide people who use drugs with a full spectrum of care options, including access to a safer supply of drugs. You can read the letter here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/minister-letter-treatment-safer-supply.html>.

The Government of Canada will also continue to encourage the formation of partnerships between law enforcement and health and social services to help divert people who use drugs away from the criminal justice system and towards appropriate health services and social supports. For example, in May 2017, the Government of Canada introduced the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act*. The Act provides some legal protection for individuals who seek emergency help during an overdose. In addition, Health Canada has provided three-year funding for a project in Peterborough, Ontario, to develop a multi-sector response, with a team dedicated to caring for people at risk of experiencing overdoses, in order to direct people away from the justice system and into care. On August 18, 2020, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada issued guidance to prosecutors directing that alternatives to prosecution should be considered for simple possession offences, except when there are serious mitigating circumstances. This policy is available at <https://www.ppsc-sppc.gc.ca/eng/pub/fpsd-sfpg/fps-sfp/tpd/p5/ch13.html>.

The Government of Canada is further supporting those who are most vulnerable during this pandemic by investing \$500 million towards health care, including support for Canadians experiencing challenges with substance use, mental health, or homelessness. This investment is part of the more than \$19 billion invested through the [Safe Restart Agreement](#) to help provinces and territories safely restart their economies and ensure Canadians have the support they need in these challenging times. We remain committed to addressing problematic substance use with a public health approach, and to continue working closely with all levels of government. In addition, we will continue to work with civil society organizations, first line responders, academics, people with lived and living experience and other key stakeholders to assess options that could better support the needs of people who use drugs during this difficult time. For example, Health Canada officials continue to engage with the British Columbia government, the City of Vancouver, local service providers, and others, to provide support and assist in overdose response efforts that address local and regional needs.

The overdose crisis is a complex public health issue and we recognize that no single organization or level of government can solve this situation alone. Thank you again for taking the time to share your views and recommendations with us.

Yours sincerely,
Jennifer Saxe
Director General
Controlled Substances Directorate
Health Canada



The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

October 5, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

VIA EMAIL: pm@pm.gc.ca

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: Opioid Drug Crisis and Overdoses

On September 14, 2020, Saanich Council considered a Report to Council from Mayor Haynes and resolved as follows:

"That Council write to the Offices of the Prime Minister, the Premier, and the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Finance, Health, Mental Health and Addictions and Municipal Affairs and Housing, requesting they commit to providing adequate funding, new policy frameworks and legislative changes to effectively and holistically address the opioid crisis, mental health issues and their connections to homelessness in the municipalities in British Columbia and Canada and this approach include the decriminalization of controlled substances for personal use and the provision of a safe supply of opioids"

Saanich greatly appreciates the support the Federal government has shown in ebbing the opioid drug crisis by providing \$2M for a safer supply pilot project in Island Health.

On September 16, British Columbia announced the provision of expansion of access to safer prescription alternatives to the toxic drug supply. New policy frameworks will allow access to substance-use services, including harm reduction, treatment, counselling and mental health supports and recovery-oriented services.

On behalf of Saanich Council, please consider this request to slow the opioid public health emergency through providing further funding, new policy frameworks, and legislative changes outlined above, including decriminalization of controlled substances for personal use.

A copy of the report and excerpt of the draft meeting minutes are enclosed for reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "F. Haynes", with a horizontal line underneath.

Fred Haynes
Mayor

Enclosures
cc: Saanich Council
Paul Thorkelsson, CAO



The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

October 5, 2020

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C, M.P.
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

VIA EMAIL: hcminister.ministresc@canada.ca

Dear Minister:

Re: Opioid Drug Crisis and Overdoses

On September 14, 2020, Saanich Council considered a Report to Council from Mayor Haynes and resolved as follows:

"That Council write to the Offices of the Prime Minister, the Premier, and the Federal and Provincial Ministers of Finance, Health, Mental Health and Addictions and Municipal Affairs and Housing, requesting they commit to providing adequate funding, new policy frameworks and legislative changes to effectively and holistically address the opioid crisis, mental health issues and their connections to homelessness in the municipalities in British Columbia and Canada and this approach include the decriminalization of controlled substances for personal use and the provision of a safe supply of opioids"

Saanich greatly appreciates the support the Federal government has shown in ebbing the opioid drug crisis by providing \$2M for a safer supply pilot project in Island Health.

On September 16, British Columbia announced the provision of expansion of access to safer prescription alternatives to the toxic drug supply. New policy frameworks will allow access to substance-use services, including harm reduction, treatment, counselling and mental health supports and recovery-oriented services.

On behalf of Saanich Council, please consider this request to slow the opioid public health emergency through providing further funding, new policy frameworks, and legislative changes outlined above, including decriminalization of controlled substances for personal use.

A copy of the report and excerpt of the draft meeting minutes are enclosed for reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. Haynes', written over a horizontal line.

Fred Haynes
Mayor

Enclosures
cc: Saanich Council
Paul Thorkelsson, CAO

