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No plan to evict Occupy protesters; No complaints | Group downtown takes turns keeping the site tidy

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Abstract (summary)

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While some Occupy protesters across the country are facing eviction, Fredericton city council isn't rushing to kick out Occupy Fredericton from in front of city hall.

Deputy mayor David Kelly said the mayor's office has been keeping an eye on the protesters.

"I've talked with police Chief Barry MacKnight as recently as yesterday (Tuesday) and they haven't had one official complaint. Nothing. There's no plan to move them right now either from the city or the police end of it," Kelly said.

"I've been there once. I've talked to them just to try to find out what they're doing.

"The two ladies I spoke with said they're trying to show people in Fredericton that they support what's happening all across the country.

"From what I can see and from whom I've spoken with, there's no complaints to city hall. We'll keep in touch with them."

Police and fire officials have periodically checked on the encampment. Members of the Occupy Fredericton movement have taken turns staying overnight to maintain their occupancy, sleeping bundled up in sleeping bags and under blankets beneath tarpaulins.

Supporters have dropped off food and hot beverages.

Kelly said the group has been keeping the site clean and haven't interrupted traffic.

"I hope that whatever issues these people have across North America can be resolved. The last thing I want to have happen is for this to turn violent like, sadly, in other parts of the United States recently," Kelly said.

Fredericton Police Force spokesman Const. Rick Mooney confirmed police haven't received any complaints.

"We are not aware of any illegal activity and the protest appears to be conducted in a peaceful manner to date," Mooney said.

The Occupy Saint John protesters have taken up a corner of King's Square in uptown Saint John. At Monday night's Saint John common council meeting, Coun. Bruce Court said it's time for the group to move on because it's had its say.

The Occupy movement began Sept. 17 in New York City with demonstrators protesting avarice in front of the New York Stock Exchange.

What began as a protest about the global financial situation has become an umbrella protest for just about any concern.

In Fredericton, the Occupy Fredericton group has hung up signs protesting shale gas drilling, hydro-fracking and war.

Supporters of the protest in the capital have organized chit-chat sessions, yoga and other activities to keep themselves engaged and busy. They've taken turns keeping their site tidy.

Despite Court's desire to remove protesters, common council in the port city didn't opt to vote for an eviction.

In Halifax, however, Occupy Nova Scotia protestors were kicked out of a park shortly after Remembrance Day ceremonies ended. Fourteen people were arrested.

In Boston, the city is letting protesters be for the time being.

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