



STAFF REPORT

Title: Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Serving Society - April 8, 2025 Delegation

Meeting Date: April 8, 2025

Executive Summary:

Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Serving Society Director of Regional Operations (DRO) Melody Littell appeared as a delegation at Council's regular meeting held April 8, 2025.

Background:

April 8, 2025 Delegation

Mayor Copeland welcomed Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Serving Society (EARVSS) Director of Operations Melody Littell to the Council meeting at this time being 6:03 p.m.

Ms. Littell handed out an information pamphlet and introduced fellow colleagues Assistant Director of Operations (ADO) North Shyan Hrynyk, Court and Support Navigator Stephanie Castonguay, and Court and Support Navigator Helena Lamoureux (all of whom remained seated in the gallery).

Ms. Littell provided Council with a power point presentation which provided an overview of the Regional Victim Serving Society (RVSS), and outlined the key steps for referral and services the RVSS provides.

Ms. Littell advised that the six (6) pillars of victim services include meet, mitigate, refer, accompany, coordinate, and engage. The RVSS's are mandated to work in partnership with the Government of Alberta Victim Services, Alberta RCMP, specialized and community-based victim serving agencies, municipalities, and other local organizations to deliver an integrated framework of services to victims of crime. The RVSS's support and assist victims of crime while they are involved in the criminal justice process.

Ms. Littell advised that the "Mission" of RVSS is to ensure that those who have been victimized by crime and/or have experienced extreme tragedy are best served, during the aftermath of an event, and while they navigate the criminal justice process, and their "Vision" is to ensure victims of crime and tragedy can access the supports and information they need to enhance their safety, empower themselves, and restore their well-being.

Ms. Littell further advised of the following core values of RVSS:

- will strive to provide services with compassion and empathy, and in a timely manner,*
- will maintain a high degree of privacy and confidentiality for their clients and their information, in all the work that they do,*



- *all members of their community will be treated with respect and dignity. They will be open and non-judgmental in their approach and interactions with their client and community members, and*
- *will value equitable treatment of all clients, staff, volunteers, and community members. They value respect and embrace diversity and inclusion of all people.*

Ms. Littell advised of the area served by EARVSS and the EARVSS Regional Teams (North Subregion and South Subregion) noting that they will continue to provide services to victims in their region through local teams of Court and Support Navigators co-located within RCMP detachments.

The North Subregion includes Wabasca, Bonnyville, Slave Lake, Barrhead, Athabasca, Westlock, Boyle, Redwater, Lac La Biche, Smoky Lake and Cold Lake.

The South Subregion includes St. Paul, Viking, Elk Point, Wainwright, Two Hills, Killam, Vegreville, Provost, Vermilion, Consort, Kitscoty, Coronation and Tofield.

Land-Use Planning, Development, and Regulatory Services Manager A. Jabs left the meeting at this time being 6:13 p.m.

The EARVSS Service Structure is as follows:

- *Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Services has a Central Office located in St. Paul and the staff working from there are the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Regional Operations, Assistant Director of Operations, Human Resources, Finance, Community and Cultural Liaison and Operations Administration,*
- *They have Court and Support Navigators (frontline workers) located in the local RCMP detachment to provide supports and services in their communities,*
- *some of their communities have volunteer advocates to help support clients after hours, go to court or attend community events,*
- *they are governed by a board comprised of community members from within their regional zone.*

Land-Use Planning, Development, and Regulatory Services Manager A. Jabs re-entered the meeting at this time being 6:14 p.m.

Ms. Littell summarized the RVSS referral criteria for the RCMP to refer for service/support noting that RVSS Services fall within two (2) categories being general support services and criminal justice system navigation services and provided a reference guide of the eligible (in scope) RVSS Services and the ineligible (out-of-scope) RVSS Services.

The RVSS's after-hours are:

- *4:30 p.m. - 8:30 a.m. Monday to Friday*
- *weekend coverage is from 4:30 p.m. Friday to 8:30 a.m. Monday*
- *stat holidays are also considered "after hours"*



The RVSS has one central number for all after-hour calls.

Where an immediate response is required in core business hours, a referral may be made for regular victim intake and case management processing (intake@earvss.ca); alternatively, members can contact their local VSU for immediate dispatch.

The RVSS will answer all eligible calls after-hours, this will be done through a central tier one on call that supports the entire Region. Where possible, a staff member or volunteer advocate may be dispatched to support in person. If this is not possible, the tier one on call will support via telephone/virtually.

Tiered After-Hours Crisis Response Tier 1:

- *central on call that supports the entire regional virtually (one phone number to support entire region)*
- *schedule will be staffed with navigators*
- *volunteer advocates will also have an opportunity to join later in the fall*
- *triages all incoming calls to determine immediate need and eligibility*
- *acts as a dispatch to Tier 2 (when available), if Tier 2 is not available, virtual support is provided*

Tiered After-Hours Crisis Response Tier 2:

- *staff are welcome to join up to a maximum of three (3) shifts per month that do not fall on the same week as their Tier 1*
- *volunteer advocates are welcome to join based on their availability*
- *Tier 2 is dispatched by Tier 1 only when eligibility criteria is met*
- *Tier 2 support in person, alongside the RCMP. No RVSS employee or volunteer advocate is permitted to attend a call without the presence of an RCMP member*

The RVSS provides immediate after-hours crisis response for the following calls/incidents:

- *suspicious death including:*
 - *homicide (or suspected homicide)*
 - *driving fatality (criminal code offence)*
- *sudden death*
- *next-of-kin death notification*
- *home invasion (victim is moved to the detachment or a safe location)*
- *domestic violence with a high level of risk to the victim (telephone support only)*
- *sexual assault where police and victim are in hospital*

The RVSS does not provide after-hours crisis response for calls/incidents that are not listed above including:

- *child abuse or child sexual abuse*
- *robbery*



- *organized crime*
- *missing person*
- *expected death*

Brief questions from Council ensued throughout the presentation.

Mayor Copeland thanked Ms. Littell for her informative presentation and the services they provide to the region.

Ms. Littell and fellow colleagues left the meeting at this time being 6:24 p.m.

Alternatives:

Recommended Action:

That Council accept the Eastern Alberta Regional Victim Serving Society delegation presentation made at the April 8, 2025 regular meeting of Council as information.

Budget Implications (Yes or No):

No

Submitted by:

Kevin Nagoya, Chief Administrative Officer