

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT 16-2005

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services Committee held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on October 24, 2005, commencing at 3:10 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

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

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

Staff

Part-time: Mr. Bousfield, Manager, Property & Facility Management; Mr. Bowles, Executive Assistant to the Regional Chair; Ms. Cousins, Business Partner; Ms. Edgar, Manager, Community Services; Ms. Heidebrecht, Director, Children's Services; Ms. Murphy, Manager, Current and Capital Budgets; Mr. Nicol, Commissioner, Human Resources; Ms. Pennisi, Director, Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities; Mr. Ventresca, Director, Seniors Services.

PRESENTATION

154. **Update on Current and Future Initiatives
Regarding Poverty Reduction in Niagara**

Peter Papp, Project Manager, Opportunities Niagara, attended to provide an update on current and future initiatives regarding poverty reduction in Niagara. Mr. Papp highlighted their mission which is "to reduce poverty and enhance the quality of life in Niagara by working with a multi-sector collaboration of community leaders that work together sharing ideas, practices and policies, which will strengthen community-based poverty reduction initiatives in Niagara". Mr. Papp highlighted Vibrant Communities which is a community driven effort to reduce poverty in Canada by creating partnerships that make use of people, organizations, businesses and governments. Vibrant Communities link up to 15 communities from British Columbia to Newfoundland in a collective effort to test the most effective ways to reduce poverty. Opportunities Niagara is part of this collective effort. Mr. Papp described Opportunities Niagara's governing body, its services and provided an overview of key strategies and initiatives that they are

currently engaging. Committee was apprised of the direction Opportunities Niagara is taking with respect to the following:

- Living Wage Initiative – Policy & Commitment by Sectors
- Affordable Housing – New program
- Transportation Pilot Project Expansion
- Human Resources Best Practices
- Community Development
- Community Marketing & Learning
- National Direction – Vibrant Communities

(A copy of this presentation is attached to the minutes.)

Moved by Councillor Almas
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That the presentation from Peter Papp, Project Manager, Opportunities Niagara, be received.

Carried.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

155. Presentation – 2006 Capital Budget

Mr. Hutchings, Commissioner, Community Services, advised that the Community Services Department's proposed 2006 Capital Budget submission applies to the Senior Services Division. Mr. Ventresca, Director, Senior Services, provided an overview of the Division's Capital Budget request for its Capital Asset Management Program in the amount of \$500,000. A breakdown of this program was presented as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| • Roof Repairs | \$ 50,000 |
| • Repairs and Redecorating | \$209,000 |
| • Resident Care Equipment | \$ 45,000 |
| • Operating Equipment | \$176,000 |
| • Bed Replacement | <u>\$ 20,000</u> |

Total	\$500,000
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A chart was presented highlighting the debt charges for the period 1995-2006 which indicates that debt charges for the period 2002 to 2006 pertain to "Redevelopment" rather than financing other debt as in the previous years.

(A copy of the proposed 2006 Capital Budget presentation is attached to the minutes.)

Moved by Councillor Marshall
Seconded by Councillor Bailey

That the presentation by Mr. Ventresca, Director, Senior Services, on the Community Services Department's 2006 Capital Budget be received.

Carried.

156. Provincial Campaign to Promote Special Diet Benefits with Social Assistance Recipients

Ms. Pennisi, Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, provided a brief overview of the potential financial impact of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) campaign regarding Ontario Works Special Diet Benefits.

Moved by Councillor Mastroianni
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That Report COM 82-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Provincial Campaign to Promote Special Diet Benefits with Social Recipients, be received for information; and

That staff continue to monitor any local and provincial impact of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) campaign regarding Ontario Works Special Diet Benefits.

Carried.

157. Social Assistance Participant Smoking Cessation Support Project

Ms. Pennisi provided highlights of the Social Assistance Participant Smoking Cessation Support Project. This project is 100% funded by Health Canada for the development of resources for case managers to distribute to social assistance recipients who express an interest in smoking cessation. Written and audio-visual material to be distributed to clients will be produced in English, French and Spanish. Ms. Pennisi advised that funding will be used to temporarily increase staff by 1.5 full time staff for the project which ends March 31, 2006.

Members of Committee requested the following information.

- How many people are being targeted?
- Is there a necessity for producing the information materials in all three languages?

- Is there information available from other levels of government?
- Have other Regions/municipalities implemented this project?
- What kind of information is currently available through the Public Health Department?
- Is it possible that the temporary staff hired may be required past the projected end of the project on March 31, 2006 and how will that impact financially on the Region?

Moved by Councillor Casselman
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That Report COM 83-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Social Assistance Participant Smoking Cessation Support Project, be referred to staff for further information.

Carried.

158. 2005 Ontario Works Service Contract

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That Report COM 84-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting 2005 Ontario Works Service Contract, be received.

That the Regional Chair and Clerk be authorized to execute the necessary documents to enter into the 2005 Ontario Works Service Contract with the Ministry of Community and Social Services (Provincial Subsidy = \$12,239,075/Regional Levy = \$6,550,828).

Carried.

159. Children's Services Update – January-June 2005

Ms. Heidebrecht, Director, Children's Services, provided an update on program and financial information pertaining to children's services for the period January 1st to June 30th 2005. Ms. Heidebrecht highlighted Appendix 1 of Report COM 85-2005 relating to recreation programming provided through various organizations as outlined in the report and commented that there is a quality assurance expectation that all recreation service providers have completed the "High Five" or "Ontario Camping Association" accreditation through Parks and Recreation Ontario.

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Mastroianni

That Report COM 85-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Children's Services Update – January-June 2005, be received for information.

Carried.

160. Status Report on Meals on Wheels – Thorold/St. Catharines

Mr. Ventresca highlighted the recent developments that have lead to the discontinuance of the Thorold/St. Catharines Meals on Wheels and the on-going efforts to achieve an acceptable solution to this issue. Further information will be provided to Councillors once it becomes available.

Moved by Councillor Baty
Seconded by Councillor Bailey

That Report COM 86-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Status Report on Meals on Wheels – Thorold/St. Catharines, be received for information.

Carried.

161. Shortfall in Provincial Funding for Long-Term Care
- A Preliminary Contingency Plan

Moved by Councillor Casselman
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That Report COM 87-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Shortfall in Provincial Funding for Long-Term Care – a Preliminary Contingency Plan, be received for information.

Carried.

Moved by Councillor Casselman
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That staff provide information on the provincial cost sharing programs as to whether there is adequate indexing for inflationary and other program cost increases to ensure sustainability of these programs.

Carried.

(Refer to staff direction on page CSC 90.)

162. Community Services Financial Update

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Mastroianni

That Report COM 88-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Community Services Financial Update, be received for information.

That any surplus arising in 2005 be considered for transfer to the Seniors Stabilization Reserve and the Social Assistance Reserve Fund in the Year End Transfer report prepared by the Corporate Services Department.

Carried.

CLOSED SESSION

163. Moved by Councillor Mastroianni
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That this Committee do now meet in Closed Session for purposes of receiving information of a confidential nature relating to personnel and property matters.

Carried.

164. Shortfall in Provincial Funding for Long-Term Care
Possible Human Resource Implications

Moved by Councillor Baty
Seconded by Councillor Casselman

That Report COM 89-2005, October 24, 2005, (HR 37-2005, October 25, 2005) respecting Shortfall in Provincial Funding for Long-Term Care Possible Human Resource Implications, be deferred to the Community Services Committee meeting of November 14, 2005 for further information to be received following preliminary budget deliberations at the Budget Review Committee meeting of November 3, 2005.

Carried.

165. Naming of Relocated Niagara Falls Child Care Centre

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Mastroianni

That Report COM 90-2005, October 24, 2005, respecting Naming of Relocated Niagara Falls Child Care Centre, be received and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

Carried.

166. Moved by Councillor Baty
Seconded by Councillor Casselman

That this Committee do now rise with report.

Carried.

STAFF DIRECTION

That staff be directed to:

- (i) That staff develop a communications strategy to communicate the concerns that relate to Seniors Homes and the shortfall in provincial funding for long-term care. (Refer to minute 161.)

ADJOURNMENT

Committee adjourned at 5:25 p.m. to meet again on Monday, November 14, 2005, at 3:00 p.m. in Committee Room 4, Regional Headquarters Building.

Jill Hildreth
Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Pam Gilroy
Regional Clerk