

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2000

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Munter

Members: D. Beamish, W. Byrne, C. Doucet, D. Holmes, H. Kreling, A. Loney, M. McGoldrick-Larsen

Regrets: L. Davis

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the regular meeting of 1 June 2000.

CARRIED

1. RENT SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM AND FEDERAL FUNDING
- Acting Director, Social Housing, report dated 30 May 00

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council:

1. **Urge the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to modify the Rent Supplement program to apply to:**
 - **in-situ tenants currently paying more than 50% of their income on rent and on the waiting list for social housing; and**
 - **any available market rent unit in social housing; and**

- Notes:
1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.
 2. Items requiring Council approval will be presented on 28 June 2000 in Community Services Report No. 49.

- 2. Request that the Government of Ontario respect its commitment in the Canada-Ontario Social Housing Agreement (1999) and transfer the federal housing dollars to the municipalities who fund social housing (Consolidated Municipal Service Managers - CMSMs).**

CARRIED

PRESENTATIONS

2. SAGE YOUTH
- A/Committee Co-ordinator report dated 1 June 00

Ms. Tamba Dhar, Executive Director, Sage Youth, provided members of Committee with an overview of the programming provided by the organization. She noted that Sage Youth is a registered charity and non profit corporation founded in 1992 with a mandate to provide free literacy, academic and life skills instruction for high risk children between the ages of 5 and 18. She added that Sage Youth is before Committee to request consideration for funding, to aid them in achieving their goals.

Ms. Dhar provided information on the different programs operated by Sage Youth, including the day program offered at Reception House, where children stay for an average of 6-8 weeks. The goal of this program is to ensure the children attain a grade 1 literacy level before they leave. There is also an after school program offered at two locations. The focus is on literacy as well as fostering the development of the child as a whole including arts, poetry, culture, social and life skills. Other communities are in the process of developing similar programs based on Sage Youth's model.

Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen inquired whether it would be possible to fund Sage Youth in the same manner that community houses are funded. Chair Munter commented that Councillor W. Byrne has tabled a motion to refer the request to the Social Services Department for funding under the National Child Benefit Reinvestment Fund.

Mr. Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services, stated that at first consideration it appears that Sage Youth would qualify for funding under the National Child Benefit Reinvestment Fund, and will discuss with the agency in more detail.

Councillor Byrne commended Sage Youth on their hard work on behalf of the community, noting the difficulties with class size and the inability of teachers to provide individual attention in the schools to assist children from different cultures, or with special needs.

In response to a question from Councillor A. Loney, Ms. Dhar confirmed that Sage Youth is operating within the parameters of its budget.

In reply to an inquiry from Councillor Loney, Ms. Dhar noted that the organization has discussed the potential of receiving funding from the school boards, however this is not feasible.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen expressed support for the motion, noting that the service Sage Youth provides to the immigrant community is invaluable.

Moved by W. Byrne

That the Community Services Committee refer the request from Sage Youth to the Social Services Department for consideration under the parameters of the National Child Benefit Reinvestment Fund.

CARRIED as amended

Chair Munter advised that the National Child Benefit Reinvestment Fund is being reinvested in community organizations that serve children and youth at risk. Staff will examine the potential for funding and report back in the fall of 2000.

3. **PROCEEDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY FORUM ON THE REGULATION OF RETIREMENT RESIDENCES**

- A/Committee Co-ordinator report dated 8 June 00
- Executive Director, Council on Aging, report dated 26 May 00

Mr. Alex Cullen, Executive Director, The Council on Aging, summarized the proceedings of the Community Forum on the Regulation of Retirement Residences for members of Committee. He noted that the Forum was held on April 29, 2000 with approximately 120 participants which included seniors, representatives from the Ontario Residential Care Association (ORCA), the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors (OANHSS), staff from the Homes for Aged Department, and members of the public.

Mr. Cullen noted that 4 questions were asked of participants:

1. Should retirement residences be regulated?
2. Who should regulate?
3. What standards should be set?
4. Who should enforce them?

Mr. Cullen advised that the Council on Aging proposes that a Task Force be established to review the Community Forum's proceedings and develop recommendations for Committee and Council on the

regulation of retirement residences, including the role of municipalities. He added that the Council on Aging is prepared to support the activities of such a Task Force. Membership would include seniors, Regional Government staff, representatives from ORCA and OANHSS, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, other service providers and the public. It is anticipated that the Task Force would report to Council in November 2000.

In response to an inquiry from Chair Munter, Mr. Garry Armstrong, Commissioner, Homes for the Aged, confirmed support for the recommendations outlined in the report, and the work of the Task Force.

Councillor A. Loney inquired whether the province has expressed a willingness to participate on the Task Force. Mr. Cullen replied that the province has offered assistance, although have not been asked to become members of the Task Force at this time. Councillor Loney suggested that as the issue involves provincial regulation, the province should be invited to participate. Mr. Cullen concurred with this suggestion.

In reply to a query from Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen, Mr. Cullen noted that the province has indicated that it is in the process of developing legislation to regulate retirement residences. He made reference to a public consultation led by M.P.P. Brenda Elliott, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister Responsible for Seniors, on the issue of regulating retirement residences, which would contain valuable information, if it was released.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen suggested that the issue should be raised with other Councils on Aging in order to provide a cohesive voice to the province concerning regulation. She expressed support for the recommendations outlined in the report.

Mr. Jean-Guy Nadeau, President of the Eastern Ontario Residential Care Association, noted that his organization represents 19 of 24 domiciliary hostels/residential care facilities regulated by the Region, and care is provided to the mentally challenged population. He noted that the proposed regulation for retirement residences will affect the organization. Mr. Nadeau expressed support for the recommendations, as they will provide a standard level of care across the province.

Ms. Winnifred Loucks representing Concerned Caregivers of Ottawa-Carleton, expressed concern about elder abuse and suggested that a hotline be established to deal with complaints and concerns. She suggested that this item be considered by the Task Force, and expressed support for the report and recommendations.

Moved by A. Loney

THAT the Region of Ottawa-Carleton receive the Report of Proceedings of the April 29, 2000 Community Forum on the Regulation of Retirement Residences; and,

1. **Distribute the Report of Proceedings of the April 29, 2000 Community Forum on the Regulation of Retirement Residences (Appendix C) to the Minister Responsible for Seniors, the Minister of Health & Long Term Care, Opposition Party Critics, and to local M.P.P.'s;**
2. **Request the Minister Responsible for Seniors to release the results of the public consultation conducted by M.P.P. Brenda Elliott, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister Responsible for Seniors, on the issue of regulating retirement residences; and,**
3. **Establish a Task Force to develop recommendations for Committee and Council approval concerning the establishment and enforcement of care standards for retirement residences, including the role of municipalities, with membership of the Task Force as set out in Appendix E of this report; and,**
4. **That a representative from the Government of Ontario be invited to participate as a member of the Task Force or as a resource/observer on the Task Force.**

CARRIED as amended

SOCIAL SERVICES

4. **2000 PROGRAM SUBSIDY FOR FAMILY RESOURCE SERVICES
AND PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**
- Social Services Commissioner report dated 30 May 00

Ms. Suzanne Dugas, representing Regroupement des Services de garde de langue française, expressed support for the staff recommendations, which increase salaries, and permit the resource centres to have equity with child care services. She noted that funding of the resource centres was previously a provincial responsibility. She noted that the families served make considerable use of family resource centres and that current financing is inadequate. At times it is necessary to refuse parents or children for part of the day, and they would like to extend their support to these families.

Ms. Lyne Tremblay, representing Regroupement des Services de garde de langue française, noted that the percentage of children with special needs has increased in the last few years. She noted that it is important point to recognize that the amount of funding is inadequate, and this common among resource centres. She noted that if there is not sufficient funding to keep a centre open all day, it is often the

parent who is the most adversely affected, and we would not want to lose this potential client. The mandate of resource centres is to help and support families, and they hope to be able to continue this mandate for the years to come. Ms. Tremblay expressed appreciation for the support and cooperation of Ms. Suzanne Gagnon, Assistant Director, Child Care Directorate, and of Regional staff, Community Services Committee and Council.

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve:

- The Program subsidies for Family Resource Services and Programs for Children with Special Needs as presented in the column entitled 2000 Recommended Subsidy in Schedule A retroactive to January 1, 2000;**
- The pay out of the Region's 20% share of the 1% pay equity adjustment for 1999 and 2000 for Family Resource Services and Programs for Children with Special Needs.**

CARRIED

5. 2000 PER DIEM AND ADMINISTRATION RATES FOR COMMUNITY CHILD CARE AGENCIES

- Social Services Commissioner report dated 30 May 00

Mr. Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services, informed Committee that the provincial government announced an increase of 1% for all transfer payment agencies including municipalities, with the exception of child care and family resource centres, which have received no increase. He noted that the province has expressed the opinion that there is no need for an increase for child care and family resource centres.

Ms. Jo Ann Hightower, Co-chair of the Ottawa-Carleton Child Care Association/CUPE 2204, expressed support for the report which acknowledges the Region's obligation regarding pay equity, and recommends giving child care staff a well deserved raise.

Ms. Shellie Bird, representing the Ottawa-Carleton Child Care Association/CUPE 2204, expressed appreciation for the Region's support of early learning and child care services in the Region. She noted that local child care groups are apprehensive about the effect municipal amalgamation will have on child care services.

Mr. Dave Hagerman, representing the Ottawa Federation of Parents' Day Care, advised that boards of non-profit centres have concerns about statutory obligations regarding pay equity. He noted that this financial obligation is not presently being met by many of the boards, and if the province does not

provide funding, the only way to meet the obligation is to pass the increase on to centre users through per diems. He noted that the outstanding liability from pay equity could impair the future ability of boards to get liability insurance.

In response to an inquiry from Chair Munter, Mr. Hagerman confirmed that the statutory obligation for the pay equity liability is on the boards and centres, rather than on the funders.

In reply to Chair Munter, Mr. Hagerman noted that for his individual centre, the amount owed is estimated to total \$200,000 over a three year period. Ms. Gayle Preston, Director, Child Care, stated that the pay equity liability for all centres approximates \$250,000 per year.

Commissioner Stewart stated that the province has not indicated whether it will fulfill its obligation. The Social Services Department has contacted the province on the issue, and will report back to Committee in early fall.

Mr. Hagerman stated that the boards have a legal obligation to show that they have made all reasonable efforts to secure the funds in order to meet their statutory obligations.

Councillor Loney inquired when the boards will be considered in legal default. He suggested that if a complaint was filed by an employee about pay equity it might force the province to respond to the issue and meet its obligation. Commissioner Stewart stated that it may be risky to encourage an employee to launch a court challenge as it may place an employer in jeopardy. With Committee's concurrence, Councillor Loney suggested that the Department be directed to investigate the feasibility of initiating a court challenge regarding pay equity. Commissioner Stewart noted that he will investigate this issue and report back to Committee at the end of September.

Councillor C. Doucet suggested that a conference or community forum with representatives from Social Services, child care centres and boards, and members of the public should be hosted by Committee, with an invitation extended to the province, to discuss pay equity and focus public attention on the issue.

Commissioner Stewart committed to discussing with the child care community the best way to focus attention on the issue, and to report back at the end of September.

Councillor D. Holmes commented that it is unlikely that the provincial government is going to be swayed by public attention, but may be persuaded by a legal challenge. She suggested the possibility that the Region provide financial support to an employee willing to launch a legal challenge against the province.

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve:

- 1) The per diem and administration rates for community child care agencies as presented in the column entitled 2000 Recommended Rates in Schedule A retroactive to January 1, 2000.**
- 2) The pay out of the Region's 20% share of the 1% pay equity adjustment for 2000 for not for profit community child care agencies.**

CARRIED

6. FULL FEE RATES IN MUNICIPAL CENTRES

- Social Services Commissioner report dated 30 May 00

Chair Munter tabled a motion to not increase the fees as outlined in the report, noting that the minimal revenue to be earned from this increase will have a significant impact on the lives and finances of residents whose children receive care in the centres..

Mr. Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services, advised that one of the reasons there is a proposal to raise the fees is as a result of a tacit agreement with the child care community. He noted that the proposal provides a modest increase in revenue, and the recommendation is based on an unwritten contract that the Region's rates will reflect the average rates charged in the community so that there is not an unfair advantage. Commissioner Stewart noted that rates have not been increased in many years, and as a wage increase has just been approved, it would be an appropriate time to raise fees.

Councillor Loney suggested that the number of subsidized spaces could be increased with the resulting revenue achieved by raising fees.

Councillor D. Beamish cautioned Committee that it will be difficult to raise fees to market level in the future without a drastic increase if it is not done on a regular basis. He noted that not implementing the increase will result in subsidization of full fee spaces.

Councillor D. Holmes inquired how many subsidized spaces the anticipated revenue of \$34,000 would achieve. Commissioner Stewart responded that the average cost of a subsidized space is approximately \$7,000 per year, and would total 5 spaces. Commissioner Stewart commented that 100% regionally subsidized spaces could be created with the revenue.

Chair Munter noted that the annual increase for infant care, based on the report, would be approximately \$500 per year. He added that an increase of this magnitude would likely result in the loss of some full fee payers.

In reply to a question from Councillor Beamish, Commissioner Stewart responded that it is anticipated that if some full fee payers drop out because the rates are raised, other ones will take their place. Ms. Gayle Preston, Director of Child Care Services, stated that if the full fee spots do not fill up, they will be converted to subsidized spaces.

Councillor Holmes tabled a motion to use the anticipated revenue from the increase in full fee rates to create additional subsidized spaces.

In accordance with Regional Council's desire not to raise taxes or user fees, the Social Services Department be directed to advise fee-paying parents that there will be no increase in child care user fees in 2000; and

Further that the 2000 operating budget be amended to delete the \$34,000 in revenue projected from the fee increase and that staff be directed to find these dollars from elsewhere within the child care budget, without affecting services, wages or subsidized spaces.

LOST

NAYS: D. Beamish, C. Doucet, D. Holmes, A. Loney, M. McGoldrick-Larsen 5

YEAS: W. Byrne, H. Kreling, A. Munter 3

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve a 3.7% increase in the rates charged to full fee payers in child care centres operated by the Region as indicated in the report effective September 1, 2000; and,

That the \$34,000 revenue from the full fee increase be used to create new subsidized spaces.

CARRIED as amended

NEXT MEETING

6 July 2000

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR