

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT 9-2005

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Services Committee held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on May 9, 2005, commencing at 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Marshall, Vice-Chair; Partington, Regional Chair; Almas; Bailey; Baty; Casselman; Katzman.

Staff: Mr. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Mr. Ventresca, Acting Commissioner, Community Services; Ms. Gilroy, Regional Clerk/Associate Director of Corporate Strategy; Ms. Manzer, Council Support Assistant.

Staff

Part-time: Mr. Hunter, Acting Director, Seniors Services; Mr. Hutchings, Director, Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities; Ms. Stewart, Manager, Community Services; Andrew Bowles, Executive Assistant to the Regional Chairman; Gracia Janes, Member of Community Services Quality Council; Louise Murphy, Quality Assurance Coordinator / Auditor, Community Services.

PRESENTATION

79. Young Carers Initiative Niagara (YCIN)

Ms. Sylvia M. Baago, Co-ordinator, Children's Issues, provided details about the Young Carers Initiative Niagara (YCIN). YCIN is a collaborative effort of 14 community agencies who joined together to develop a network of support systems for young children in Niagara who live with a family member who has a chronic condition. A 'Young Carer' describes young persons under the age of 18 who take on a care-giving role within their families because a family member needs assistance in their everyday activities. The family member could be a parent, a sibling, or a grandparent.

The YCIN is based on the philosophy that individual and family resilience is fostered through strong communities founded upon mutuality, partnership and collaboration. Their mission is to create an inclusive community where young carers and their families can build resilience through opportunities to share experiences, benefit from mutual support, have fun and achieve optimal development through individualized guidance designed to strengthen the

resources with their families and themselves. Honouring the needs and perspectives of young carers within the context of their families serves as the core value for the YCIN and the evolution of its programs.

Moved by Councillor Katzman
Seconded by Councillor Casselman

That the presentation by the Young Carers Initiative Niagara (YCIN) be received for information.

Carried.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

80. Social Planning Councils – An Overview

Dominic Ventresca, Acting Commissioner of Community Services presented an overview and background of the role of Social Planning Councils.

Louise Murphy, Quality Assurance Coordinator / Auditor, Community Services, presented details of the Kitchener-Waterloo council which has been in operation since 1967. Their *Mission* is “to link services and people for the well-being of the community”, and their objective is to build the community’s capacity to improve the social and economic well-being of its residents. This is done through Community Building, Research and Data Management, and Community Information.

Ms. Murphy also presented details of the Ottawa Council that has been in operation since 1928. Their *Mission* is “to provide the residents of Ottawa with the means to exercise informed leadership affecting their social and well-being”. The activities of the Social Planning Council of Ottawa include:

- Identifying needs and resources of residents through social research.
- Designing solutions to identified problems through community and social planning.
- Supporting community agencies through the provision of information and technical assistance.

After some discussion, the committee requested a report on possible next steps to see if there is a consensus among community stakeholders in forming a Social Planning Council in Niagara. Social Planning Councils generally rely on funding and grants from all levels of government and most receive funding from the United Way. Some Social Planning Councils also provide services for a fee and/or fundraise.

Moved by Councillor Casselman
Seconded by Councillor Katzman

That Report COM 44-2005, May 9, 2005, respecting Social Planning Councils – An Overview, be received for information, and

That staff provide a further report that will include the feasibility, financing and partnerships for the development of a Social Planning Council in Niagara.

Carried.

81. Approval of Contract with Medical Director, Deer Park Villa

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Almas

That Report COM 45-2005, May 9, 2005, respecting Approval of Contract with Medical Director, Deer Park Villa, be received, and

That the Regional Chairman and Clerk be authorized to approve the contract with the new Medical Director of Deer Park Villa for a term of April 13, 2005 to October 31, 2006.

Carried.

82. Ontario Municipal and Social Services Association's (OMSSA):
Transforming Ontario Works to a Labour Force Development Proposal

Brian Hutchings, Director, Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities, provided an overview of the work of the Task Force on Transitioning Ontario Works to a Labour Force Development Program and described the key concepts of the proposal being developed. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) proposed a conceptual plan in 2003 that called for the removal of children from social assistance through the creation of a separate child benefit, and to transition Ontario Works to a labour-market focused program. In 2004 the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) established a Task Force on "Transitioning Ontario Works to a Labour Force Development Program" to develop a more detailed policy framework to the concepts outlined by the AMO proposal.

The mandate is to consider how to make Ontario Works a more effective employment program and to consider the implications of establishing a separate Children's Benefit.

Mr. Hutchings provided details as to the reason for change, the timing, an overview of the proposal and the suggested benefit structure. He also outlined the eligibility, benefits, assets and emergency assistance. He concluded his presentation showing a conceptual design of the service pathway and expected outcomes.

Moved by Councillor Baty
Seconded by Councillor Almas

That Report COM 46-2005, May 9, 2005, respecting Ontario Municipal Social Services Association's (OMSSA): Transforming Ontario Works to a Labour Force Development Proposal, be received for information, and

That the Regional Clerk be authorized to send a letter of support for the proposal to the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association's Board.

Carried.

MINUTES

83. Report 4-2005

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Katzman

That Report 4-2005, being the minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Committee Ontarians with Disabilities Act meeting of April 12, 2005, be received.

Carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

84. Federal Provincial Signing of the
Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

Mr. Ventresca distributed copies of a memo from Ms. Pat Heidebrecht, Director Children's Services, who was invited to attend the signing of an historic agreement by Prime Minister Paul Martin along with Social Development Minister Ken Dryden and Minister Dr. Marie Bountrogianni on May 6th in Hamilton. This agreement between Canada and Ontario in principle further supports the development of quality early learning and child care for young children and families in Ontario. This announcement follows the Federal Governments February, 2005 budget commitment to invest \$5 billion over five years to enhance and expand high-quality development early learning and child care in collaboration with provinces and territories.

Moved by Councillor Katzman
Seconded by Councillor Almas

That the memo from Ms. Heidebrecht regarding the initiative of the Governments of Canada and Ontario by the Signing of the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement on May 9, 2005, be received.

Carried.

(Please refer to Staff directions)

CLOSED SESSION

85. Moved by Councillor Baty
Seconded by Councillor Katzman

That this Committee do now meet in Closed Session for purposes of receiving information of a confidential nature relating to a legal matter.

Carried.

86. Legal Opinion on Proposed Cemetery Pricing

Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Almas

That Report COM 47-2005, May 9, 2005, respecting Legal Opinion on Proposed Cemetery Pricing, be received for information and considered with deferred report COM 34-2005 (April 4, 2005).

Carried.

87. Moved by Councillor Bailey
Seconded by Councillor Almas

That this Committee do now rise with report.

Carried.

REPORTS (continued)

88. Proposed Cemetery Pricing Model

Brian Hutchings, Director, Social Assistance & Employment Opportunities, gave an overview of the five options in the report regarding a proposed cemetery pricing model. He advised a review of the rates for ten municipal cemeteries in Niagara was completed and the average cost of interment charges was approximately \$1,489. Current practice has been to pay the actual cemetery costs.

Moved by Councillor Almas
Seconded by Councillor Katzman

That Report COM 34-2005, April 4, 2005, respecting Proposed Cemetery Pricing Model, be received, and that Option two be recommended with a provincial regulated rate of \$1,000 being paid along with the municipality surcharge reduced by 35 per cent, and

That the prices be annually reviewed by staff for potential adjustments.

Carried.

STAFF DIRECTION

That staff be directed to:

- (i) Place the Youth and Homeless issue on the agenda for the next Homeless Long Term Committee meeting agenda.
- (ii) Prepare an Information Report on youth ages 13 – 19.
- (iii) Provide an update on the impact on Community Services of the proposal to raise the mandated school age to 18.

ADJOURNMENT

Committee adjourned at 4:30 p.m. to meet again on Monday, May 30, 2005, at 3:00 p.m. in Committee Room 4, Regional Headquarters Building.

George Marshall
Vice-Chair

Hope Manzer
Council Support Assistant

Pam Gilroy
Regional Clerk/
Associate Director of Corporate Strategy