

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT 13-2003

Minutes of a meeting of the Community and Health Services Committee held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Monday, August 11, 2003 commencing at 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Hildreth, Chair; Zimmerman, Regional Chair; Bentley; Brickell; Davidson; Eke; Forster; Gabriel; Harry; Marshall; Timms.

Staff: Mr. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Ms. Graham-Watson, Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities; Dr. Williams, Medical Officer of Health; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

Staff

Part-time: Community Services Dept.: Mr. Hutchings, Director, Operational Support Services; Mr. Ventresca, Director, Seniors Services.

Public Health Dept.: Mr. Christensen, Director, Health Protection & Promotion; Mr. Jones, Director, Administrative Services; Ms. Partington, Director, Population Health; Ms. Rix, Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention; Ms. Roach, Program Mgr., IEPT Programs; Ms. Wodchis, Director, Chronic Disease Prevention; Mr. Young, Manager, Health Protection & Promotion.

Other Depts.: Ms. Beckwith, General Manager, Niagara Regional Housing Corporation; Ms. Drake, Manager, Housing Programs; Ms. Bianco, Corporate Communications Strategist.

Others: Councillor Saracino.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

167. West Nile Virus Update

Mr. Young, Manager, Health Protection & Promotion, provided an update of West Nile Virus activities to date. A media release was distributed advising that a dead crow was found in Niagara Falls and has tested "presumptive positive" for West Nile Virus. This, he commented, is in

contradiction to his report which advised that West Nile Virus had not been identified in birds. Committee was asked to recommend the implementation of standing water by-laws in all area municipalities that would specifically address mosquito-breeding sites.

A discussion ensued on the necessity to again approach the Province to request 100% funding for the West Nile Program, and it was:

Moved by Councillor Davidson
Seconded by Councillor Eke

That Report PHD 47-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting West Nile Virus Update, be received for information.

That area municipalities develop and enact a standing water by-law that would specifically address mosquito-breeding sites.

That the Regional Chair forward a letter to the Province requesting 100% funding for all pesticide related costs for the West Nile Virus Program.

Carried.

168. Smoking By-law: Two-Month Post Implementation Report

Ms. Rix, Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention, highlighted the progress to date with the implementation of the Smoking By-law, commenting that overall compliance has been good. Major concerns are centered around the exemptions for private clubs and businesses attempting to circumvent the by-law by this means. The exemptions that have been allowed for private clubs and gambling venues are a contentious issue for workers, bar owners and the general public. Ms. Rix commented that the issue of bars taking on the "Private Club" status will likely be the first challenge before the courts. Council will be advised immediately of any court challenges and the outcome.

Moved by Chair Zimmerman
Seconded by Councillor Harry

That Report PHD 48-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting Smoking By-law: Two-Month Post Implementation Report, be received for information.

Carried.

169. Infant Education and Parent Teaching Program (IEPT)
2003/04 Service Contract Amendment 3

Moved by Councillor Davidson
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That Report PHD 49-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting Infant Education and Parent Teaching Program (IEPT) 2003/04 Service Contract Amendment 3, be received.

That approval be granted to accept the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services 2003/04 Service Contract Amendment 3 for the Infant Education and Parent Teaching (IEPT) program; and

That the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk be authorized to process the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services 2003/04 Service Contract Amendment 3.

Carried.

170. Request for Approval of the 2002-03 Annual Program
Expenditure Report (APER) for the Infant Education and
Parent Teaching Program (IEPT)

Moved by Councillor Harry
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That Report PHD 54-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting Request for Approval of the 2002-03 Annual Program Expenditure Report (APER) for the Infant Education and Parent Teaching Program (IEPT), be approved and signed.

Carried.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

171. Affordable Housing Program
Community Rental Housing Initiative
Expression of Interest

Ms. Beckwith, General Manager, Niagara Regional Housing, together with Ms. Drake, Manager, Housing Programs, presented a slide presentation on Report COM 42-2003/DPD 95-2003/CSD 111-2003 on the Community

Rental Housing Initiative Expression of Interest. Ms. Beckwith highlighted the progress to date and advised that in June, the Board of Niagara Regional Housing approved putting an Expression of Interest forward to the Ministry, subject to Regional Council approval. The Expression of Interest would provide the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing with information regarding the number of units being requested; confirmation of the need for affordable housing in the Niagara Region; confirmation of the Region's commitment to meet program requirements and description of the potential contributions to the program through existing and/or planned incentives. Ms. Beckwith advised that if Council and the Ministry approve the program, the next steps will be:

- Develop program criteria including definition of affordability, length of program, site design features, percentage of units for supportive and rent supplement;
- Develop Municipal Housing Facilities by-law
- Set up Task Force to develop tender process and documents

Moved by Councillor Timms
Seconded by Councillor Eke

That Report COM 42-2003, August 11, 2003 (DPD 95-2003/CSD 111-2003, August 13, 2003) respecting Affordable Housing Program Community Rental Housing Initiative Expression of Interest, be received.

That the recommendations in the attached report "Affordable Housing Program: Community Rental Housing Initiative – Expression of Interest" be supported.

That staff be authorized to participate as members of the Task Force to proceed with the development of a tendering process in anticipation of receiving an allocation from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

Carried.

(Refer to staff direction on page CHS 110.)

172. Ontario Works Community Placement Funds
Reinvestment Strategy – Opportunities Niagara Portion

Mr. Hutchings, Director, Operational and Support Services, provided further information on the reinvestment of funds generated through a provincial community placement incentive program. A portion of these funds will be allocated to support the Opportunities Niagara initiative operated under the auspices of Community Care of St.

Catharines/Thorold. Mr. Hammond, Board President, Opportunities Niagara, was also in attendance to respond to any questions.

Moved by Councillor Davidson
Seconded by Councillor Brickell

That Report COM 43-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting Ontario Works Community Placement Funds – Reinvestment Strategy – Opportunities Niagara Portion, be received as further reinvestment information from COM 12-2003, “Ontario Works Community Placement Funds – Reinvestment Strategy”.

That Regional staff be authorized to enter into a \$75,000 Purchase of Service Contract, (100% Provincial funds) with Community Care of St. Catharines/Thorold operating as the host agency for Opportunities Niagara. The contract would cover the period of March 1 to December 31, 2003.

Carried.

173. Ontario Drug Benefits – Provincially Operated Programs
- Ontario Disability Support Program

Mr. Hutchings provided background information on the recent letter requesting 15 months in retroactive payments for the Ontario Drug Benefit Program due to the Ministry of Community, Family and Childrens Services’ (MCFCS) inaccurate estimation and billing practices. The Director highlighted the impact on the budget due to the delay in assessing and billing actual costs after the fact and the financial hardship to CMSM’s and their inability to effectively plan and manage financial costs related to these Provincially Operated Programs.

Committee expressed their concerns on the Province’s ability to effectively manage their program costs and the need for the Region to establish their own audit of these programs to determine more accurate estimates.

Moved by Councillor Forster
Seconded by Councillor Bentley

That Report COM 44-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting Ontario Drug Benefits – Provincially Operated Programs – Ontario Disability Support Program, be received.

That correspondence be forwarded by the Regional Chair to:

- A. The Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services (MCFCS) requesting that:
 - I. the Region of Niagara be provided with relief from 2002 retroactive Ontario Drug Benefit of \$919,605 in net expenditures, given the late billing and the need for the Province to take responsibility for errors in their administrative and financial management practices;
 - II. the Province of Ontario review and improve the accuracy and timeliness of billing procedures for Provincially Operated Programs.
 - III. that an appropriate accountability framework be established for all aspects of the Provincially Operated Programs including the management of the Ontario Disability Support Program and related costs. This accountability framework should be consistent with the program and financial management expectations of CMSMs;
 - IV. the Province of Ontario transfer the administration of the Ontario Disability Support Program to Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM);
 - V. Regional staff meet with Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services staff quarterly to review estimates and billing information.
- B. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) to request that the subject of this report be put on the agenda for upcoming government to government discussions.

That the Chief Administrative Officer place this report on the Regional CAO's Agenda for future discussion and collective action.

That the Region establish its own methodology in order to audit these programs and establish a more accurate analysis and projection of program and financial requirements.

Carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

174. Northland Pointe

Chair Zimmerman commented that there have been a number of challenges facing the starting up and running of the new "Northland Pointe" facility in Port Colborne. The Chair highlighted some concerns and recommended that a Community Forum be held to allow administrators, staff, residents and families the opportunity to discuss and resolve these concerns.

Following discussion, it was:

Moved by Councillor Forster
Seconded by Councillor Gabriel

That a Community Forum be held in late August/early September to provide an opportunity for the relevant administrators, staff, residents and families to address the various challenges and issues related to the new Northland Pointe facility.

Carried.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT (continued)

175. Respite Companion Program: A Progress Report on
Collaboration with a Community Partner

Mr. Ventresca, Director, Seniors Services, provided a status report on the efforts to arrange an alternative method of delivery of in-home respite services to citizens with Alzheimers and related dementia, and their family caregivers, through collaboration with a community partner. He advised that the Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region has advised it is unable to commit at this time to the implementation of the draft Agreement to Cooperate. Regional staff have arranged for the immediate continuation of insurance coverage under the Region's policy, with the Ministry's approval and financial support. Regional staff will continue its effort to seek a community partner to make the Respite Companion Program more stable for the long term future.

Moved by Councillor Harry
Seconded by Councillor Forster

That Report COM 45-2003, August 11, 2003, respecting Respite Companion Program: A Progress Report on Collaboration with a Community Partner, be received for information.

Carried.

MINUTES

176. Report 4-2003

Moved by Councillor Bentley
Seconded by Councillor Harry

That Report 4-2003, being the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Ontarians with Disabilities Act meeting of August 5, 2003, be received and the recommendations contained therein approved.

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

177. Moved by Councillor Forster
Seconded by Councillor Gabriel

That the following communication be received.

CHS 56-2003 J. Marchio, A/Director, Human Resources Development Canada, Niagara, (July 7, 2003) advising that Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) funding for a total of \$1,461,520 will be made available to St. Catharines/Niagara over the next three years (2003-04 to 2005-06).

Carried.

ACCOUNTS

178. Moved by Councillor Marshall
Seconded by Councillor Timms

That Accounts Payable Expense Summary for the Period ending July 31, 2003 in the following amounts be approved:

Community Services	\$2,784,297.38
Public Health	\$2,181,977.18

Carried.

STAFF DIRECTIONS

That staff be directed to:

- (i) Include as members of the Task Force to proceed with the development of a tendering process in anticipation of receiving an allocation from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, members from the Smarter Niagara Steering Committee and the Regional Development Charges Task Force. (Refer to minute item 171.)

ADJOURNMENT

Committee adjourned at 4:55 p.m. to meet again on Monday, September 8, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. in C.R. 4, Regional Headquarters.

Jill Hildreth
Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Thomas R. Hollick
Regional Clerk