

## **THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

#### **REPORT 15-2005**

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services Committee held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on October 3, 2005, commencing at 3:10 p.m.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Committee: Councillors Hildreth, Chair; Bailey; Baty; Casselman; Gabriel; Marshall; Mastroianni; Rigby.

Staff: Mr. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Mr. Hutchings, Commissioner, Community Services; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

#### **Staff**

Part-time: Ms. Cousins, Business Partner; Ms. Heidebrecht, Director, Children's Services; Ms. Nelson, Family Support Worker; Ms. Pennisi, Director, Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities; Ms. Rutherford, Supervisor, Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities; Ms. Stewart, Manager, Community Services; Mr. Tarajos, Manager, Community Services.

#### **COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

##### **146. Introductions**

Mr. Hutchings, Commissioner, Community Services, introduced two new staff, Ms. Sarah Pennisi, Director of Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities and Ms. Cathy Cousins, Business Partner, Community Services Department.

##### **147. Niagara's Best Start: The Early Learning and Child Care Plan 2005-2008**

Ms. Heidebrecht, Director, Children's Services, provided a summary of the key recommended changes to the previous years Early Learning and Child Care Plan with the addition of the newly required Best Start component. The Plan adheres to the Provincial Child Care and Best Start requirements as outlined in Appendix 1 attached to the report. A hard copy of the plan will be available in November and a Community Wide Plan will be available in December.

Moved by Councillor Marshall  
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That Report COM 77-2005, October 3, 2005, respecting Niagara's Best Start: The Early Learning and Child Care Plan 2005-2008, be received for information.

That Children's Services Plan "Niagara's Best Start: The Early Learning & Child Care Plan 2005-2008 be approved and forwarded to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services for acceptance.

That the Regional Chair and Clerk be authorized to execute any necessary documents related to this matter.

Carried.

148. Niagara's Proposal for Ontario Works Addiction Services

Ms. Stewart, Manager, Community Services, apprised Committee of Niagara's proposed implementation plan for Ontario Works addiction services. The program will enhance participants' employability, decrease their time on assistance and support low income individuals and families to move forward with their lives. The proposal will be submitted to the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Staff will provide an update to Committee and Council after the Ministry approves the proposal.

Moved by Councillor Mastroianni  
Seconded by Councillor Rigby

That Report COM 78-2005, October 3, 2005, respecting Niagara's Proposal for Ontario Works Addiction Services, be received.

That the Niagara Region's Ontario Works Addiction Services Implementation Proposal be submitted to the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

That staff provide a final report after the Director, Ontario Works, has approved the plan; and

That the Regional Chair and Clerk be authorized to execute the necessary documents related to this matter.

Carried.

148. Temporary Care Implications for  
Proposed Kinship Care Funding

Mr. Tarajos, Manager, Community Services, highlighted the funding initiatives and strategies currently being considered by the Ministry of Children's and Youth Services related to the expanding role of Kinship Care for relatives of families who assume the responsibility for children in their families.

Moved by Councillor Bailey  
Seconded by Councillor Rigby

That Report COM 79-2005, October 3, 2005, respecting Temporary Care Implications for Proposed Kinship Care Funding, be received.

That the Niagara Regional Chair correspond with the Minister of Community and Social Services (MCSS) and the Minister of Children's and Youth Services (MCYS) to provide support to MCYS's direction for Kinship Care funding.

Carried.

149. Niagara's Family Support Unit and the  
Effective Date of a Support Obligation

Ms. Rutherford, Supervisor, SAEO and Ms. Nelson, Family Support Worker, apprised Committee of the current Family Support process and the impact on the Community Services Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities budget and the relevant stakeholders advocacy in bringing changes to the Family Law Act.

Moved by Councillor Baty  
Seconded by Councillor Bailey

That Report COM 80-2005, October 3, 2005, respecting Niagara's Family Support Unit and the Effective Date of a Support Obligation, be received for information.

That Niagara's Regional Chair send a letter to the Minister of the Attorney General and the Minister of Community and Social Services in support of this process change; and

That staff be directed to enter into wider discussions through the provincial agencies such as the Joint Working Group on Family Support, advocating for changes to the Family Law Act so that the obligation to make support payments commences effective the date of separation.

Carried.

150. 2005 Service Contract with  
Ministry of Community and Social Services  
For Homelessness Programs

Moved by Councillor Marshall  
Seconded by Councillor Bailey

That Report COM 81-2005, October 3, 2005, respecting 2005 Service Contract with Ministry of Community and Social Services for Homelessness Programs, be received.

That the Regional Chair and Clerk be authorized to execute the necessary documents to enter into the 2005 Service Contract with the Ministry of Community and Social Services regarding the delivery of services and programs through the Supports to Daily Living, Provincial Homelessness Initiative Fund, Community Partners Program and Energy Emergency Fund (100% Provincial subsidy = \$558,696).

Carried.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

151. Moved by Councillor Mastroianni  
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That the following communication be received:

CSC 19-2005          Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Community and Social  
Services, regarding the JobsNow pilot program.

Carried.

### **MINUTES**

152. Report 7-2005

Moved by Councillor Bailey  
Seconded by Councillor Mastroianni

That Report 7-2005, being the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Ontarians with Disabilities Act meeting of August 9, 2005, be received.

Carried.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

153. Meals on Wheels

The loss of the Meals on Wheels program (due to lack of Ministry funding) was brought to the attention of the Committee and further information was requested on this matter.

(Refer to staff direction on this page.)

**STAFF DIRECTION**

That staff be directed to:

- (i) Prepare a report on the potential impact on Niagara's residents due to the discontinuation of the Meals on Wheels Program. (Refer to minute item 153.)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Committee adjourned at 4:20 p.m. to meet again on Monday, October 24, 2005, at 3:00 p.m. in Committee Room 4, Regional Headquarters Building.

Jill Hildreth  
Chair

Gail Reilly  
Legislative Assistant

Pam Gilroy  
Regional Clerk