

MINUTES
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
CHAMPLAIN ROOM
17 OCTOBER 1996
1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: M. Meilleur

Members: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, L. Davis, D. Holmes, A. Loney, A. Munter, D. Pratt

Regrets: B. McGarry

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of 03 October 1996.

CARRIED

1. PRESENTATION ON THE ANTI-POVERTY PROJECT

- Committee Co-ordinator report dated 4 October 1996

Linda Lalonde, Anti-Poverty Project reminded Committee members that October 17 is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. She spoke about an impact study on the results of the one year of welfare cuts across the province (material on file with the Committee Co-ordinator) and she highlighted the definition of poverty as written by a grade 4 and 5 class of children from North Bay.

Notes: 1. Underling indicates new or amended recommendations.

2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 13 November 1996 in Community Services Report Number 37, with the exception of Item 5, Update Report, Nelson House, which will be presented to Council on 23 October 1996 in Community Services Report 36

Ms. Lalonde suggested cuts have hurt the most vulnerable people in Ontario, single mothers, children and people with disabilities: the housing problem has become a housing crisis. The province is facing a hunger epidemic. The health and mental health of Ontario residents is deteriorating. Welfare recipients can't earn back the differences from their welfare cheques as the Province had said they could and other supports are being decimated just when they are needed most. Ms. Lalonde pointed out that people can't earn back if they don't have a job, there aren't enough jobs available and. If jobs were available, some people could not go to work because no child care services are available as a support to employment.

Ms. Lalonde continued by saying people are facing the loss of telephone services and gas and electricity services because they can't pay their bills. The use of shelters is increasing and even though shelters are supported by the welfare system, shelter residents are not counted as welfare recipients. This is the reason why the number of persons on welfare rolls is decreasing but not welfare costs.

Ms. Lalonde spoke about food banks facing crisis situations, for example 35% of people who used food banks in 1996 did so because they could not afford to buy food. This represents an increase from 15% in 1995. The relationship between poor health and poverty has been described as a vicious circle.

Speaking to the question of welfare eligibility, Ms. Lalonde said she believes the changes in rates and criteria have played a part in reducing welfare rolls. However, she argued that people who have left the welfare rolls are being supported through other social programs.

Helen Saravanamuttoo, Child Poverty Action Group expressed her desire to see the eradication of poverty. She explained that the effects of poverty on children are long lasting: infants from poor families have lower birth weights, higher infant mortality rates, and more physical and mental health problems. They don't do as well in school, have higher drop out rates, have more accidents and have are more frequently involved with the justice system. The speaker suggested the actions of the federal and provincial governments are tantamount to child abuse: when a parent denies a child food, clothing and social security it is considered child abuse but when governments do it, it is called balancing the budget.

Ms. Saravanamuttoo continued by saying teachers involved in school breakfast programs have noted the only food some children get is from these programs. Children come to school hungry, eat as much as they can for breakfast and take away what they can for lunch. This shortage of food has a serious effect on growth, development and learning ability. Ms. Saravanamuttoo stated there are indications that people are starving. Numbers and waiting lists in agencies have gone down but not because the need has gone

down. People are not bringing their children in for follow-up appointments as they can not afford to pay for prescriptions. She emphasized the importance of school breakfast programs and child care programs, saying studies have shown that every \$1 spent in quality early childhood education saves up to \$7 in remedial services later a child's life.

Ms. Saravanamuttoo concluded by saying it is not poverty on its own that is destructive but the inequality between the rich and the poor. As the gap increases there are increases in family break-downs, substance abuse, violent crimes and suicide rates. She reasoned it is not only the poor who are affected but society as a whole. Everyone pays for extra health costs, extra unemployment, increases in violent crimes and the weakening of the social fabric.

That the Community Services Committee receive this presentation for information.

RECEIVED

REGULAR ITEMS

2. DRAFT REGIONAL PEST CONTROL POLICY

- Acting Medical Officer of Health, Environment and Transportation Commissioner, Commissioner of Homes for the Aged, Commissioner of Planning and Property Services joint report dated 25 September 1996

Dr. Geoff Dunkley, Acting Medical Officer of Health explained the purpose of the report is to respond to a request from the Committee to provide more specific details on the application of the policy as well as the different pesticides that would be used by various departments. Dr. Dunkley indicated a lot of work has been done in this field and the policy provides a reasonable pest management approach. He noted it provides for minimal use of chemicals and only in exceptional circumstances.

In reply to a question from Councillor D. Holmes, Dr. Dunkley confirmed that the Milkweed listed under Noxious Weeds is the plant associated with the Monarch butterfly. He said he was doubtful there would ever be a situation in the RMOC that would warrant spraying milkweed.

John Sankey, Pesticide Education Network postulated that the claim that pesticides are safe when used as directed is no longer permissible since their control has been transferred from Agriculture Canada to Health Canada. He indicated there are approximately 1,000 people in Ottawa-Carleton whose day to day lives have been, and continue to be, affected by the use of pesticides as directed. Mr. Sankey believed the staff policy gives

consideration to the health of these people and recommended it to the Committee. He also commended staff for their care of the health of the community and the environment.

Moved by D. Holmes

That Council write to the provincial Minister of Environment and Energy, requesting that the current posting requirements be extended to be required by all those who spread pesticides, spray or granular, on land(s) accessible to the public in urban areas.

CARRIED

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve the Draft Regional Pest Control Policy described in this report.

CARRIED as amended

3. **STATUS REPORT ON THE SOCIAL SERVICES' DEPARTMENT IMPROVING CLIENT SERVICES INITIATIVE**
- Social Services Commissioner report dated 30 September 1996

That Community Services Committee recommend Council endorse the Improving Client Service Initiative's vision and conceptual model for the redesigned Manage Cases process.

CARRIED

4. **REGIONAL RESPONSE TO ONTARIO'S CHILD CARE REVIEW**
- Commissioner Social Services Department report dated 24 September 1996

The Commissioner, Social Services Department, Mr. D. Stewart, began by saying the discussion paper format of the provincial report, long awaited by both regional staff and the child care community, provides a two-month window of opportunity to respond to its recommendations. Mr. Stewart added that another report from the "Who Does What" Panel will also have a bearing, as it will likely change the role municipalities play in the delivery of child care by giving them less responsibility for funding and more responsibility for licensing.

The Committee heard from Ms. Gayle Preston, Director, Child Care Services Division. She explained that because of the short timeframe for public consultation, there was very little time to involve agencies in the preparation of regional staff's response to the

provincial report. She went on to say this document represents a good review of the existing system, as it highlights the issues and points to the difficulty in dealing with these issues. Ms. Preston noted that, while staff feel a number of proposals for change can be implemented, a number of implementation issues remain and she expressed the hope there would be further opportunities for community involvement throughout the process.

Ms. Preston highlighted the following areas of concern:

Wage Subsidies

Offering reasonable salaries is a significant factor in a centre's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff and provide quality care to children. For this reason, the wage subsidy should be retained as staff believe it is more important to provide adequate funding for existing spaces than to create new ones. Staff estimate the financial impact of losing the wage subsidy would be approximately \$276,000 to municipal centres and an additional \$147,000 to the municipal home child care budget. The RMOC would be required to keep paying salaries at the current rates and would have to look at options to make up the loss, including re-evaluating whether programs can continue.

Quality and Standards

The provincial report suggests increasing the preschool ratio from 1:8 to either 1:9 or 1:10; regional staff support an increase to 1:9 in some situations, but no further. The impact of this change would have to be monitored since ratios affect the quality of care.

After-School Recreation Programs

Staff agree there is some rationale for reviewing the school age programs but are reluctant to proceed without first looking at what can be done in the licensed care sector. Staff suggest the province decrease the age for toddlers from 18 months to either 12 or 15 months, as long as children are able to walk. This would decrease costs of care for parents with small children. There would also be an impact on quality of care which would have to be monitored.

Child Care Resource Centres

There are 19 centres operating in Ottawa-Carleton and they provide a very useful service to parents and caregivers. The province is recommending changing the funding criteria for these programs to allow them to move away from funding centres in areas that don't have high concentrations of high risk families; this could mean centres in more middle income areas would lose their funding. Ms. Preston concluded by saying that the program by

program review of agencies is proceeding and staff will report back on the results of the review. She noted there may be problems maintaining all spaces in 1997.

Speaking to the issue of wage subsidy, Commissioner Stewart noted child care is provided by professional staff. The major elements of the provincial report appear to be that these professionals should provide care to more children, be inspected less regularly and be challenged in many other ways. Mr. Stewart expressed the view that phasing out wage subsidies would have a serious destabilizing effect on the community's ability to provide quality care.

Councillor A. Munter noted that Regional Council is on record as opposing the removal of the Wage Subsidy. Speaking to the recommendations of the "Who Does What" Panel alluded to earlier by Mr. Stewart, the Councillor said he believed the Ministry does not favour municipalities managing programs towards which they do not contribute financially. He asked whether staff had any further information on the Minister's position. Commissioner Stewart replied he had supplementary information at this time. Ms. Preston added there are no criteria or implementation issues relative to defining a community's needs for child care resource centres

Councillor M. Bellemare inquired about the suggested redistribution of the wage subsidy and to what extent this would impact on the private sector. Ms. Preston said the department's understanding is that the funding formula would apply to both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors.

The following delegations were heard:

Carol Ince, Home Child Care Network. Ms. Ince said home child care is the most economical method and it represents 40% of all care provided in Ottawa-Carleton. She spoke in support of the Region's response to the provincial review and of the department's position of wage subsidies. She explained that home child care providers are the lowest paid and their incomes are not stable because of family mobility. In addition, agencies incur out-of-pocket expenses for food, equipment and supplies. One of the Province's goals is to expand home child care services to the informal sector but there are fears the Network will not be able to attract providers without the wage subsidy.

Mary Lou James, Home Child Care Network indicated that the home child care community wants to make every effort to protect the integrity of the current delivery model. She requested the third sentence in the paragraph entitled "Home Child Care" be amended to read: "Existing agency resources would continue to provide more support, etc...". She went on to say the home child care community has spent considerable time exploring the possibilities of altering their delivery model while maintaining the integrity of their services and the suggested re-wording would lend support to their efforts.

Charlyn Monahan, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee, Child Care Council of Ottawa-Carleton

The speaker invited Committee members to attend a child care rally at Regional Headquarters on Saturday, 19 October. She asked that the staff report be strengthened and she requested Regional Council to write to the Premier of Ontario and to the Minister of Community and Social Services asking that wage subsidies not be cut. This Motion should also be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for endorsement and support.

Ms. Monahan noted that the Region's report pre-dates the "Who Does What" Panel report and position on child care. She indicated the Child Care Council is concerned about the panel's definitions. Another area of concern is the fact that the "Who Does What" Panel limits child care as a support to employment and does not speak about the value of early childhood education. The child care community in Ottawa-Carleton has worked hard to develop a co-operative relationship with local politicians and there are fears that accountability will be lost if the Province takes over control of services. She questioned how licensing requirements would be administered by municipalities, and who would interpret the legislation.

Ms. Monahan spoke in support of the licensing proposals contained in the staff report. She suggested the supervision criteria should be enhanced to allow for verification not only when an operator changes but also when there is a change in the supervisor/director position. She said she was not in support of lowering the age for toddler programs or of changing the ratio to 1:9, especially when the requirements of special needs children have to be met. She expressed concern about the move to unlicensed facilities for school age children, noting it has taken 20 years to establish these programs. Ms. Monahan quoted figures that dispell the myth that recreation programs charge considerably less per annum than licenced care programs. Speaking to the issue of capital costs, the speaker said she was astonished at the fact there is no recognition and no support for building child care facilities. She reiterated the most important matter is the proposed cut to the wage subsidy and she suggested that, instead of cutting salaries, the money set aside for Jobs Ontario spaces be used to bring up the salaries of staff in for profit centres.

Anne Marie René de Cotret representing the Ottawa Federation of Parents' Cooperatives. Ms. de Cotret pointed out that while the provincial report refers to private and non-profit, it should be clarified the distinction really is profit and non-profit. The Federation supports a continued municipal role in the delivery of child care services. Parents are concerned there be ongoing monitoring of licencing. The Federation has always supported income testing when it comes to fees, however there are concerns about accessibility for parents in the moderate income range. It should be suggested there be some mechanism to recognize this factor in different areas of the Province. The Federation cannot support a 1:9 ratio for pre-school children. The proposal to reduce the age for toddlers is inappropriate and unsafe. With respect to the loss of the wage subsidy, Ms. de Cotret pointed out agencies also have to meet the requirements of collective agreements and of pay equity legislation. She concluded by saying that child care workers have not had salary increases since 1991: in 1996, all centres received a 1% roll-back due to pay equity legislation and had to face an additional 2.1% reduction to maintain the Jobs Ontario spaces.

Ms. Karen Perras, Child Care Action Network

Speaking to the issue of Quality and Standards, Ms. Perras said the Network was especially concerned about lowering the age of toddlers, as any change would have a tremendous impact on the quality of care given to children. She said she agreed with the Region's analysis that any decrease would destabilize the entire licenced care system. She was pleased to see staff recognize that one of the key determinants in providing child care is consistency in trained staff.

An unidentified person, speaking as a representative of licenced home care to the CCAN, expressed support for continuing to provide in-home training. She asked that the Committee direct staff to delete the last sentence under this heading in the report, so that it ends with the words "...expanding licensed care."

Pat Williams, representing CUPE Local 2204, said the provincial report is generally seen as a real attack on quality non-profit programs and an attempt to privatize the service. She expressed the view that eliminating the wage subsidy would be an enormous blow to agencies. Any redirection of these funds into a wage stabilization fund would not be tied in any way to salaries, wages or benefits and could be used to lower fees; trained staff will leave the field and working in child care will become a transient job. Ms. Williams suggested a look at centre budgets will shows all are being cut, workers are getting lower wages and the work load is increasing.

Suzanne Dugas, representing the Regroupement des services de garde de langue française d'Ottawa-Carleton

Ms. Dugas said the staff response is too polite and needs to be more strongly stated. She spoke in support of a continuing role for regional government in child care. With regard to needs assessment, the situation of families with special needs children would have to be considered. The proposed ratio changes would also have an impact on the integration of those children. There is no support for any change in ratio for toddlers and for unlicensed school age care. Speaking to the issue of wage subsidy loss, Ms. Dugas said the Regroupement would not support these funds being used to create new spaces. She posited that municipalities would be unable to provide their share of the funding for the proposed 12,000 new spaces mentioned in the report.

Ms. Dugas continued by saying the Province will have to demand that owners in the for-profit sector not use the wage stabilization grant for other purposes. She expressed concern about the change in resource centre mandates, pointing out that in francophone communities, the centre is often the only place where families get the support and services they require. On the matter of Capital Funding, Ms. Dugas asked where non-profit centres would find their 50% share. Another area of concern is the proposal to provide funds to parents so they can obtain services. The speaker expressed firm opposition to a "coupon" system and she asked that this be clearly stated in the staff response.

Replying to a question from Councillor M. Bellemare, Ms. Dugas said it is recognized there has been inequality in salaries between the profit and non-profit sector and some equalization is supportable. However, there is no support for cutting salaries in non-profit centres and establishing 12,000 new spaces if it means there will be a lessening of care.

Eleanor Benesch, Association of Early Childhood Educators commended staff for a concise report which reflects their thorough understanding of the child care community and system. Ms. Benesch echoed the concerns raised by previous speakers. She drew Committee's attention to the requirement, in the provincial report, for qualifications to be maintained, noting the Day Nurseries Act only requires one qualified staff per group. She posited that having to abide by this "safe and secure" principle might have a devastating impact and this has to be seriously evaluated.

Speaking to the issue of ratios, Ms. Benesch said this has not been the subject of thorough discussion and there may be room for flexibility. She indicated there is much literature which refers to ratios being as important as qualified staff. She urged that Regional Council maintain its own commitment to Capital Funding saying the community will lobby for expansion. With regard to the redistribution of dollars, the speaker pointed out there will probably be expansion in the for-profit sector and new people will be coming into the

field wanting to be paid equitably. Ms. Benesch invited Committee members to the kickoff for the Week of the Child noting this event will be held on 19 October at Andrew Haydon Park.

Committee Discussion

Councillor A. Loney asked for clarification on Capital Funding being available “for serious health and safety projects only” and whether any local situations would currently meet this criteria. Commissioner D. Stewart replied these would likely be situations where centres have been notified they are in violation of, and need to bring their premises up to, property standards. He added he was not aware of any such violations currently. Gayle Preston noted, in response to a further question from the Councillor, that the Capital Reserve Fund presently has a limited amount of funding however some funds could be moved from the Contingency Fund if required.

Councillor D. Holmes suggested that under Capital Funding, the sentence calling for a funding moratorium be clarified to indicate support for a short-term moratorium as opposed to the elimination of all capital funding.

Councillor L. Davis said she was uncomfortable with sending out statements about a moratorium on Capital Funding without addressing the situation of agencies such as the Children’s Centre, where the community wants to ensure it stays where it is. Commissioner Stewart proposed that the wording in the report be tightened up to say there can be a moratorium for new capacity but no moratorium for existing capacity. The Committee agreed this direction be given to staff.

The Committee then considered the following:

Moved by Munter

If the provincial government provides grants for the capital costs of for-profit businesses, it should also ensure that the public recoups its investment when the business or building is sold.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That the third sentence under the heading Home Child Care in the staff report, be amended to read:

Existing agency resources would continue to provide in-home support and training for providers. The population (children and parents) home child care agencies serve would be increased by offering a more flexible service geared to the needs of the clientele.

CARRIED

Councillor A. Munter said he found himself increasingly concerned about the language used to discuss issues such as these. He put forward the view that the provincial government appears to be so strapped for cash that it cannot afford \$125 million for child care, but it can afford \$5.4 billion for a tax cut that disproportionately benefits affluent people: the fact is child care is not a priority. He said the staff report is too polite and too many concerns are expressed more delicately than they need to be. He suggested Regional Council needs to reiterate its support for maintaining the wage subsidy.

Councillor R. Cantin said he wanted to put forward a Motion asking that the proposed cuts to wage subsidy be replaced by equal base funding to all child care centres, both for-profit and not-for-profit. This would stabilize the workforce and ensure more consistent child care services. Further, provisions should be made to ensure that the additional funding to for-profit centres goes to salaries to ensure a level playing field for all workers in the child care area.

Councillor Munter pointed out this would not address the potential decrease in wages for the not-for-profit centres. Councillor Cantin clarified the intent is that this be base funding as opposed to a subsidy. This would ensure every worker gets the same salary; it is the care received by the child that is important, and this care is affected by the high level of turnover in the for-profit sector.

Commissioner Stewart pointed out that suggesting the wage stabilization grant that goes to not-for-profit centre also go to for-profit centres would mean a substantial increase to the provincial budget, as well as increasing costs to non-subsidized parents.

The Acting Chair, A. Loney, ruled that the two Motions were substantively different and should stand alone.

Moved by A. Munter

Resolved that regional government believes that removing the wage subsidy to child care workers at the same time as increasing expectations on those workers would have a serious destabilizing effect on the system, therefore Council does not support it.

CARRIED
(M. Bellemare, R. Cantin
dissented)

Moved by R. Cantin

In order to achieve equality in wage subsidies, the wage stabilization grants to the for-profit sector be increased up to the current level received by the not-for-profit sector. This wage stabilization grant should continue to be paid outside the per diem funding system. A monitoring system (should be) put in place to ensure that the grants are used only to increase salaries.

CARRIED

Councillor A. Loney posited that the fundamental change in emphasis on the part of the Province to the for-profit sector has contributed to a chaotic situation for everyone involved. He said the main goal, which is to provide more good, quality child care, is losing ground. He added he hoped to send a clear message that does not appear to discredit one approach over another and that says there should be sufficient funding to attract and retain qualified, capable workers in both sectors.

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve the Social Services Commissioner's report dated 24 Sep 96 as amended by the foregoing, as the Regional response to Ontario's Child Care Review.

CARRIED, as amended

Moved by A. Munter

In response to the recommendations of the "Who Does What" panel, Council reiterate its support for a continued municipal role in the administration and funding of child care.

CARRIED

5. UPDATE REPORT - NELSON HOUSE
- Social Services Commissioner's report dated 15 Oct 96

The Social Services Commissioner, D. Stewart, began by noting there are actually two funding contracts with Nelson House: the first with the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC) for the base per diem, representing approximately \$160,000 per annum, the second between Nelson House as an incorporated body and the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) representing approximately \$360,000 per annum.

Mr. Stewart described the proposed plan of action that calls for the temporary closure of Nelson House. The plan also calls for the creation of a Community Advisory Committee to advise the funding partners on developing criteria for a Call for Proposals for services to women and children victims of family violence. He expressed the hope the timeframe to accomplish this task would be considerably shorter than the five months cited in the report, as it would not be in anyone's interests to have the beds out of circulation longer than necessary.

Speaking to the issue of service provision in the interim, Mr. Stewart indicated that, as of 17 October 1996, 57 women and children were in the shelter system: should Nelson House close, other shelters have the capacity for, or could expand their services to accommodate, 62 beds. He added there are currently 3 vacancies in the family shelters operated by the RMOC and the Department would commit to making those spaces accessible as long as they were needed.

Mr. Stewart ended by saying he could not absolutely guarantee there would be no interruption in service. He said he felt a 62-bed capacity would be manageable for a short period of time but it was imperative the 15 beds be brought back into the shelter system as soon as possible. Mr. Stewart introduced Ms. Louise Atkins, from the Area Office of the MCSS and Mr. L. Legault, Director, Residential Services, Social Services Department, noting they were prepared to answer questions from Committee members.

Replying to concerns expressed by Councillor Linda Davis about security issues related to the location of Nelson House having been identified by the media, Commissioner Stewart said this is one of the factor that will need to be assessed. He added it would not be possible to absolutely eliminate the location for any future use.

Councillor Davis said she had been surprised by the suggestion that cots or cribs could be added to already small rooms and she asked whether risk situations would be created by superimposing beds. Ms. Louise Atkins noted the funders' goal is to restore capacity, adding that in certain situations it makes sense to concentrate people: in those situations, good service principles need to be applied. The Councillor inquired whether regional staff ever sought post-stay feedback from clients. Mr. Stewart replied this was not done

systematically. Ms. Atkins related that some agencies conduct their own customer satisfaction surveys but the funders are not privy to the information contained therein. Councillor Davis said she would be asking that staff develop such a questionnaire to get client input into the quality of services provided by the shelters.

Replying to questions from Councillor D. Holmes, Commissioner Stewart clarified that RMOC funds represent per diem funding of \$34.50 per occupied bed, per day. Ms. Atkins said provincial funds are used to cover costs over and above the per diems: these may include covering shifts, administrative/overhead costs and special program elements such as child support workers and parental support programs.

Councillor A. Munter asked whether there were any statistics on the number of Ottawa-Carleton women and children who have to go outside the RMOC because of insufficient beds. Commissioner Stewart responded by saying facilities outside the Region are sometimes used because of a client's need for additional security, safety or distance from their immediate community, and not only because shelters are full. Mr. Luc Legault added that, in 1995, approximately 86% of available capacity was purchased in Ottawa-Carleton.

In response to Councillor A. Loney, Ms. Atkins said the report before Committee represents the position of both funding partners and it is the intent of the Province to reinvest its funding in this community for women and children fleeing family violence. She added, in response to a comment made by Councillor Davis, that a decision by the Committee not to support staff's recommendation would need to be evaluated.

Public Delegations

Pauline Van Lammers, representing a coalition of service providers:

Ms. Van Lammers re-stated the position put forward by the coalition of service providers at the 03 Oct 96 meeting. She expressed the view the interim plan is based on a positive working experience and was developed in the long-term interests of women and children. Ms. Van Lammers said the distress of staff currently working at Nelson House and that of persons currently living there is not being underestimated, nor is the coalition choosing sides: its intent is to support a rational, secure, planned approach to providing good quality services to women and children in Ottawa-Carleton today and in the future.

Liette Perron, Co-ordinator, Maison d'Amitié

Ms. Perron, speaking on behalf of the Board of Directors of Maison d'Amitié, expressed support for the position conveyed by the previous speaker. She reiterated it is absolutely necessary to maintain the resources presently invested in the western part of the Region and the use of the 15 beds must be resumed as soon as possible. She added no position has been taken with respect to the entity known as Nelson House.

Councillor D. Holmes said she still had not been given reasons why it was felt a "cooling off" period was essential in this situation. Pauline Van Lammers responded by saying that, over the last three years, two consultants reports made recommendations for major restructuring to address concerns about service provision and management board/staff relationships at Nelson House. She added that, while she was not aware of the contents of the reports, it was her view that the Board and Management had been unable to deal with the recommendations.

Replying to a further question from Councillor Davis, Commissioner Stewart said the reports, one in 1993 and the other in 1996, were commissioned by the former Board of Nelson House. He noted many of the issues highlighted in the first are repeated in the second, indicating there had been no substantial change in a three-year time period. The reports did not document large numbers of overt conflicts between management and staff but made reference to incidents where tensions spilled over; issues centered around directions from the Board on administrative matters, accountability issues, time reporting, that were not being fulfilled. Mr. Stewart said it was clear Nelson House staff had a substantially different view from that of the Board, on how the facility should run and the situation came to an impasse. He expressed the view that the election of a new Board has not made those difficulties evaporate.

When asked by Councillor Davis why the reports were not brought to the attention of the Committee, Commissioner Stewart explained the material is the property of the Board of Nelson House. Departmental staff had to consider the fundamental question of whether the security of Nelson House clients was being compromised and it was adjudged this was not the case. It became a different situation when the former Board, in its Letter of Termination to the funders, stated it did not have confidence in the services it represented. Mr. Stewart said that the Board's position, the material contained in the reports and the funders' commitment to continuing the services in a stable way, are the reasons why the recommendation for temporary closure is being made.

Ms. Wendy Maroon, Lawyer (representing Nelson House residents during recent court proceedings)

The speaker said she wanted to dispell the myth that Nelson House residents were manipulated into taking the actions they did, noting such a suggestion is patronizing to those residents. She stated her belief the election of the new Board of Directors was entirely appropriate and would be defended in court, if necessary. Ms. Maroon added that the former Board never explained why it decided to close Nelson House and she posited residents and citizens have the right to know those reasons. Ignorance of the reasons has caused gossip and controversy, the legal actions taken have caused controversy, and all this will disappear if the new Board is allowed to get on with its work.

Ms. Maroon indicated clients who remain at Nelson House have expressed no concern about their safety even with the location of the facility being disclosed. She asked whether using cots in other shelters would comply with fire and safety regulations. She spoke about ongoing surveys of residents leaving Nelson House, noting the feedback has been very satisfactory. She concluded by saying Nelson House is a first-stage shelter and its continuation is imperative for the safety of women and children fleeing family violence. She asked that the 18 women who died at the hand of their abusers, and whose stones dot the Memorial in Minto Park, not be forgotten.

Jamie Dunn, CUPE Local 3851, representing the employees of Nelson House.

Mr. Dunn provided a brief history of events leading to Local 3851's certification on August 9, 1995. He said that, in May 1996, the Union applied to the Labour Board to appoint a Conciliation Officer and a final meeting had been scheduled for September 24. On that date, union officials were advised Nelson House would be closing. The reasons given were that the Board no longer wanted to be liable for a mounting deficit (this was later denied by the Vice-Chair of the Board) and that there had been failure in implementing organizational change.

Mr. Dunn put forward the view the inconsistencies in the reasons given for the closure lead to the conclusion this was done to get rid of the employees and their bargaining unit rights to hold on to their jobs. He added there is no evidence Nelson House staff did anything other than an excellent job, no discipline or discharge processes were initiated by the employer, a legal right if someone is not doing a good job. Based on these factors, the Union has made allegations to the Ontario Labour Relations Board the situation is nothing but "Union bashing". Mr. Dunn said it is no coincidence that the staff report calls for up-to a five-month closure as that time span would effectively wipe out any guarantees under the Labour Relations Act that the bargaining rights will be protected.

Mr. Dunn asked how it will look to residents of Ottawa-Carleton concerned with Nelson House remaining open, and to the thousand of unionized workers in the RMOC, if the Committee, by agreeing with the staff recommendations, supports and assists in rewarding Nelson House's past management's behaviour. He said a clear message should be sent that the abuse of taxpayers' money to formulate such schemes will not be tolerated.

In reply to questions from Councillor Munter, Mr. Dunn clarified there are time limits associated with negotiating for a collective agreement. In the report from the conciliator, issued September 30, there was no recommendation to bring the two parties to the Conciliation Board. This means the Union's right to represent the employees is jeopardized within one month of that time, therefore five months would exhaust almost every time limit and there are no guarantees other applications made would help the cause. A representative from the Regional Legal Department, Mr. Don Wilson, responding to a question from Councillor Loney, confirmed a lapse of time could make it impractical to resurrect the matter.

Donna Watson-Elliot, Staff person, Nelson House:

The speaker clarified one of the two reports alluded to by previous speakers was prepared by the ex-Chair of the Board who had been hired by the new Chair as a consultant. She added that, at the 1995 Annual General Meeting (AGM), the ex-Chair gave glowing reviews to both staff and to the services provided at Nelson House. She suggested part of the deficit alluded to was caused by funds being used for consultants and for planning the closure and this should be investigated.

Ms. Watson-Elliot, speaking as a staff representative, said the fate on Nelson House employees has been decided In-Camera for the past six months. The employees have maintained effective, quality service throughout the crisis. She asked why the favourable evaluations of former service providers had not been brought forward, why staff had not had any input. Nelson House staff were informed by the Board in the Spring of 1995 that they could no longer represent Nelson House on any committees, and that there was no money available for staff to participate in training in the community to perfect their skills. A Mission Statement formulated by staff in March 1996 reflects their commitment to women and children. Staff now have a truly committed Board under which to further their goal to provide true service to Nelson House clients.

Replying to a question from Councillor Davis, Ms. Watson-Elliot said staff have not been provided with Board meeting Minutes for one and one-half years. She also indicated she had never seen any written evaluations.

Michèle Berg, Lawyer working with abused women:

Ms. Berg expressed the view the measures proposed are short-sighted. She said she works extensively with abused women and has problems finding spaces for them as there are not enough beds. She said she felt Nelson House must remain open to serve those women. When asked by Councillor Munter how frequently she had problems finding beds, Ms. Berg responded by saying this happened once a week. She added she cannot refer clients to a family shelter, as this may not be safe, and they will not get the counselling they need. If Nelson House closes, women will be facing difficult situations. She spoke about her clients only having positive comments to make about Nelson House staff, noting that in her dealings with the latter, she had received full and competent co-operation.

Leighann Burns-Campagna, said she would be speaking as a concerned shelter service provider, as a worker in first and second stage shelters in both urban and rural settings and as someone who has served as the regional representative for all shelters in Eastern Ontario. She began by saying that Harmony House has never regretted the decision it took, further to provincial cuts in funding to second-stage shelters in the Fall of 1995, to keep the facility going, as it was known the need for the services had not disappeared. She posited the only circumstance that could warrant the closure of any facility for abused women and children would be that continuing those services would cause harm to their users. Ms. Burns-Campagna said there is no evidence this is the case at Nelson House and all evidence points to the contrary: the fact that clients were unaffected by whatever management difficulties existed speaks highly of staff's commitment.

The speaker continued by saying it appears many service providers were aware of difficulties at Nelson House over time and they should have stated any specific concerns on record. During the time of Harmony House's "stewardship" no such concerns were expressed and there were no indications, in previous Board or personal files, of complaints raised against staff.

Ms. Burns-Campagna said it would be difficult to imagine closing the Social Services Department for five months while attempting to resolve difficulties between management and staff. Speaking to the suggestion that beds will be found in other settings, she asked what other needy persons would be affected and about security arrangements. She noted the new Board is committed to moving beyond the current difficulties, as are staff and residents are counting on Nelson House continuing to provide service to abused women who need it. The Nepean Community has supported Nelson House since it opened and has indicated it will continue to do so in future.

Ms. Burns-Campagna said she was most concerned about how this decision would impact on abused women and children. When survivors of violence come into shelters they take a tremendous leap of faith in people they have never met before, at the most dangerous times in their lives. She proposed that direction be taken from the actions the residents took to prevent Nelson House closing three weeks ago, and that a way be found to continue service without interruption.

Emily Comer, Lawyer, Acting President, Harmony House

Ms. Comer noted she has been impressed by the commitment of the new Board of Directors of Nelson House and she expressed the hope the Committee would support their efforts to maintain service and develop the appropriate management structures therein. In reply to a question from Councillor Davis, Ms. Comer said she had received no feedback about Nelson House. She added that comments received in the past never once reported problems, users had been impressed with the support provided by staff.

Linda McQuarrie, Executive Co-ordinator, Nelson House.

Ms. McQuarrie said her mandate from the interim management (Harmony House) board is to ensure the needs of residents continue to be met, that the necessary supports are provided to staff and that the shelter continues to operate efficiently on a day-to-day basis. She reassured the Committee that women and children are safe, secure and moving forward with plans for their future even in this difficult period. Staff have made exceptional efforts to ensure the current situation does not impact on their relationship with Nelson House residents.

Ms. McQuarrie continued by saying Nelson House has complied with the departmental directive not to accept new residents; the shelter currently has 6 residents and 9 empty beds. Since Sep 24, 32 requests for shelter have not been able to be met. She expressed concern that the recommendation to accommodate the lost beds in other shelters will create over-crowding and an overall reduction in service to all women and children. She said it should be noted that, at the time the closing was announced, there were 17 residents at Nelson House, two above the usual limit, and other shelters already use added space that would be lost as well.

The proposal to accommodate these clients in emergency shelters for the homeless is not acceptable: the family shelters at Carling and Forward do not have the same level of safety and security or the supportive environment provided by shelters for women and children.

Ms. McQuarrie concluded her presentation by stating her commitment to work with the interim board and with staff to continue service delivery. She said she thought that work with the funders could continue while Nelson House remains open. She added she has been overwhelmed by the support received from the community in the past weeks.

Councillor Holmes asked what services are brought into the shelter. Ms. McQuarrie cited Housing Help, Visiting Homemakers, workers from the Social Services Department and cultural interpretation as some of the services provided. She said thought the comment about staff not wanting services provided from the outside was unwarranted.

Fern Elgar, a concerned individual, said she wants Nelson House to continue operating. Speaking as a representative of deaf women, she said closing Nelson House will mean more barriers for deaf women in terms of accessibility. She noted that two staff members at Nelson House know Sign Language, they understand the language and deaf culture and are willing to communicate with deaf women there. These services are not available at other shelters and if Nelson House closes, the barriers for deaf women will become almost insurmountable.

Susan Woodhouse, representing the new Board of Directors, Nelson House, spoke in opposition to the staff recommendations, saying there is no reason to discontinue funding for any period of time. She requested it be continued for the following reasons:

- there continues to be an urgent need for beds for abused women in Ottawa-Carleton. As of 2:00 p.m Wednesday, all beds were filled to capacity;
- regarding security, many persons know the location Nelson House and many shelters chose to advertise their location. There are no indications this increases the risk to residents.

Ms. Woodhouse circulated biographical notes on the current board. She asked that it be noted there is a great level of skill and diversity in board membership and board members are proud of this achievement. She indicated the board is willing to sit with the funders to clarify the respective agreements and will comply with any and all evaluation processes required by these agreements. The board believes its role is to govern Nelson House through financial accountability and policy development, and that the day-to-day management of the facility is the responsibility of the Executive Co-ordinator. Board decisions are made by majority vote.

Ms. Woodhouse repeated an earlier allegation about the five-month closure basically guaranteeing the end of the Union certification process and she said it could appear Nelson House was closed for this purpose. She pointed out that only the board has the power to recommend that services be discontinued; the Region and the Province are limited to deciding whether they will fund Nelson House. If the funders chose a different service provider who is not approved by the membership of Nelson House, that provider would have to provide a new physical location and resources for the service.

Ms. Woodhouse concluded by saying Nelson House has a strong, committed board; over 80 community members who support the service; an new Executive Co-ordinator who has the complete support of the board and staff; a collective agreement shortly to be ratified; a secure facility; overwhelming, positive resident evaluations about the quality of services received and competent staff ready and willing to provide those services. She said what is needed is the commitment to continue to provide per diem funding with no break in service. It would be unconscionable to the Nelson House board and to women that the Region would chose to withdraw funding from Nelson House.

In response to a question from Councillor Holmes, Ms. Woodhouse expressed the belief a collective agreement is close to being completed and it will have to be negotiated within existing budgets: the board would be responsible for any promises made beyond that.

Vallee Sterns part-time, front line worker, President of the Union

Ms. Sterns refuted a number of allegations made against Nelson House staff. She expressed the belief there was no incompetence on the part of staff, that all employees are skilled, caring and experienced. Their first concern are the women and children and the maintenance of the fifteen beds. Evaluations from past residents are overwhelming in their support of services. Ms. Sterns put forward the view there are no longer any more board-staff conflicts, both are committed to providing quality service and a collective agreement will be in place shortly. She asked that the beds not be closed unless there are serious, substantiated claims against Nelson House staff. She added staff are committed to putting into place recommendations for administrative and accountability changes made in the 1996 consultant's report. Ms. Sterns, in reply to questions from Councillor Cantin, indicated she had not had the opportunity to speak to any of the previous board members and that none of these individuals had been at the negotiating table.

Robbie Loomer, family lawyer, said he had spent many hours looking for shelter for clients and that there are not enough beds. Clients need the services they get at Nelson House and not just beds.

Barbara Ramsey, Health Care professional and concerned citizen:

Ms. Ramsey said she has heard from individuals who did not feel their needs as mothers and children who suffer from abuse were first and foremost. They believe they are pawns being used by certain individuals with certain political agendas and that the philosophy displayed at Nelson House had not always been “women and children first”. Ms. Ramsey said these statements reflect on the Nelson House environment and not on staff.

Ms. Ramsey went on to say that, upon being made aware of the situation, she had expressed her concerns to local politicians indicating she wanted to become involved. She had been hoping that change was at hand when she heard about events three weeks ago but had been mortified to hear that the situation had deteriorated to the point where the facility would be closing. Ms. Ramsey said she has served on a number of boards but she had never heard of an institution calling a board meeting on less than 24-hours notice; she challenged the Committee that, as protectors of taxpayers’ money, this behaviour has to be questioned.

Quoting from documents obtained at a meeting to elect the new Board, Ms. Ramsey read the following philosophy statement: “A feminist and structural analysis of violence against women and children...believe this violence is widespread because: it is rooted in the fabric of our society which hates women (misogyny), women are not valued and are seen as sexual objects and property. This ideology can be internalised by all of us. It is perpetuated by society’s tolerance of oppression of women and children by social attitudes, values, behaviours and institutions”. It is indicated on the document that this is Approved by Staff.

The speaker called herself a person who willingly pays taxes because she does not want to hear about women and children being shunted to environments that are not familiar to them. However, as a taxpayer, she asked where was the governance model that allows this kind of literature in a publicly-funded organization. Ms Ramsey concluded by saying this situation is about governance, about funding partners having to spend taxpayers’ money wisely and about sustained change being required. She questioned a situation where a board elected in 24 hours magically makes all problems disappear and she challenged the new duly-elected board to come forward with a consensus approach to governance.

Céline Boulanger, Board Member, said that, as a health care worker, she had never seen a situation so poorly planned as the take-over of Nelson House. Clients were left alone and at one point it was thought telephone services would be cut. The crisis was created by the decision of the old board and there are indications there was poor conflict management over a long period of time.

Peggy Feltmate, Executive Director, Goulbourn Kanata West-Carleton Community Resource Centre (CRC), responded to questions about why representatives from the CRC were at Nelson House on the day of closure. She explained CRC staff had offered to assist in any way and had been informed it would be best if they took over child care responsibilities. It was understood Nelson House staff had agreed to let CRC representatives into the shelter to provide those services on Thursday and Friday afternoon.

Councillor Cantin asked for additional information about the CRC workers. Ms. Feltmate indicated these were experienced group counsellors, a social worker from the Family Service Centre and a person from the Rape Crisis Centre; a case aide and a student from Algonquin College provided child care. She said these persons quickly determined their presence would not be helpful at that point in time, as they found a very emotional situation. However, they believe they were helpful to the children who had picked up they would be losing their home. The workers were able to distract the children in the time they were there.

Councillor A. Munter asked that staff respond to the oft-made comment that family shelters are not appropriate to the needs of victims of family violence. Mr. Legault responded by saying family shelters would provide shelter and security, however other necessary services, not available in-house, would have to be provided by outside agencies.

Committee Discussion

Councillor D. Holmes moved that Nelson House remain open and that criteria be established for governance and service standards. She expressed the view it is important to maintain the building and the beds in the community when individuals have to go to other municipalities to obtain shelter. She added the funders want to be assured a satisfactory management structure is in place, that the Board of Directors is dealing with policy issues, not running the daily operations of the house and that the services are appropriate and sufficient to meet the needs of clients. Councillor Holmes said she wanted to see long term stability and clients not having to experience such turmoil again. She posited the house can remain open while these issues are being addressed. She said she had been made most uncomfortable by the allegation the funders are engaged in union bashing and she had been pleased to hear the current board is close to having a collective agreement to ensure stability without increasing funding.

Councillor L. Davis said she found it suspicious and shameful that no one has clearly stated why Nelson House had to be closed. She added that, because of this lack of information, she cannot support closure for five months. She expressed disbelief that fifteen beds would be lost, saying this will help no one, especially not the women and children who need help. Ms. Davis called allegations about a long history of problems with staff “a huge over-reaction” since there have been no staff evaluations and no problems have been documented. She pointed out that, contrary to other instances where contracting difficulties exist, not everything has been attempted to maintain this contract. She spoke about the personal, emotional costs to women and children and to the 25 staff persons whose future is tied to the situation. She asked that the Committee support the approach proposed by Councillor Holmes. She suggested that interim monitoring be put in, that residents be consulted about what they want to do, noting this kind of information has never been collected.

Councillor R. Cantin said he had found it difficult to believe that, after such a short time and with no negotiations having been held, the new Board can say it is close to finalizing a collective agreement. He highlighted the fact that no one had spoken to former Board members, that he had been told those Board members were informed they were not welcome in a facility they were supposedly managing and that Nelson House had difficulty retaining its Executive Co-ordinators. He said he would find it difficult to continue funding an organization, the governance model of which is so much in question and he would not support funding until stability has been re-established and things were again under control.

Councillor A. Loney provided background information on the origins of Nelson House. He noted he had been most surprised to learn the facility was experiencing difficulties and that no one, knowing of his connection to Nelson House, had notified him this was the case. He expressed the view the timeframe the facility remains closed should be considerably shorter than five months, as de facto, the longer people are out of work, the more difficult the certification process becomes. Councillor Loney said that, while he did not know the motivation of the former Board for closing Nelson House, he did know the motivation of funders is not to “bust” the Union. Regional and provincial staff have been trying to do their jobs and would not recommend a course of action they did not feel was in the best interest of all parties concerned.

Councillor Loney expressed the hope situations such as these could be avoided in the future: to achieve this, it is fundamentally important that staff get on with the program outlined by Commissioner Stewart, negotiate good contracts, establish clear rules and performance measurement standards. The Councillor added he would not want persons who should be going into shelters to be discouraged from doing so because of the events that have unfolded in the last few weeks.

Councillor A. Munter said he was very alarmed by what is happening, both in Ontario and in society in general, to the network of services people need and upon which they depend. He said his instinct was that the 15 beds should be available, considering it has always been stated there not enough beds and closing existing beds is a difficult proposition to support. The Councillor noted however that he did not believe there have been no problems over the years at Nelson House. He added he could not understand why the former Board acted as it did. He posited some of the blame belongs with the funders who did not try to address problems they were aware existed over the years.

Councillor Munter expressed support for Councillor Holmes' Motion, as it keeps the beds open in the immediate and recommends that issues of accountability, service provision and expectations be addressed to avoid similar situations in the future. He expressed the hope the Department would involve the broader community in the discussion. He said he agreed with Councillor Loney that the credibility of shelters has been seriously affected by these events., therefor all parties need to work together to restore the faith in the community for these essential services.

Councillor M. Bellemare said it was necessary to ask a fundamental question, i.e., does the system function properly; the answer to that question is that the present governance model does not work. He said he had no doubt the new Board and Nelson House staff are committed to trying to provide services to women, however all the difficulties over the years and those that have surfaced more recently signify a dysfunctional governance model is in place. The Councillor did not believe all the difficulties have magically disappeared with the election of a new Board. In order to achieve long-term stability, the funders must step back and re-evaluate the program by closing it for a few months. The sooner the re-evaluation of the governance model is done, the sooner services can resume. The Province and the Region as funders have a right to a level of confidence, which they do not presently have, in the services provided by Nelson House

Councillor D. Pratt noted that, like Councillor Loney, he had been involved from the beginning with Nelson House, a real community effort which everyone wants to see on solid footing. He pointed out that some of the people at the outset are still involved and are committed to helping victims of family violence. The Councillor read from a written statement, submitted by Ms. Patricia Pepper, which says an Interim Board comprised of six (6) members of the Nelson House Corporation was elected on October 15, 1996. The statement further alleges that the Board elected on October 8, 1996 is not legally constituted and that the Interim Board intends to carry on the affairs of Nelson House. Further, it takes the position that the process adopted by Harmony House, including the Court Injunction, was not in the best interest of women and children who were there at that time.

Councillor Pratt said that, based on this new information, it was his view the matter will need to be resolved by the courts. Approving Councillor Holmes' Motion becomes a moot point, as a governance structure will not be in place for arriving at a contractual agreement. He suggested the only way to handle the situation was to support the course of action proposed by staff. He said no one present wants to see these important services in any way impaired but they must be on absolutely solid footing if they are to have integrity and long-term viability.

Councillor Holmes asked whether the Interim Board intends to take up the service at Nelson House. Councillor Pratt said he was aware that two members of the former Board were prepared to file an injunction if the Region decides to contract with the new Board. Councillor Cantin inquired about contracting with an entity whose status is unclear and whether the former Board, which has said it could not longer continue providing the service, could be legally contracted with. Commissioner D. Stewart replied that, before any contract is negotiated, staff would have to ensure it is with a duly-constituted body with a governance in place according to the constitution and the by-laws of that organization.

At this point, the Committee considered the following Motion:

Moved by D. Holmes

That Nelson House remain open and that the RMOC and the Province of Ontario establish criteria for governance and service standards, and take other steps as necessary to ensure the long-term stability and appropriateness of services.

LOST

YEAS: L. Davis, D. Holmes, A. Munter, M. Meilleur 4

NAYS: M. Bellemare, R. Cantin, A. Loney, D. Pratt 4

Councillor Munter proposed an amendment to the staff recommendation, noting he had concerns about the length of time Nelson House would be closed, and expressing his belief all parties need to work as quickly as possible to restore services. He suggested a Purchase of Service agreement be in place by December 1, 1996, with operations resuming as soon as possible after that date.

Councillor Cantin asked whether, in the best scenario, staff felt a contract could actually be produced in the time frame proposed by Councillor Munter. Commissioner Stewart said he would commit full time resources to meeting the goal and that there may have to be a truncated community involvement process. He said he thought this could probably be done by the end of December. Councillor Munter agreed to amend his Motion to say by December 4th. He reiterated the importance of restoring services as quickly as possible, as not only clients are affected but also people's jobs and livelihood. Councillor Cantin said another reason for supporting an earlier date has to do with the Christmas period being a difficult time for many people.

Councillor Pratt asked for a comment from the Ministry representative on the proposed timeframe. Ms. Atkins said she respected the Committee's wish for a speedy resolution to the situation, and she concurred with the comment that Christmas is a difficult time. She noted however that the funders felt their timeframe was quite minimal to get the kind of product they require and to give people time to prepare solid proposals. She said her tendency would be to ask for a little more time. Councillor Pratt suggested the Purchase of Service be achieved by the end of January 1997 and that arrangements be made to ensure there are no gaps in service in the interim. Councillor Davis made the comment that as the views of the community have been clearly stated today, a long consultation period should not be necessary.

Councillor Loney put forward the view that if a plan of action is to be carried out, it needs to have sufficient time. He said he could support speeding up the process, but felt the December 4th deadline was not realistic. He suggested January 15th, 1997 may be a more reasonable deadline.

Further to these comments and observations, the Committee considered the following Motion:

Moved by A. Munter

That the timeline proposed in the Social Services Department's action plan be amended to foresee the negotiation of a Purchase of Service agreement by December 4, 1996, and that services resume at Nelson House as soon as possible thereafter.

CARRIED

YEAS: R. Cantin, L. Davis, D. Holmes, A. Munter, M. Meilleur

NAYS: M. Bellemare, A. Loney, D. Pratt

Commissioner Stewart, in reply to concerns expressed by several Committee members, said staff will work as expeditiously as possible, as no one is interested in the process taking longer than needed. He indicated he would report to Committee on progress by the second meeting in November.

Moved by L. Davis

That staff develop a questionnaire for voluntary completion by residents of shelters to allow the RMOC to assess the quality of services.

CARRIED

Moved by Munter

That the Rules of Procedure be waived so the Council may consider this matter at its meeting of 23 October 1996.

CARRIED

COUNCILLORS' ITEMS

6. **MERGER OF THE DISTRICT HEALTH COUNCIL WITH THE REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

- Councillors Peter Hume and Alex Munter report dated 8 October 1996

That Regional Council express its support in principle for the merger of the District Health Council with the regional Health Department and forward the pilot project proposal -- How to Cut Duplication, Reduce Costs and Improve Health Planning -- to the Minister of Health and all Ottawa-Carleton MPP's.

CARRIED

(A. Loney dissented)

INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

1. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT 1995
- Acting Medical Officer of Health memorandum dated 25 Sep 96
2. FINAL REPORT OF 1996 MEASLES IMMUNIZATION CAMPAIGN
- Acting Medical Officer of Health memorandum dated 17 Sep 96

OTHER BUSINESS

Reorganization of Teaching Health Unit Program

Councillor R. Cantin informed Committee Members the Teaching Health Units are to be re-organized province-wide and Dr. Paula Stewart, Associate Medical Officer of Health, has been appointed Interim Director of the Ottawa-Carleton Site of the Eastern Ontario Public Health Research Education and Development (PHRED) Partnership. The site will include the eight existing health units in Eastern Ontario and, through amalgamation, this number may be reduced by one or two health units. Councillor Cantin added that the combined budgets will be reduced by approximately \$170,000 in each of the calendar years 1997 and 1998.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

7 November 1996

COMMITTEE CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR