

Hello Everyone

I want to bring attention to a variety of instances that have been occurring at our downtown properties regarding the safety of our staff at Mijidaa & The Woolly. While we acknowledge and empathize with the marginalized individuals who are suffering from homelessness and mental health issues, recent events have highlighted an even greater sense of urgency and need for immediate action.

Regrettably, our staff members have been subjected to dangerous situations stemming from our downtown core. Most concerning was an incident at The Woolly, where one of our staff members was assaulted in the restaurant, resulting in them receiving five stitches to their head. This staff member was just working a lunch serving shift, which ended up in an ambulance ride and being unable to work for a week. Not only did this cause them stress and anxiety about coming back to work, but could have created a loss in income if we didn't step in to provide for them. This also resulted in a WSIB claim against us which will cause our rates to increase next year. And, to top it all off, despite the individual responsible being apprehended, they were released and returned to the vicinity of The Woolly within hours of the incident. How is this even possible?!!

This incident underscores the urgency of the situation. Our staff members are not equipped or trained to handle such crises, and we fear that without proper support and intervention, more serious incidents may occur. Moreover, encounters with similar situations have become a daily occurrence at Mijidaa and The Bookshelf, from thefts, defecations, threats and drug use in and around our businesses.

In light of these events, I'm urgently requesting your assistance in providing crisis management training for our staff members as we try to do our best to keep people out of harm's way. This training would enable them to effectively respond to emergencies while prioritizing the safety and well-being of both our staff and the individuals involved. I can't believe I'm even asking for this, as who would have thought crisis management would be part of a job description for a server, host, cook or manager, but here we are due to the lack of action by our City/County/Government officials which has been years in the making.

We understand the complexities surrounding homelessness and mental health in our community, and we remain committed to addressing these issues with compassion and empathy. Heck, we even offer financial support to certain organizations helping to alleviate these issues, and we'll continue to do so. However, the safety of everyone must be paramount, and we implore you to take swift and decisive action to ensure their protection, both on and off the streets.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We stand ready to collaborate with you in finding constructive solutions to improve the safety and well-being of all residents in downtown Guelph. Bottom line, we must do better...enough is enough!

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