

# NEWS ALBERTA

## Edmonton police arrest interpreter at city hearing over alleged sex-massage Man faces prostitution charges

BY [ANGELIQUE RODRIGUES](#), EDMONTON SUN

FIRST POSTED: THURSDAY, APRIL 04, 2013 01:01 PM MDT | UPDATED: THURSDAY, APRIL 04, 2013 04:10 PM MDT



Police Services Det. Dave Scheming (l) arrest Simon Shum (c) at the Churchill Building in Edmonton, Alberta on April 4, 2013. Shum arrested today on charges of living off the avails of prostitution. Shum was acting as an interpreter Ha Yung Tso at a Subdivision and Development Appeal Board meeting. Ha wants to open a massage parlour in the Alberta Avenue area. Perry Mah/Edmonton Sun/QMI Agency

An Edmonton man acting as an interpreter for a woman accused of trying to open an Alberta Avenue massage parlour was arrested near city hall in connection with a human trafficking investigation Thursday.

Police were on hand at the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board meeting — where alleged massage parlour applicant Ha Yung Tso was set to appeal the city's decision to deny her application — to get a handle on the situation when one detective spotted a familiar face.

Simon Shum, 55, was signing in as the business owner's interpreter when police pulled him out of the room, searched him and promptly hauled him into a squad car at the Churchill Building, 10019 - 103 Avenue, just west of city hall.

City police Det. Dave Scheming says Shum is a key suspect in an ongoing multi-jurisdiction human trafficking investigation he's been working on since June.

"He was arrested today on charges of living off the avails of prostitution," said Scheming. "I've been trying to track him down for weeks."

Police say Shum claimed to be serving as Yung's interpreter and business partner but stress the arrest was not related to the meeting.

"The arrest had nothing to do with what's happening here today," said Scheming.

But Crystal Kids Youth Centre executive director Miri Peterson — who has been opposing Yung's business application for the parlour that would be across the street from the centre — says she and her colleagues believe the arrest is a clear indication the business is sex-trade related.

"We have a copy of the floor plan of the business, and to us it looks like a sex shop and nothing else," said Bryan LeFleche, president of the organization.

"The arrest that occurred today indicates there's involvement with the sex trade. So I guess our comment is if it walks like a duck and it quacks — and it quacked pretty loud today — it's a duck."

Both Peterson and LeFleche were on hand to oppose the appeal and came armed with an entourage and a petition with 12,000 signatures from Edmontonians.

They planned to bring forward a panel of speakers but were forced to stand down when it was discovered Yung's legal representation would not be attending the city meeting, held at the Churchill Building.

Yung told board members she didn't feel comfortable addressing the issue without her interpreter because she didn't understand the documents.

She maintains her business application has nothing to do with the sex trade. She spoke briefly with media, saying only that her massage business would be "100% regular massage" for "ladies and men".

Officials postponed the hearing until May 2. In the meantime, Peterson says the group of opponents plan to gather more signatures for their petition.

angelique.rodriques@sunmedia.ca