



**Claresholm**

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

Meeting: August 12, 2024  
Agenda Item:

---

## **FCSS Staffing – Request from Claresholm Coordinated Response to Elder Abuse Committee**

---

### **DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:**

Gabrielle Kirk, the coordinator from the Claresholm Coordinated Responses to Elder Abuse Committee, addressed Council at the May 27, 2024 Council meeting. She spoke not only to Elder Abuse, but focused much of her address on the wide range of support that FCSS provides to the residents of Claresholm, FCSS staffing, and the increasing or prevalent threat of elder abuse.

The Claresholm Coordinated Response to Elder Abuse Committee partnered with FCSS to create a 0.5 FTE position, grant funded through the Claresholm Coordinated Response to Elder Abuse Committee, in 2022. This position has been in place for nearly two years now, however the funding is coming to an end and the delegation, in short, requested that Council continue to fund this position.

On June 10, 2024 Council referred this issue to the Audit and Finance Committee.

On July 30, 2024 the Audit and Finance Committee met and discussed the issue and it is now coming back to Council again.

### **DISCUSSION/OPTIONS:**

FCSS does tremendous work in the community, providing supports to our seniors and other at-risk populations. This is not easy work and there seems to be no end to the work. There are always more needs – needs going unmet. As we have seen from many of the motions made at the last Alberta Municipalities Conference, and from a recent Rural Municipalities of Alberta report, many of the current issues we are seeing are a result of the Provincial or Federal governments stepping back or not stepping up. Whether that is financial issues, such as not appropriately indexing senior benefits like CPP, OAS and GIS, or closing offices or services in rural communities, such as Alberta Works. Then there are issues of mental health, which is largely a healthcare issue that is supposed to be the purview of the Province/AHS, but again there is too little and it's too hard to access.

As a result, people come to the one place that is still open to them – FCSS – asking for help with it all. It is overloading our FCSS office and burning out our staff. Increased staffing will of course help, but there will continue to be a shortage of supports unless the Federal and Provincial governments step up and do their part by increasing/indexing funding (funding directly to individuals through OAS, GIS, and other support payments, as well as funding to other programs such as FCSS), and providing additional supports. Attached is a nice summary of the issues we are seeing with FCSS across the province. This is not an isolated issue for Claresholm.

**COSTS/ SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

The requested position is part-time therefore the position would not qualify for benefits or pension, which reduces the costs of funding this position. If the position is a 20 hour per week position, paid comparable to the FCSS Outreach Coordinator, with a pay rate between 23.61 to 28.08 per hour, plus CPP, EI and WCB, the estimate annual cost is \$27,000 to 32,100.

This entire cost would not have to be borne by the taxpayer, at least not initially, as there are some areas of the FCSS budget that could potentially be reduced to help offset a portion of this cost, however it is unlikely that we will be able to maintain this over the next several years as wages for all positions continue to increase with inflation, and FCSS funding remains stagnant. So, this will likely creep up year over year to where the full position costs are being funded by tax dollars in a few years.

As the position is still in place and funded by the Claresholm Coordinated Response to Elder Abuse Committee through to October/November, there is only a month or two in 2024 that this position will require Town funding. As a result, it is only approximately \$2,500 of budget cost in 2024, which current year budget and spending can be reallocated to accommodate without any out of budget expenditure request of Council. The funding of the position in 2025 and beyond will be deferred to future budget discussions.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The Audit and Finance Committee, on July 30, 2024, made a motion to recommend to Council that the FCSS half-time senior's support position become permanent and funded by the Town when the grant funding for this position expires.

**PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS:**

Moved by Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ to approve the creation of permanent part-time FCSS senior's support position to begin after the Claresholm Coordinated Responses to Elder Abuse Committee's funding expires in late 2024.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1.) FCSSAA – Funding Information Feedback – May 2024

PREPARED BY: Blair Bullock, CPA, CA – Director of Corporate Services

---

APPROVED BY: Abe Tinney - CAO

DATE: August 7, 2024

---