

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2000

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Munter

Members: D. Beamish, W. Byrne, C. Doucet, L. Davis, H. Kreling, M. McGoldrick-Larsen

Regrets: D. Holmes, A. Loney

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the regular meeting of 3 August 2000.

CARRIED

INQUIRY

Councillor W. Byrne raised an inquiry related to the participation of Regional Councillors on the Ottawa-Carleton Housing Board. She referred to the 5 June 2000 Board meeting, where the Chair of the Board declared her in conflict of interest with respect to a building located at 2651 Regina Street situated in her ward. Since that time, a fact finding agency (a forensic accounting firm) has been appointed by the province to investigate the matter and report to Minister Tony Clement. Councillor Byrne noted that the conflict is being defined with respect to her role as a Regional Councillor and a perceived bias with respect to issues affecting tenants who are also her constituents.

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- Notes: 1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.
2. Items requiring Council approval will be presented on 13 September 2000 in Community Services Report No. 53

The Councillor noted that such a ruling would exclude her and all other Regional Councillors from taking part in discussions relating to housing board buildings in their respective wards, and would also affect Councillors Holmes, Doucet, Davis and Hill, who are members of the Ottawa-Carleton Housing Board.

The Councillor raised the following two questions, to be addressed by Legal Services and Social Housing:

1. Given how severely this would limit Councillor's participation in Ottawa-Carleton Housing Board matters, what is the purpose of the requirement for Regional Councillors on the Board of Ottawa-Carleton Housing?
2. Please define a Councillor's role under a ward system as prescribed by existing legislation and the new City of Ottawa Act.

REGULAR ITEMS

HEALTH

1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE HANDLING OF BULK FOOD PRODUCTS - RESPONSE TO INQUIRY 26(99)
- Associate Medical Officer of Health report dated 25 July 00

That Community Services Committee and Council receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

2. BILL S-20 - TOBACCO YOUTH PROTECTION ACT
- Medical Officer of Health report dated 25 August 00

Dr. R. Cushman, Medical Officer of Health, urged Committee to support the recommendations outlined in the report, noting that Regional Council previously expressed support for an earlier incarnation of Bill S-20. He referenced a recent article in the Globe and Mail, which noted that 74% of the population is in support of the Act. Dr. Cushman noted that funding will be provided to the Region to aid in enforcement and education programs to assist the Health Department's anti-tobacco strategy.

That Community Services Committee recommend Council endorse Bill S-20 (The Tobacco Youth Protection Act), and request the Prime Minister, the Federal Minister of Health and all Ottawa-Carleton Members of Parliament to support passage of Bill S-20 by the House of Commons.

CARRIED

SOCIAL SERVICES

3. SERVICES FOR FRANCOPHONE CHILDREN WITH AUTISM
- A/Social Services Commissioner report dated 9 August 00

Chair A. Munter noted a delegation is present to speak to the report on Services for Francophone Children with Autism, listed as Information Previously Distributed on the agenda.

Moved by L. Davis

That pursuant to Section 1.(2) of the Regional Procedural By-law 112-94, the rules of procedure be suspended to permit discussion of the information report previously distributed entitled “Services for Francophone Children with Autism.”

CARRIED

Ms. G. Preston, Director, Child Care, provided an update on the issue and the service system for autistic and developmentally delayed children, noting that the Ministry of Community and Social Services is the major player in that service area and the Region’s role is limited to the funding of Thursday’s Child Nursery. Following the Committee meeting in May 2000, the Department reviewed the gaps in services for francophone children and in view of the obvious problems, a plan has been developed to implement a small program housed in one of the existing child care for a one year trial basis to see how it works and see how the other provincial autism initiatives unfold. The Department is working with Child Development Services at the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario to identify whether there are sufficient children to operate the program.

Chair Munter inquired when it is anticipated that the proposed program would commence. In reply, Ms. Preston noted that affected families are still being consulted and some minor renovations to the centre would be required, with a possible start date for the program by the end of October, assuming that there are sufficient children. In response to a question from Chair Munter, Ms. Preston noted that a minimum of six children would be appropriate to operate the program.

Ms. Huguette Boisvert, President of the French Chapter for Ottawa-Carleton of the Autistic Society of Ontario, expressed heartfelt appreciation to members of Committee and Regional staff for their hard work and perseverance on this issue, adding that these positive steps will help children and their families. She suggested that a Committee be established with a mandate to address the issues of children placed in the program. Ms. Boisvert offered to devote time as a member of the Committee.

In reply to a query from Chair Munter, Ms. Preston confirmed that it is the intent of the Department to establish an advisory Committee, as well as to review the performance of the program.

Chair Munter requested that Committee be updated on the issue as the program is developed.

That Community Services Committee receive the report as information.

RECEIVED

4. SOCIAL SERVICES PRIORITIES FOR 2001 AND 2002
PROJECT GRANTS

- A/Commissioner, Social Services report dated 8 August 00

Ms. Linda Kinsella, resident of Carling Avenue, requested clarification why the disabled were not specifically identified in the priorities for social services grants for 2001 and 2002. She noted that the disabled require assistance for employment readiness, meeting basic needs, and life skills training. She noted that more and more disabled people are requiring social assistance as cuts to programs are made. Chair Munter noted that the disabled are not specifically excluded from the criteria outlined in the report.

In reply to a question from Ms. Kinsella, Social Services staff drew the attention of Committee to page 33 of report where the following is noted: “ Strategies are needed that support groups of individuals to enhance their employment readiness (for example, stabilization of personal or family issues, work skills assessment/development, transition to the work force, introduction of newcomers to the local work environment, access to opportunities and resources for the disabled, service for sole-support parents)”, noting that the Department has identified these areas as having gaps in service.

Ms. Kinsella noted that the 3rd recommendation specifically targeting services to ethnic and racial minorities and aboriginal groups to build knowledge and self-confidence, are also required by the disabled community.

Chair Munter suggested that additional examples and broader definitions be provided with the grant applications and information packages, and further that if Ms. Kinsella has information about specific disabled groups that should receive application information that she forward this to the Department.

That the Community Services Committee approve the following funding priorities for the 2001 and 2002 allocation of Social Services Project Grants:

Employment sustainability and self-reliance strategies that:

- 1. Support projects that engage disadvantaged populations in economic development activities that facilitate integration into the work force;**
- 2. Support groups of individuals towards employment readiness; and**
- 3. Provide services to Ethnic and Racial Minorities and Aboriginal Groups.**

CARRIED

SOCIAL HOUSING

5. FUNDING ALLOCATIONS UNDER THE RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RRAP)
- A/Director, Social Housing report dated 24 August 00

That the Community Services Committee recommend that Council request the Federal Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Honourable Alfonso Gagliano to :

- 1. re-distribute RRAP funding so as to shift the priority to rental and rooming house stock, recognizing the urgent need to preserve this stock, particularly for persons at risk of becoming homeless; and**
- 2. increase the RRAP allocation for Ottawa-Carleton to better reflect the dire need for affordable rental housing in our municipality which has the lowest vacancy rate in Canada.**

CARRIED

COUNCILLOR'S ITEM

6. PROVINCIAL FUNDING - MENTAL HEALTH
- A/Committee Coordinator report dated 28 August 00

That Committee direct staff to apply for mental health funding from the Provincial Government to provide for mental health workers in the mixed age buildings in the Ottawa Carleton Housing portfolio.

CARRIED

INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

1. UPDATE ON SOCIAL HOUSING DEVOLUTION
- A/Director Social Housing report dated 22 August 00

NEXT MEETING

21 September 2000

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:57 p.m.

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR