

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT 2-2007

Minutes of a meeting of the Public Health and Social Services Committee held in the Linhaven Home for the Aged Auditorium, 403 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, Ontario, on Tuesday, January 30, 2007 at 1:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Baty, Co-Chair; Timms, Co-Chair; Partington, Regional Chair; Collins; Cordiner; Forster; Greenwood; Henderson; Rigby.

Staff: Mr. Hutchings, Commissioner, Community Services; Dr. Williams, Medical Officer of Health; Ms. Gilroy, Regional Clerk; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

Staff

Part-time: Community Services Dept.: Ms. Cousins, Director, Operational Support Services; Ms. Horner, Manager, Children's Services; Ms. McBrain, Manager, Children's Services; Ms. Pennisi, Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities; Ms. Rudel, Manager, Seniors Community Programs; Ms. Tanouye, Staff Training Coordinator, S.A.E.O.; Ms. Urbshott, Administrative Assistant; Mr. Ventresca, Director, Seniors Services; Ms. Watson, Manager, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities.
Public Health Dept.: Mr. Cunnane, Director, Emergency Services Division; Mr. Fuentes, Associate Director, E.M.S.; Mr. Jones, Director, Administration Services; Dr. Klooz, Associate Commissioner, Public Health Dept.; Mr. McKay, Cost Analyst; Mr. Van Valkenburg, Acting Training Supervisor, E.M.S.
Others: Mr. J. Bergsma, Commissioner, Corporate Services; Mr. McQueen, Director, Administration; Ms. Murphy, Associate Director, Budgets & Reporting.

Councillor Baty expressed his appreciation to committee for appointing him as Co-Chair of the Public Health and Social Services Committee. He advised Committee of his past and ongoing involvement with Local Health Integrated Networks (LHIN) and his upcoming participation in Community Services events.

PRESENTATIONS

16. 2007 Community Services Budget

Ms. Cousins, Director, Operational Support, Community Services, provided an overview of the 2007 Community Services Budget, highlighting the challenges and priorities within the Budget. The 2007 Proposed Budget was presented at \$328,059,230 gross expenditures, representing a gross expenditures increase of \$17,409,286 (5.60%) over the 2006 Approved Budget. Net expenditures were presented at \$64,549,951 representing a net expenditures increase of \$4,753,738 (7.95%) over the 2006 Approved Budget. Provincially operated programs constitute \$2.8 million or 8.3% of this increase.

The Director apprised Committee of the increases in the program areas highlighting the 2007 fiscal challenges for the Provincially Operated Programs that include: an increase in the ODSP caseload of 3.8% and 7% allowance increase budgeted; Ontario Drug Benefits increase of 15%; and Ontario Dental Association increase of 10%.

Ms. Cousins outlined the Program Developments and Fiscal Challenges for the department's three Divisions: Social Assistance and Employment; Children's Services; and Senior Services. Committee was also apprised of the 2007 Budget Impacts on each Division, their solutions and implications of these solutions. Please refer to the attached budget for more detailed information.

The Capital Budget was presented in the amount of \$700,000 which relates to repairs and improvements for the eight Seniors Homes.

The Community Services Department 2007 Budget was summarized as follows:

- Cost of Provincially operated programs (i.e. ODSP) attributes for 60% of the net increase in the Community Services budget (i.e. \$2,833,541 of the \$4,753,738).
- New Provincial Best Start funding has contributed towards a balanced budget in Children's Services; however the expansion of financial eligibility through a Provincial policy shift to Income Testing may create an increased demand for service.
- Provincial funding increase of 1.5% for seniors services when inflation is approximately 3% results in a funding shortfall of \$900,000 after process improvements incorporated into 2007 budget.

Moved by Councillor Collins
Seconded by Regional Chair Partington

That the 2007 Community Services Budget, be received and referred to the Budget Review Committee meeting of February 8th, 2007.

Carried.

17. 2007 Public Health Budget

Dr. Williams, Medical Officer of Health, provided an introduction to the 2007 Public Health Budget, highlighting the department's strategic directions within Council's vision and its strategic goals for 2006-2007. The department's Vision, Mission and Values were also presented.

Mr. Jones, Director, Administrative Services, provided an overview of the proposed 2007 Budget. Committee was apprised of the 2007 funding which represents the final step to 75% Provincial/25% Regional funding. This funding formula provides for a \$1.7 million reduction to the Regional tax levy.

Mr. Jones outlined the 2007 initial budget requests which were developed following a comprehensive review process with Managers and staff, highlighting the four positions to be moved forward within this budget.

Mr. Van Valkenburg, Acting Training Supervisor, E.M.S., provided an overview of the Emergency Services Division's budget. He advised that the Provincial move to the 50:50 ratio for EMS grants provides for an additional \$1.1 million reduction to the tax levy. Mr. Van Valkenburg highlighted the challenges and risks of the Division's budget.

Mr. Jones provided a 2007 fiscal overview with respect to General Programs, 100% Funded Programs, Emergency Services (including Land Ambulance) and Ambulance Communication Service.

The Public Health Department's 2007 Proposed Budget was presented at \$58,283,815 gross expenditures, representing a gross expenditures increase of \$3,936,282 (7.24%) over the 2006 Approved Budget. Net expenditures were presented at \$18,218,490 representing a net expenditures decrease of \$1,724,626 (-8.65%) over the 2006 Approved Budget.

In summary the Public Health Department 2007 Proposed Budget provides for a \$1,724,626 reduction to the net Regional share.

Moved by Councillor Rigby
Seconded by Councillor Timms

That the 2007 Public Health Budget, be received and referred to the Budget Review Committee meeting of February 8th, 2007; and

That staff prepare a report regarding additional funding for training for the Emergency Services Division, should additional funds become available following budget deliberations.

Carried.

18. 2007 Budget
CSD 24-2007

Moved by Councillor Forster
Seconded by Councillor Rigby

That Report CSD 24-2007, respecting 2007 Budget, be received.

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

19. Moved by Councillor Cordiner
Seconded by Councillor Greenwood

That Communication PHSS 1-2007, from Ted Boadway, MD, Chair, The Citizens Panel on Increasing Organ Donations (January 2, 2007) requesting survey information, be received and referred to staff.

Carried.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

20. Social Assistance Participant Smoking Cessation
Support Project, Phase Two – Broadening Target Group
COM 06-2007

Moved by Councillor Timms
Seconded by Councillor Forster

That Report COM 06-2007, January 30, 2007, respecting Social Assistance Participant Smoking Cessation Support Project, Phase Two – Broadening Target Group, be received; and

That Regional Council endorse the broadening of the Social Assistance Participant Smoking Cessation Support Project to include all Niagara residents wanting to quit smoking.

Carried.

21. Forecast of Year-End Results and Budget to Actual Comparison for the Month Ended November 30, 2006
COM 05-2007

Moved by Regional Chair Partington
Seconded by Councillor Rigby

That Report COM 05-2007, January 30, 2007, respecting Forecast of Year-End Results and Budget to Actual Comparison for the Month Ended November 30, 2006, be received for information.

Carried.

22. 2006-2008 Community Services Strategic Plan: Enhancing the Well-being of the Niagara Community
COM 03-2007

Moved by Councillor Cordiner
Seconded by Councillor Rigby

That Report COM 03-2007, January 20, 2007, respecting 2006-2008 Community Services Strategic Plan: Enhancing the Well-being of the Niagara Community, be received for information.

Carried.

23. Video-Community Services: Building Community. Building Lives.

A video was presented from staff and clients of the various Community Services Programs (Community Day Programs, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, Long-Term Care Homes and Child Care Services) attesting to the benefits and satisfaction derived from these programs for both clients and staff.

It was suggested that Cogeco be approached to air the video in order to better educate the public on the services provided by the Region's Community Services Department. It was commented that the necessary releases would have to be in place to do this.

(Refer to staff direction on page PHSS 16.)

24. Councillor Orientation Reference Information
COM 04-2007

Mr. Ventresca, Director, Seniors Services, Ms. Horner, Manager, Children's Services and Ms. Pennisi, Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, highlighted the Councillor Orientation Reference Information for their respective Divisions.

Moved by Councillor Cordiner
Seconded by Councillor Timms

That Report COM 04-2007, January 30, 2007, respecting Councillor Orientation Reference Information, be received for information.

Carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

25. Community Services Orientation Presentation "Tom"
Due to the time, the orientation session scheduled regarding "Tom", an exercise to show how the process is carried out for the public to access the services or programs they need within the Community Services Department, was not held. A sheet was distributed outlining the situations and answers.
26. Co-Chairs
Councillor Baty, Co-chair advised that, for future meetings, the Co-Chairs will both Chair each meeting as it relates to their alignment to the departments.

STAFF DIRECTION

That staff be directed to:

- (i) Provide chart regarding FTEs – (Refer to minute item 17.)
- (ii) Staff examine the possibility of having Cogeco air the Video "Community Services: Building Community. Building Lives". (Refer to minute item 23.)

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 3:20 p.m., to meet again in Committee Room 4 on February 20, 2007, at 2:00 p.m.

Brian Baty
Co-Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Pam Gilroy
Regional Clerk