

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

16 JULY 1998

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Munter

Members: D. Beamish, C. Doucet, D. Holmes, ALoney, M. McGoldrick-Larsen

Regrets: W. Byrne, L. Davis, HKreling

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of 25 June 1998.

CARRIED

INQUIRIES

1. The Committee Chair, A. Munter, asked that the Social Services Department provide him with the latest numbers for immigrants on social assistance due to accreditation problems.
2. Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen asked that the Committee receive a report on the policy for family shelters, specifically, whether these facilities should be permitted to raise money or accept corporate donations. The report should indicate why the current policy does not permit these activities and whether the policy should be revised.

Notes: 1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendation(s) approved by Committee.
2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 12 August 1998 in Community Services Report No. 15.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. NO SMOKING BY-LAW RECOMMENDATIONS IN BINGO HALLS, BILLIARDS HALLS AND BOWLING CENTRES
- Medical Officer of Health report dated 2 June 1998

Dr. Edward Ellis, Associate Medical Officer of Health, introduced Ms. D/ McCulloch, Tobacco Use Prevention Officer, Health Department. He began by speaking about tobacco use targets, noting these have been modified based on the new Mandatory Standards and are as follows:

- decreased teen smoking to 10% by year 2005 (currently 20% of teens smoke on a daily basis, 29% if one includes daily and occasional smoking)
- decreased adult smoking to 15% by year 2005 (currently the percentage is 23-24%)
- 100% smoke-free schools, workplaces and public places by year 2005
- reduced sales to minors by year 2000 (the Nov/Dec survey showed 89% of vendors comply with the law)
- increase in the proportion of smoke-free homes by year 2000.

Dr. Ellis spoke about the previous Council's request that area municipalities endorse the passing of a regional workplace by-law and he indicated that, to date, the following municipalities have given their endorsement: the City of Ottawa, the Village of Rockcliffe Park and the Townships of Goulbourn, Osgoode and West Carleton. The Region could proceed with a by-law if one more municipality consented.

Dr. Ellis described the health effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS), highlighting, among others:

- increases in heart disease and lung cancer among those who live with a smoker and who are chronically exposed to smoke in the workplace
- adverse effects on the fetuses of pregnant women (relationship with low birth -weight, sudden infant death, respiratory problems in children)

He noted that, in Ottawa-Carleton, there are 10 deaths per year from lung cancer, 90 from cardio-vascular diseases, approximately 500 to 900 cases of bronchitis and pneumonia in children under 18 months, and one-quarter of the population suffers from a health condition aggravated by ETS.

Dr. Ellis pointed out that the crux of the issue for operators of bingo, bowling and billiard halls is to balance the desire of smokers to participate in a leisurely activity with those who don't want to be exposed to second-hand smoke. A health department survey done in 1996 showed there is majority support for smoking being allowed in these facilities if there are separately ventilated areas within. He added that the Health Department placed nicotine monitors in bowling alleys and, combining this with data from studies done elsewhere in Ontario, has come up with estimates of getting cancer from exposure: a person frequenting a bingo hall for 2 hours a week for 40 years in a non-smoking area has a 1 in 15,000 chance of getting lung cancer: in the smoking area the ratio is 1 in 12,000. This does not represent much of a difference and can be ascribed to the fact the halls do not have separately ventilated areas for non-smokers.

Dr. Ellis concluded his presentation by outlining the departmental recommendations. He spoke about receiving a copy of a 135-name petition sent to the Manager of a bingo hall in Nepean indicating that the current non-smoking area was unacceptable (Nepean's current policy is 50/50). When the Health Department surveyed bingo halls, it was ascertained they were running at 65% non-smoking section and operators feel they are doing all that they can. Nevertheless, there is tension since some customers want to continue participating but feel the halls are too smoky.

The Committee Chair, A. Munter wanted to know what progress has been made in securing area municipality approval for a region-wide by-law applying to restaurants and bars. Dr. Ellis indicated this was not pursued because it was felt the result would be similar to that of the workplace by-law which was going nowhere. Chair Munter recalled that the clear message from the Restaurant Association is that a level playing field is essential for any by-law applying to restaurants and bars. Dr. Ellis confirmed the same message was coming from bingo halls, billiards and bowling alley operators.

Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen asked whether Health Department staff were aware that the City of Nepean calls for a gradual increase from its current 50/50 policy between now and the year 2000. Dr. Ellis replied in the affirmative, adding it was his understanding Nepean will maintain enforcement at 50% to be in accord with the municipalities of Ottawa and Kanata. He said he thought there would be uniformity between the three municipalities.

Councillor A. Loney inquired why the Region's goal would not be to completely eliminate sales to minors. Dr. Ellis replied that the goal was adopted based on the premise that sales could never be completely eliminated, and thus the aim should be to reduce sales. He added that studies done in the United States have shown that keeping sales under 20% contributes to decreased prevalence in smoking and that he would personally like to see the Region's numbers in the high 90s. Councillor Loney said he did not consider it unrealistic to aim for zero sales to minors, and that such a target should be adopted as the Region is now doing fairly well in this area.

Replying to a question from Councillor D. Beamish, Dr. Ellis said the Region has not requested that the Province allow it to pass by-laws in matters of public health without resorting to the “good will” of area municipalities. The Councillor thought it was unfortunate that petty turf wars between municipalities put citizens at risk, and he would like the Region to request this kind of legislation.

The request should be accompanied by documentation on the efforts made by the Region to-date to secure region-wide or conformity by-laws, and should explain the difficulties encountered in trying to garner support from area municipalities. In addition, it should be clearly stated that the Region needs to have the powers to make itself more effective in matters of public health.

The following delegations were heard, and their comments are summarized below.

Carolyn Hill, representing the Ottawa-Carleton Council on Smoking and Health

Speaking in her capacity as Chair of the Council’s public health issues, Ms. Hill said there is no denying the serious effects caused by ETS, a carcinogen that causes cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, harms children and seriously affects the health of unborn children. She said the question for health officials is when and how much to further strengthen restrictions in bingo, billiards and bowling alleys. She pointed out there is less support for regulation in these facilities since they are normally frequented by a higher number of smokers than in the general public. The Council on Smoking and Health firmly believes that staff and volunteers working in these facilities have a right to work in smoke-free conditions and the public who wish to participate in smoke-free bowling, billiards or bingo also deserve protection from second-hand smoke. The Council strongly believes that when children are present, the facilities should be smoke-free and this should take effect immediately. Ms. Hill congratulated the cities of Ottawa, Nepean and Kanata who have in the past set the standard for other municipalities to follow. She spoke in support of a level playing field for all municipalities, of 100% smoke-free facilities that are used by the entire community and of reaching 100% smoke-free status by the year 2000.

Lise Caputinsky and Ann Henry, Friends’ Bingo Hall (Vanier)

Ms. Caputinsky said she manages the Friends’ Bingo Hall and the facility already has a smoke-free room. The hall capacity is 600 places and, out of these, 60 are in an enclosed area for non-smokers. She expressed the view the idea of 50% of a hall being smoke-free is irrational and will not be attainable, as most patrons of bingo halls are smokers.

Ms. Henry said she was pleased with the fact the Health Department consulted with operators and has listened to their comments. She asked that the requirement for the caller to be in a separate enclosure be reviewed, as a large percentage of them are smokers who would not want to be in a small, enclosed area.

Don McMillan, Professional Engineer (Gloucester)

Mr. McMillan said he has knowledge in the area of indoor air quality and he informed the Committee that specifications on how to design a smoking area in any building in the world already exist, as well as all the engineering requirements. He posited it would cost approximately \$25,000 to adequately ventilate the McArthur Bowling Lanes, the only 10-pin facility in the east of the Region, in the city of Vanier, where he bowls. He spoke about having met the lessee of this facility in Montreal, and of having been informed the lessee was not interested in cleaning up the air unless forced to do so by legislation.

Irvin Budge, Public Relations, Snooker Billiards Centre (Kanata)

Mr. Budge spoke on behalf of Mr. John Bell, the proprietor of a 100% smoke-free billiard hall in Kanata. Mr. Bell has a young family and has worked in the business for 20 years therefore he is aware of the hazards. He wanted to be a trend setter and attract young families that are more health conscious. Mr. Budge said a billiard establishment conveys the image of a dark, smoky place, but Mr. Bell's facility is clean and requires less maintenance because there are no smoky, grimy walls to clean. Mr. Budge expressed the view that, eventually, all facilities will be smoke-free, and he asked why not start right now.

Roger Sarazin, Manager, McArthur Bowling Lanes and Mr. Denis Ste-Marie

Mr. Sarazin indicated most bowlers complain about smoking in this facility, since this is allowed in 70% of it. Many people who bowl are trying to become non-smokers. He said that parents have been asked not to smoke during junior bowling on Saturdays, however they continue to smoke. Mr. Sarazin said he was trying to reverse the percentages, to have 70% for non-smokers and 30% for smokers, but so far he has been unsuccessful in achieving this goal.

Denis Ste-Marie added there are children in the bowling centre almost 100% of the time, including babies in carriages. On league nights, children wait for their parents to finish their games, and are exposed to smoke. He speculated that smoking in 10% of an area will still spread to the remainder of the space. Mr. Ste-Marie asked what other sport allows smoking in any observable area. He said he thought that the Health Department was not going far enough and should be advocating for a 100% smoke-free environment. The Medical Officer of Health, Dr. R. Cushman, said he was delighted to see people pushing the department forward on this issue. He expressed the hope that participants would make similar presentations to their municipal councils, to press this point forward. Mr. Ste-Marie spoke about attempts made to get the City of Vanier to agree to the regional by-law, but to no avail: initiatives included a 600-name petition and a call campaign to Vanier officials.

Chair Munter read a number of Motions put forward by Committee members. Councillor D. Holmes said it was sad to see only five area municipalities have agreed to support the regional by-law. She posited it was time that agencies and individuals supporting these measures meet with their municipal councils in an effort to secure the support of a sixth municipality to ensure a region-wide by-law.

Councillor Loney spoke about there being a renewed spirit of cooperation between area municipalities and the Region, and he suggested further attempts be made to secure their cooperation for the proposed regulations, as well as for the no-smoking in restaurants and bars by-law. Having been assured by the Legal Department representative, Ms. A. Taschereau -Moncion, that the support of the six municipalities would have to be maintained throughout, Councillor Loney suggested it would be safer to have the support of seven. He added had not found many people who were not in favour of rules against smoking.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen suggested the Chair communicate to the City of Vanier the gist of the presentation made to Committee today. Chair Munter indicated he would follow-up on this suggestion. He expressed strong support for Councillor Holmes' Motion which calls for action at a level other than government to government. Municipal councils should understand their own businesses want a level playing field, and their own residents want this legislation. He asked that bingo and billiard operators and organizations that have membership across the municipalities to get involved and to pressure their local councils to do the right thing.

The following Motions were then brought forward:

Moved by A. Loney

That the RMOC's goal re: sales to minors be amended to reflect the elimination of sales to minors

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Health Department convene a meeting of groups interested in the establishment of a regional non-smoking by-law to prepare a strategy (both process and content) for the groups to then present to our member municipalities in order to present a case and request that municipalities agree to a region-wide by-law.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Beamish

That staff prepare a submission to the Provincial government, including a legislative amendment and background documentation to allow the Region to fulfill its public health mandate by passing and enforcing by-laws on public health matters such as smoking, and that staff report back in six months on the success of the submission.

CARRIED

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve the recommendations, as contained in the report, and as amended by the foregoing, for area municipal councils within Ottawa-Carleton to use in developing or revising their public places smoking by-laws as necessary with respect to bingo halls, billiard halls and bowling centres.

CARRIED

2. UPDATE - LAND AMBULANCE SERVICES
- Medical Officer of Health report dated 6 July 98

The Committee heard from Joanne Yelle-Weatherall, Director, Land Ambulance Services, Region of Ottawa-Carleton. Ms. Yelle-Weatherall summarized events beginning with Council's approval of early assumption of land ambulance services on 25 Mar 98 and leading to those described in the report.

Ms. Yelle-Weatherall gave background information on the current ambulance service providers. She indicated that the Ministry of Health still intends to hold a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Ministry-run Ottawa-Carleton Regional Ambulance Service (OCRAS) which delivers 50% of the service. Four (4) of the private operators cover the Region of Ottawa-Carleton and neighbouring counties. This will be an important factor with early assumption since operators will need to set up separate "businesses", creating additional costs for the operators and ultimately for the RMOC. As the operators are protected under legislation until 31 Dec 99, the Region would have little control over current service, over costs and could make few changes. Operators are governed by the Ambulance Act and operating on a licence: there are no written agreements or contracts, and the Ministry of Health imposes few guidelines or standards.

Ms. Yelle-Weatherall emphasized the importance of ensuring effective public consultation on the very complex issue of land ambulance service. She added that, while not every stakeholder will be satisfied with the outcome of the transition, the hope is that all the participants will view the process as being fair and transparent. A consultation group has

been set up and copies of the report were forwarded to paramedics in Ottawa-Carleton to involve them as much as possible in the process.

Ms. Yelle-Weatherall then provided the rationale for the recommendation to review early assumption in November 1998:

- the need to carefully evaluate risks and uncertainties and balance those with the ability to achieve a smooth and seamless transition
- the difficulty in accessing detailed financial and operating information
- the Ministry of Health's decision to "cut off" private operators from the store operation where they obtain their non-disposable supplies and equipment. This would have left the Region with less than one month to source and set up contracts for these supplies. As well staff were unable to obtain information on what these costs are
- the fact that a number of other unaccounted-for costs such as legal fees, contract negotiations and costs associated with special events such as Canada Day, are not available
- early assumption will require a full-time manager to deal with day-to-day operations of the six current operators; there may be other significant labour relations and legal costs as well.

The speaker said that Council's decision for early assumption has helped staff gain expertise and learn more about the business. However, it would have been preferable to have the support of other upper tier municipalities, as well as that of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) for negotiating with the Ministry of Health.

With respect to the RFP for Ottawa-Carleton Regional Ambulance Service which is still pending, Ms. Yelle-Weatherall indicated that senior staff from the Ministry of Health agreed it should be cancelled and said they would lobby Cabinet to do so. Staff have learned that, regrettably, Cabinet is still moving forward with the RFP. With regard to dispatch issues, local Ministry staff indicate there is now room for discussion. The Land Ambulance Transition Task Force will recommend that upper tier municipalities have more involvement and control over this function. In addition to dispatch, issues ranging from co-operative purchasing to full service delivery can be discussed with neighbouring counties. As well, staff will meet with the Regional Tiered Response Committee to ensure their continued participation. The area of non-emergency services, currently hotly debated by stakeholders, will be the subject of a future report to Committee and Council. Staff have also been reviewing best practices and hope to complete this work by September.

The Committee Chair, A. Munter, commended Ms. Yelle-Weatherall for a remarkable job to bring the Committee up-to-date on this matter. He asked whether it would be fair to say the current operators are “franchisees” of the Ministry of Health, and that their costs are strictly prescribed by Ministry. Ms. Yelle-Weatherall agreed with this description. She added that operators have two budgets, one that is set by the Ministry, with any surplus or profit returning to the Ministry and the second a Management Compensation Plan (this is how operators get paid). The latter is an un-audited budget and is set up according to the volume of calls. Nothing is known about the Ministry of Health-run ambulance service, other than the fact the Province intends to proceed with the RFP for this service.

In response to a concern expressed by Councillor Clive Doucet, Ms. Yelle-Weatherall clarified an earlier comment about the Ministry having no operating standards. She indicated that operators are governed by *The Ambulance Act*; there are no written agreements between operators and the Ministry of Health, and it is her understanding no one has ever lost their license in the Province of Ontario. The Director, Policy and Legislative Services, Ms. Kelly McGee added that *The Ambulance Act* does contain details in terms of required training and levels of standards for the operators in the vehicle, and the necessary safeguards are there for Ministry-set standards.

Ms. Yelle-Weatherall described Paramedics as highly-skilled, trained, competent individuals. She spoke about the role played by the Base Hospital (Ottawa General) in land ambulance services, and that of its director, Dr. Justin Maloney who is responsible for quality assurance and for training.

In response to a question from Councillor A. Loney, Ms. Yelle-Weatherall indicated staff have been unable to obtain copies of the RFPs for the various services. The Councillor spoke of participating in the RFP process for Osgoode, and he expressed the view that the very detailed RFP and the response to it constitute, de facto, a contract since the winning firm is selected according to its response. He pointed out that having this documentation would place the Region in a better position when negotiating future contracts.

Myles Cassidy, representing Rural Metro Ontario

Mr. Cassidy applauded efforts at early assumption from both a business and a philosophical point of view; if the Region pays the bills, it should have a say in what is provided. He spoke about the uncertainties experienced by ambulance service staff since the downloading to upper tier municipalities, i.e., whether the system will change drastically, whether they will be employed, whether their wages will diminish. He posited that the sooner these questions are answered, the sooner ambulance staff will be able to concentrate more on their jobs. He said he thought the term “franchisees” to describe private operators was a good one, since assets owned by anyone other than the Ministry of Health are few and operations are either funded by the Ministry or owned by it.

Mr. Cassidy said he thought staff had clarified the training issue well. He spoke about the requirements of *The Ambulance Act* which are that the operator provide attendants trained to a certain level, maintain the vehicles in his care and guarantee that attendants are in the vehicle within two minutes. Subsequent to this, everything is completely up to dispatch and response times depend entirely on where vehicles are, how busy a day it is and where incidents occur.

Randy Caverly, Ambulance Workers' Union

Mr. Caverly thanked regional staff for the work and the resources devoted to this issue, saying this speaks well to the direction the community is taking and to the outcome of the process. He said he has found both regional staff and Members of Council approachable, and he said this was a refreshing change after dealing with the Ministry of Health. He expressed concern about moving the target date to the end of the protection period, saying the upper tier municipalities have received special status under Bill 152 to assume early ownership. By changing the target date, these rights are being waived and special lines of communication are being lost. If the target date is maintained, there is no incentive for the Ministry to provide any further information because the Region will only be one other player. Mr. Caverly felt there was some advantage in having an early date, both to move towards the tender process and to make demands for special lines of communication.

Committee Chair Munter pointed out that setting an early assumption date has brought the Region to this point and has shown the Ministry that Council sees this as an important responsibility which it takes seriously. He expressed the view the delay does not mean the matter is being pushed off until the end of 1999, simply that the matter must come back in November for further discussion. The original argument for assumption on 1 July, i.e., paying for the service should allow the Region to make decisions about it, still holds. The threat that the Province will make irreversible changes by tendering the service and leave the RMOC with a "fait accompli" is a powerful motivator for Council to send the clear message it is still interested in early assumption and in becoming fully responsible as early as possible. Chair Munter put forward the view Council will soon have to address what form the service will take once Council is fully responsible for it. He expressed his appreciation for the presentations made and he stressed the importance of continuing to make every effort to communicate with all parties involved in the process.

The Committee agreed with a suggestion from Councillor Loney that Recommendation 1 be amended to state it is still Council's intention to assume land ambulance services as early as possible. Councillor Loney reiterated the importance of clearly communicating this message to Ministry of Health officials.

Moved by A. Loney

1. That Regional Council inform the Ministry of Health that:
 - a) it is Council's intent to proceed with early assumption of ambulance service and that a date for such assumption will be set in November 1998;
 - b) the Request for Proposal for the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Ambulance Service (OCRAS) should be cancelled, and;
 - c) effective and seamless ambulance service requires control of dispatch;
2. That Regional Council direct Land Ambulance Services staff:
 - a) to prepare a detailed year 2000 assumption plan with milestones and timelines for Committee and Council's information early this fall;
 - b) to review possible options to gain more and control over the dispatch function;
 - c) to explore the full range of options, from purchasing/leasing cooperatives to full service delivery, with the Region of Ottawa-Carleton's neighboring Counties for 1 January 2000;
 - d) to begin discussions to develop multi-jurisdictional, mutual-aid agreements with neighboring Counties;
 - e) to send this report to other Upper Tier Municipalities in Ontario and invite them to join in the establishment of an information exchange network.
3. That Regional Council forward this report to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) requesting AMO's support.

CARRIED, as amended

3. APPOINTMENTS: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY GROUP
 - A/Co-ordinator, Community Services report dated 2 July 1998
 - Report to be issued separately

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve the appointments of the following individuals as public representatives to the Environmental Health Advisory Group (Listed alphabetically)

Albert W. Dugal
Ann Coffey-Farmilo
Nora Gambioli
Roy Hickman
Michael Holliday
Diane Huffman

Caroline Ladanowski
Roderick Raphael
Victor Shantora
Dr. Dana Silk
Susan Springthorpe

CARRIED

4. ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION 49TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services report dated 2 July 1998

The Committee Chair directed that the Co-ordinator canvass all members to ascertain whether there was any interest in attending the conference and report back at the next regular meeting.

DEFERRED
(To 3 Sep 98)

5. LANGUAGES OF LIFE REQUEST FOR SUPPORT
- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services report dated 2 July 1998

The Committee heard from Ms. Bryna Monson, Executive Director/President, Languages of Life Inc. She introduced Ms. Bonnie Favilla, agency secretary and Mr. Alex Cullen, M.P.P., Ottawa West. Ms. Monson said the agency provides services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and has over 700 translators and interpreters in its employ.

These individuals are screened and have signed confidentiality forms that allow them to work with police, in hospitals and with agencies such as the Children's Aid Society. Ms. Monson indicated the agency has lost \$50,000 in funding, equally shared between the City of Ottawa and the Province of Ontario, but has managed to continue operating through donations received and by charging a fee for service. She asked that the Committee help maintain a "one-of-a-kind" service in the community.

Ms. B. Favilla spoke of the older immigrant communities having made extensive use of the agency in times of crisis, and having benefited from the service. Several newer ethnic communities are in desperate need of similar assistance, and \$25,000 is a small amount to maintain something the agency feels is a necessity for the City of Ottawa. Ms. Favilla told about having to make personal requests to friends for assistance and about the fact that Ms. Monson is running the agency almost entirely by herself, taking only a small salary: no one else is really paid in the agency.

Mr. Cullen said Languages of Life provides a social service that agencies such as the Police, hospitals, and regional departments would otherwise have to pay for using. He called it a small but wise investment that saves the Region money in the long run.

The Committee Chair, A. Munter, referred to the Financial Statements submitted by the agency, and he asked whether \$91,000 represents fees for service in 1997. Ms. Monson indicated this amount represents fees for service and donations from corporations and funds contributed by friends and families. Councillor D. Beamish wanted to know whether translators are volunteers or whether they are paid every time they do interpretation and translation. Ms. Monson said workers are advised they will be paid when the agency gets paid; she confirmed that the \$22,000 listed under the heading Translation and Interpretation represents the amount received in 1997. The Councillor questioned whether it costs \$49,000 to raise \$63,000 in funds, as indicated in the financial statements. Mr. Cullen explained that these expenditures are for hall rental, invitations, refreshments and other costs associated with fundraising activities. Ms. Monson added, in response to further questions from Councillor Beamish, that fundraising revenues are down by \$60,000 from 1996 to 1997 because there are scarce resources in the community. Mr. Cullen pointed out that, with all the cutbacks, there is a great deal of competition for the same funding dollar.

Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen asked about the base charge for service and she suggested this amount could be raised to increase revenues. Ms. Monson said the agency charges .20 cents per word for written translations; translators are paid .10 cents per word and interpreters receive one-third of a \$55 to \$60 dollar charge. She added that workers are advised at the outset they will be paid when the agency is paid. Mr. Cullen added this is a charitable, non-profit agency in existence for 20 years; it has 700 translators in its work bank and, because it was non-profit, it did not charge for service. The loss of funding from both the Province and the City of Ottawa means the agency cannot carry out, and its loss would have a tremendous impact on the community. He posited that the majority of people could not use a professional company and the cost to agencies would triple and quadruple.

The Committee heard from Dr. Marvin Blauer, Board President, Cultural Interpretation Services of Ottawa-Carleton (CISOC), a volunteer and one of 12 people representing the community. Dr. Blauer introduced Ms Fiona Faucher, Executive Director of CISOC. He spoke about the service growing out of the perception that many in the immigrant population of Ottawa-Carleton were not capable of, or comfortable with, speaking about serious matters in either French or English. The means chosen to provide the service was through quality interpretation done by professionally trained cultural interpreters who are capable of understanding a culture to convey meaning more accurately.

Dr. Blauer said CISOC has been in existence for 5 years; it is a non-profit, registered charitable organization which, in the current year, will perform 7,000 interpretations, i.e., 20 assignments per day, 365 days per year, on a 24 hour basis. The agency has service agreements with the RMOC, the hospitals, the Police, the CAS and other similar agencies. A condition of the service is that interpreters be tested through a professional testing mechanism developed by CISOC and currently in use throughout the Province. When proven qualified to join CISOC's roster, interpreters have to provide service according to a service standard, in a reliable, professional manner and CISOC is insured to provide this. In addition, CISOC is determined to ensure that cultural interpreters are not being exploited, that they are paid fairly for the work they do once they meet the required qualifications and operate professionally. Dr. Blauer suggested that the RMOC not provide core funding but continue operating as it has, acquiring service through service agreements and that funding continue to come from a fee for service.

Ms. F. Faucher provided historical background on the establishment of cultural interpretation services in Ottawa-Carleton. She pointed out that services are offered in approximately 65 languages, noting this has to be kept fluid because of changing needs in the community. Two hundred and 205 cultural interpreters are utilized and in the past month, 613 assignments have been completed; all interpreters are screened, selected, trained and supervised by CISOC, and receive core training of approximately 36 hours on basic skills, plus 12 hours in specialized areas.

Speaking to the issue of standards, Ms. Faucher indicated CISOC has developed and administers a Cultural Interpretation Languages Assessment and Skills Tool. This is a two-part test currently available in 14 languages, with an additional 10 languages being added this year. It is being used across the Province as the standard to hire cultural interpreters. CISOC has just received a Project Grant from the Ministry of Citizenship to develop the 10 additional languages to meet the response for the new Domestic Violence Courts being set up in Ottawa and Toronto. The agency has an extremely sophisticated database, so it can provide quality control services; it reports monthly to all its clients, and provides statistical information. Feedback forms are provided for every assignment, and the satisfaction rate is approximately 90% monthly.

Replying to a question from Councillor D. Holmes, Dr. Blauer reiterated that agencies wanting interpretation services and paying a fee for service have a right to demand that it be in accord with certain standards and that interpreters be professionally trained. Other concerns center around clients not receiving proper interpretation and interpreters not being paid for their work.

Councillor Holmes asked how many companies providing the service. Dr. Blauer indicated that CISOC and Languages of Life are the only two companies that provide cultural interpretation. Ms. Faucher added the issue is broader than not wanting the RMOC to fund a competitor: the Board of CISO feels that certain quality standards have

to be met for cultural interpretation and they can be provided through a fee for service. If Languages of Life wishes to enter into this type of agreement, the Region should investigate their request under certain criteria. CISOC has spent considerable time establishing the service and the standards and has not asked for core funding.

Councillor Holmes put forward a Motion calling for the item to be referred to staff for a report that would include information on the Region's need for interpretation services, and the need of its clients as well. The Councillor noted that Languages of Life has been in existence for many years and, prior to making a decision, the Committee should have more information on training the interpreters; more information on the Financial Statements, what the hourly rates are, how often are the services used by the Police service, is the RMOC getting good service, are clients and the department satisfied. Councillor A. Loney suggested this be expanded to include the needs of the Police service as well

Councillor C. Doucet expressed his support, and he cautioned that one agency should not be placed at a disadvantage in favour of the other: another consideration is the issue of quality control, as raised by representatives today.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen said that, while she respected and admired the long-term service provided by Languages for Life, some questions have not been answered to her satisfaction. She felt it would be irresponsible of the Committee to provide any funds without having all the information it needs.

Councillor Loney pointed out that any request for funding from whatever source should automatically trigger a response from staff. He said that Ms. Monson has done good work for a long time, and her contribution should not be dismissed lightly, however the reality is the service has to be weighed in terms of current realities, value for service, and in terms of whether the Region can afford to let the service drop.

Committee Chair Munter echoed earlier statements regarding the contributions made by Languages of Life. He pointed out that the Social Services Commissioner could utilize his delegated authority to meet emergency needs of the organization, pending receipt of the report requested by Committee.

Moved by D. Holmes

That this item be referred to the Social Services Department for a report that will include the needs of the Department, the Police Service and our clients for cultural interpretation and translation services, and that this report be brought forward at the 3 Sep 98 meeting.

CARRIED, as amended

RESPONSE TO MOTION/INQUIRIES

6. SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- Commissioner of Planning & Development Approvals Department report dated 30 June 98
- Response to Inquiry CSC No.14(98)

In response to questions from Councillor D. Holmes, the Head, Policy and Planning Branch, Planning and Development Approvals Department, Ms. Marni Cappe, described the key criteria used by the Province to determine which supportive housing projects are to be funded by municipalities as opposed to those that are to be transferred to the Ministry of Health (MOH) or to the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS). To qualify for Ministry funding, projects will have to be considered dedicated supportive housing, i.e., all tenants within the complex receive support services (supportive housing is considered to be a core business of the MOH). In Ottawa-Carleton, the ratio of supportive housing is almost 2:1, therefore twice as many units are not being transferred to MOH or to MCSS.

Ms. Cappe spoke about the Hard-to-House program, noting that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will not transfer this component. In Ottawa-Carleton, the programs affected are Options Bytown and Daybreak: since neither of these programs receive funds from the MOH or from MCSS, they will not be eligible for transfer to those ministries. This means the RMOC will be responsible for funding housing costs for the supportive housing projects not transferred. Ms. Cappe indicated staff are seeking absolute assurances that the services currently available will continue to be funded through other Ministries. Replying to a question from Councillor Holmes on how this is being done, Ms. Cappe indicated that a report on social housing is expected within the next few weeks; if this report does not mention supportive housing, staff will highlight this point in their response to the Ministry.

Councillor Holmes said one of her major concerns is the possible loss of funding for support services for the hard-to-house, and the fact that the Region may be penalized for having taken on additional supportive housing units. She expressed the view the RMOC should be asking for more of this type of accommodation, not just trying to keep the few units it already has in operation.

The Committee Chair, A. Munter, suggested that the matter be referred to the Social Housing Working Group for that entity to develop an action plan to come back to Committee and Council in an effort to move things forward. Chair Munter said he was concerned that the actions of the Province will result in two "streams" of supportive housing, one provincially-funded and one municipally-funded, and this likely will mean problems in the future.

Moved by D. Holmes

That a strategy be developed to increase the number of units of supportive housing in Ottawa-Carleton. That a report be prepared that outlines the needs. That the Social Housing Working Group be sent this report for action.

CARRIED

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

RECEIVED

INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

1. Correspondence from Ottawa-Carleton Housing
- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services report dated 14 May 1998.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

3 September 1998

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR