

Community Services Committee
19 February 1998

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

19 FEBRUARY 1998

1:30 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Munter

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

Regrets: L. Davis

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of 22 January 1998.

CARRIED

INQUIRIES

1. DEATHS AMONG STREET PEOPLE

Councillor Holmes requested a report from the Commissioner of Social Services on the number of deaths of street people, that have occurred on the street, in the last couple of years. Commissioner Stewart responded that a report would be available for the 19 March 1998 Committee meeting.

Notes: 1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.

2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 25 February 1998 in Community Services Report 2 or on 11 March 1998 in Community Services Report 3.

The following inquiries were made by Chair Munter.

2. SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR GRADES 7 - 9

The new Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines require that grade 7 to 9 students in Ottawa-Carleton receive three hours of school instruction as well as ongoing information about sexual health. This is to include material on contraception, prevention of sexually-transmitted diseases and sexual orientation. Can the Health Department advise:

- What is the adequacy of such programs, both in schools and in other settings?
- If there are gaps, what steps does the Department intend to take to improve them?
- Since the Mandatory Guidelines only describe the minimum acceptable standard, is it the Department's view that this standard is adequate or should it be supplemented? If so, how?

3. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACTS OF CASINO GAMBLING

What is the Health Department's position re: public health impacts of casino gambling and expanded gaming? Are programs in place to deal with the health consequences of addiction to gambling?

4. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has floated the concept of an early childhood education program, funded by this ministry, to effectively replace junior kindergarten. What is the status of such a proposal?

PRESENTATION

1. PEOPLE'S HEARING/AUDIENCES POPULAIRES

- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee report dated 18 February 1998

Committee received a bilingual presentation by Ms. Joanne Steven and Ms. Louise Delisle representing the Organizing Committee of the People's Hearings/Audiences populaires. Ms. J. Steven began by stating that in October 1997, over 100 people participated in five hearings organized in Ottawa-Carleton. The hearings provided an opportunity for people living in poverty to talk about their difficulties, particularly since the provincial government's cuts to Social Assistance.

Notes: 1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.

2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 25 February 1998 in Community Services Report 2 or on 11 March 1998 in Community Services Report 3.

The Organizing Committee is currently finalizing a report containing individual experiences, supporting material, and a set of recommendations which will address a variety of issues related to poverty.

The Organizing Committee has unsuccessfully attempted to arrange a date to make a final presentation to Council. Regional Chair B. Chiarelli informed the Organizing Committee that he would not support at presentation to a regular Council meeting as it would set a precedent to other public interest groups doing so. Although, in order to remain accountable to the motion passed by the previous Council (October 1997), he would support a presentation occurring immediately prior to a Council meeting, to which all Councillors and Rogers Cable TV would be invited to attend.

The Organizing Committee believes it is critical that their recommendations be presented prior to the budgeting process, and therefore have decided to accept this offer. They are currently negotiating the date of 25 March 1998 with the Regional Chair's office.

The project requests the support of the Community Services Committee further by endorsing the request to present on 25 March; attending the presentation; and ensuring that recommendations be entered into an official process whereby they can be addressed and acted upon by Council.

Questions

Councillor Holmes stated that when the Organizing Committee presented to the Committee in October 1997, they requested a process be established to enable them to go to Council so that all Councillors would have the opportunity to hear what the residents of Ottawa-Carleton had to say about living in poverty. She asked whether or not the Committee recommendation to Council, and subsequently approved by Council, was still acceptable to the Organizing Committee.

In response, Ms. Steven explained that the Organizing Committee was cognizant of time constraints and would like to present recommendations before Council before budget decisions are made. They do not want to delay the process with further negotiations in this area. While their preference is to present at a regular Council meeting, the Organizing Committee is willing to accept the compromise. Ms. Steven confirmed for Councillor Holmes that the Organizing Committee has spent the last six weeks unsuccessfully trying to negotiate a time at a Council meeting.

Councillor Holmes suggested it may be appropriate to try to get the new Council to agree to a presentation, whereas it was the former Council that had agreed to the previous

¹ Note: A copy of the briefing notes for this presentation are held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

motion. She emphasized that this committee knew it was a precedent setting motion and it went before Council because it was such an unusual request.

Councillor Loney questioned whether the Organizing Committee had considered presenting its recommendations to this committee, in addition to Council. Ms. J Steven iterated their belief that they would be speaking to the “converted” if they presented their recommendations to this committee. She stated her understanding that the rationale for addressing Council was to reach Councillors who, perhaps, needed the information from the Hearings.

In response to a further question by Councillor Loney, Ms. Steven and Ms. Delisle reiterated their first choice was to present *within* a Council meeting and their second choice was to present on 25 March 1998 *prior to* a Council meeting

Ms. Steven confirmed for Councillor Holmes that at the Hearings, participants were told that they would have the opportunity to report their stories at a Council meeting, as this was the Organizing Committee’s initial understanding.

A motion was put forward by Councillor Holmes.

Committee Discussion

Councillor Beamish observed that the original motion (October 1997) did not specify that there would be a Presentation by this group in a formal Council meeting. He opined that the request was extraordinary, and suggested a presentation prior to Council, and making every effort to ensure full attendance by Council members, might be a more effective means of getting the message across, versus competing with other business arising within Council.

Councillor Loney reiterated that the Committee’s intent when it passed the motion last October was clear - to have a presentation before Council, and that Council did pass the motion. He stated his support for Councillor Holmes’ motion, and put forward an amendment to remind Council of its previous motion last Fall.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen also verbalized her support for the motion citing her rationale as honouring the commitment of the previous Council, and the understanding that the group was not assured of reaching all members of Council outside of a Council meeting. She stated that her position on this matter was not to be interpreted as precedent-setting. Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen emphasized that time constraints on Councillors do not enable them to listen to groups several times, as she predicts may happen. She suggested that other members of Council be invited to attend Committee meetings to hear presentations, or that interest groups meet with Councillors individually, on specific issues.

Chair Munter read relevant portions of the Extract of Minute of Committee meeting 16 October 1997. He opined that the intent was clear - a commitment was made by Council to hear this group in Council and on that basis, the group went into the community and told people that they would be heard. He emphasized that the whole point was to reach those members of Council that don't, and won't, attend Committee meetings and won't attend a briefing.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen observed that the wording of the original motion stated "...communicate to.." and did not specify the form of communication. Chair Munter stated that the intent of the motion was reflected in the Committee discussion leading up to the vote on the motion.

Moved by D. Holmes

That the People's Hearings be presented to the Council meeting of 25 March 1998. That the presentation be at 1:30 p.m. during the Council meeting, as Council earlier agreed to do in October 1997.

CARRIED, as amended

Moved by D. Holmes

That Council be requested to waive the notice required under the Procedure By-Law and consider this item at its meeting of 25 98.

CARRIED, as amended

2. **HEALTH DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**
- Medical Officer of Health report dated 19 January 1998

That Community Services Committee approve the attached policies, which are related to the operations of the Committee and the Health Department.

CARRIED

3. **REQUEST FOR REGULATIONS GOVERNING USE OF PESTICIDES**
- Regional Solicitor & Medical Officer of Health report dated February 1998

Public Delegations

Ms. Randi Goddard

Ms. Goddard stated she has observed an increased reliance on the services of lawn care companies in her neighbourhood. As a parent and pet owner, she is concerned that there

are no regulations in place to ensure the public is advised of private landowners applying pesticides.

Last spring, Ms. Goddard began a campaign to raise awareness of use of lawn pesticides, the health risks associated with use of these products, and the availability of safe alternatives. During the Summer 1997, she distributed a petition calling on the City of Ottawa to pass a By-Law banning the cosmetic use of pesticides on any and all properties within its boundaries, and to educate its residents on the available, ecologically sound alternatives. To date, approximately 1300 names have been collected.

With the assistance of the Ottawa-Carleton Health Department, Ms. Goddard produced a flyer entitled, *Be Part of the Ultimate Grass Roots Movement! Say No to Lawn Pesticides*³

Ms. Goddard emphasized that there is increasing incidence of health problems, such as breast cancer, associated with the proliferation of environmental toxins. She concluded that the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes must be restricted, pressure from pesticide companies must be resisted, and the public should be educated about the health risks associated with these products.

Ms. Judie Spence, President, Environmental Illness Society of Canada

Ms. Spence began by stating that over the past five decades, physicians and scientists have studied the effects of chemicals on the human immune system, particularly volatile organic compounds (VOCs), such as those found in pesticides. She explained that VOCs enter the body through the respiratory tract, digestive tract and skin. Children are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of pesticides on the central nervous system resulting in, for example, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and violent behavioural patterns.

Ms. Spence stated that pesticides must not be assumed safe simply because they have been approved by Environment Canada. She stated that the body's immune detoxification system becomes over-stressed as a result of increased chemical exposures occurring in our daily lives. This leads to illnesses such as cancer and environmental illness, and ultimately to irreversible organ damage.

In conclusion, Ms. Spence urged the Committee to take action to gain authority, from the province, to enact By-Laws aimed at curtailing the use of all cosmetic pesticides in the Region.

² Note: A copy of the petition is held on file with the Committee Co-ordinator

³ Note: A copy of the flyer is held on file with the Committee Co-ordinator.

Ms. Spence distributed copies of the *Environmental Illness Society of Canada Newsletter*, an article from the *Peace and Environment News*, and *Blair, Bear & Hare: The Story of a Young Girl with Environmental Illness*⁴

Mr. John Sankey, Pesticide Education Networks Telephone Information Line

Mr. Sankey stated that over the past 20 years he has been receiving calls from people worried about pesticides and wanting to know what alternatives are available, or from people whose lives have been devastated by pesticides. Mr. Sankey provided an example of a recent call. A woman with severe asthma had her apartment sprayed for cockroaches. She persuaded her landlord to use, what was suppose to be, non-toxic chemicals and made arrangement to vacate her apartment for a few days. Within five minutes of returning to her apartment, she became very ill.

Mr. Sankey stated that the standard clinical toxicology, with which the federal government evaluates toxic substances including pesticides, does not consider people who suffer from any known illness. Approximately 15 percent of the population of Ottawa-Carleton suffer from some sort of chronic or health problem, such as asthma or allergies, and therefore excluded from federal government safety testing of pesticides.

Mr. Sankey concluded by stating his support for the efforts of the Health Department to protect the health of Ottawa-Carleton residents.

Ms. Peggy Land, Health Dangers Urban Pesticide Use Working Group

Ms. Land introduced herself as a physiotherapist, and a discussion leader at the World Breast Conference in Kingston last summer. She noted that the incidence of breast cancer for Canadian women has risen to 1 in 9 women. The incidence of prostate cancer has risen and male fertility has declined. These health concerns are linked to the endocrine-disrupting or estrogen-mimicking effects of certain chemicals in the environment, including widely used pesticides. Such chemicals can permanently damage the body's endocrine, reproductive and central nervous systems. Many chemicals are known to be possibly, probably, or definitely cancer-causing. This link is difficult to prove because of the latency period of up to 20 years.

With the assistance of the Canadian Cancer Information Service and the library of the Health Department, Ms. Land conducted a literature search and has written a paper focusing on the links between breast cancer, breast feeding and pesticides. She found evidence that commonly used pesticides can cause or promote the growth of breast cancer in lab animals. Pesticides and their components can be detected in the body long after exposure. Pesticides can accumulate in body fluids, including breast milk. Women who have breast cancer tend to have higher levels of some pesticides in their blood and breast tissue than women without breast cancer.

⁴ Note: A copy of these resources are held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

Ms. Land urged that local government show leadership in the education about the long-term health concerns of the use of pesticides, and legally limit the use of unnecessary pesticides in the Region.

Ms. Melissa McDonald, Health Dangers Urban Pesticide Use Working Group

Ms. McDonald began by sharing an anecdote involving her mother who, after planting tree saplings, experienced severe muscle weakness, difficulty with walking, tingling and other neurological symptoms. After consulting with doctors, it was determined that her symptoms were due to exposure to pesticides via the saplings. Since this incidence, her mother has experienced increased sensitivities to many chemical products. Ms. McDonald stated this anecdote illustrates how federally-approved products, when used as directed by the provincial government, can still be damaging to members of population.

Ms. McDonald stated that the Region's request for the power to enact a By-Law is a human rights issue. Referring to the Ontario Human Rights Code, and specifically the term "handicap"; defined therein as *any degree of physical disability including illness*, she argued that it is discriminatory that 15 percent of the population is excluded from the testing protocol of pesticide products that is set out by the federal government.

Ms. McDonald called on the Committee to help to rectify this discriminatory situation by considering the 15 percent of the population when making a request to the provincial government for local control over the use of pesticides in the urban areas of Ottawa-Carleton.

Ms. Kathy McHugh, Russell Environment Committee

Ms. McHugh explained that the Russell Environment Committee originated from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit's Healthy Community Initiative. The Committee's main interest is in reducing the use of pesticides in their community.

To this end, the Environment Committee has concentrated on educating the public about the health hazards associated with pesticides, and the availability of alternatives. Ms. McHugh blamed peer pressure to have the "perfect" lawn for the increased use of pesticides, and the Committee is trying to change this mind set. Ms. McHugh observed that people are gradually becoming more comfortable with having a chemical-free lawn. The Committee obtained lawn signs from Breast Cancer Action which proclaim a chemical-free lawn.

In addition, a brochure was produced and distributed to residents in their municipality. Ms. McHugh stated that the current Council (of Russell) was very supportive of the Committee's work. They are beginning work on a very new initiative to enact a ban on pesticide use in their municipality. Ms. McHugh concluded by stating her belief that the time is right for a ban and community support is increasing.

Mr. Harvey Goodwin, Rockcliffe Park Environment Committee

Mr. Goodwin stated that the Village of Rockcliffe Park Council supported Councillor Holmes' motion and passed a resolution to that effect⁵.

As background, Mr. Goodwin explained that the Environment Committee had chosen to focus on the issue of pesticides for cosmetic purposes. After due diligence, and not being assured that the chemicals were safe, they made a recommendation to the Village of Rockcliffe Park Council to ban the use of pesticides until such time as they could be proven safe. A draft By-Law was passed by Council. However they were advised by their legal council that it would not hold up in a Court of Law, as the Village did not have the right to control pesticide use.

Mr. Goodwin informed the Committee that in Quebec, the right to control pesticide use has been given to municipalities. He also stated that in Quebec, a Committee has been formed by the lawn care companies, and chaired by the President of Chem-Lawn, to ban the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes. Interestingly, the lawn care companies appear to be leading the cause in that province.

Dr. Leonard Levine, Past-President of Canadian Holistic Medical Association

Dr. Levine described how he personally has experienced negative health effects after being exposed to DDT (pesticide) in the early 1950's. He also described how, while working in Australia during the early 1970's, he was exposed to organophosphates. Nearby cotton fields were sprayed with these chemicals and subsequently the entire village became ill with flu-like symptoms, malaise and lethargy. Dr. Levine stated he continues to experience the long term effects such as multiple chemical sensitivities.

Dr. Levine warned that there will be an increasing incidence of Spina Bifida, Downs Syndrome, Dyslexia and other medical conditions as a result of continued exposure to chemicals.

Ms. Sharon Skead, Breast Cancer Action

Ms. Skead limited her comments to the evidence of a potential link between breast cancer and pesticide use. She opined that media coverage of this issue is sometimes conflicting and confusing. For example, she referred to an article appearing in the 29 October 1997 issue of the *Globe and Mail*. The article, headlined "Breast Cancer, Pesticides Not Linked Studies Says", was concerning two studies with conflicting conclusions on evidence of the possible link between breast cancer and pesticides. Ms. Skead stated she has found numerous studies which provide evidence supporting such a link.

⁵ Note: A copy of this motion is held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

Ms. Skead suggested readers need to be discerning and analytical when reviewing research results including funding sources, research methodologies, sample size and conclusions.

Ms. Skead stated that the Ontario Task Force on the Primary Prevention of Cancer estimated the risk of 1 in 3 Ontarians developing cancer within their lifetimes. Ms Skead questioned if this was an acceptable risk.

In concluding, Ms. Skead cited a comment by Elizabeth Dowdswell, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Program, as quoted in the previously mentioned newspaper article. It read “[policy makers] cannot wait for scientific certainty to take actions that would slow the destructive effects of human activity.” She referred to the tobacco and asbestos industries to demonstrate how long it can take to prove a danger to health exists.

Ms. Angela Rickman, Director, Pesticides and Toxics Campaign, Sierra Club of Canada & Coordinator for the Campaign for Pesticide Reduction (CPR)

Ms. Rickman stated the Campaign for Pesticide Reduction (CPR) was a network of activists, across Canada, interested in the pesticide issue. Currently, CPR is conducting a national campaign in over 30 municipalities. Individuals and organizations are campaigning to have pesticide By-Laws passed which restrict or ban the cosmetic use of pesticides on private property. To date they have had successes in Quebec. When the legislation was challenged by lawn care companies, the Supreme Court of Quebec ruled in favour of municipalities.

Ms. Rickman distributed resource materials including *Pesticide Watch Newsletter*, *Pesticides: The Right To Know Fact Sheet* and *The Truth about Pesticides Pamphlet*.

Ms. Rickman stated that pesticides contain active ingredients registered under the *Pest Control Products Act* (Health Canada). The public does not have access to information about the inert ingredients, such as formaldehyde and panzene, many of are as toxic as the active ingredients of pesticides. She explained that inert ingredients are protected as trade secrets by the industry.

Ms. Rickman also pointed out that ingredients are tested individually, not in combination as they would appear in a pesticide. Therefore, there is limited knowledge of the synergistic effects of the ingredients. Also toxicology testing is based on the effects on an average-sized man, therefore little is known about the effects on women, children, and fetuses.

In conclusion, Ms. Rickman offered access to a realm of information available through CPR and the Sierra Club of Canada.

⁶ Note: A copy of these resources are held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

Questions to Staff

In response to a query by Councillor Loney, Ms. A. Tashereau-Moncion, Solicitor, stated that the draft *Municipal Act* had been introduced for consultation and made no specific reference to pesticides. In addition, she stated she was not aware of any precedent being set in Ontario, in which a By-Law was challenged and subsequently upheld by the Ontario Supreme Court, as has occurred in Quebec.

Committee Discussion

Councillor Loney stated that the Region should continue to try to have legislation clarified by the province and should pursue a By-Law. He is cognizant that the RMOC has responsibility for public health, and therefore should advocate for what can be done under existing laws, whether it is by lower- or upper-tier municipalities.

Councillor Holmes thanked the Health department for supporting the Working Group over the past year. Their work has included a sod experimentation (on Lisgar street) to test different types of grasses to determine which is the most effective lawn cover, without the use of pesticides. In addition, the Working Group has produced and distributed five information brochures (attached to report, and also available through RMOC Web site).

Councillor Holmes stated that the Region has been trying since 1995 to have the *Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton Act* changed to have the legislative ability to take control over pesticides on private property. If successful, the next step is to invite public participation in drafting a By-Law. Following presentation of the draft By-Law, there would be a large public education project on alternative lawn care, and discussion with lawn care companies about offering non-toxic lawn treatments. If unsuccessful at the legislation level, Councillor Holmes proposes going ahead with the process of By-Laws, and have them challenged within the court system.

Councillor Holmes reminded the Committee of the range of health risk associated with pesticides, from minor symptoms to health crisis for some individuals. While the evidence is inconclusive as to the link between organochlorides and cancer, she stated the possibility certainly exists.

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve:

- 1. The continued administrative support by the Health department for the Health Dangers of Urban Use of Pesticides Working group;**

2. **A request to the Province of Ontario to amend the *Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton Act* to enable the enactment of By-Laws regulating the use of pesticides;**
3. **That should province-wide legislation that appropriately addresses the pesticide issue be enacted, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton request for special legislation would become redundant.**

CARRIED

A request was made by the Medical Officer of Health to deal with Item 7 next on the Agenda.

7. OSGOODE AMBULANCE SERVICE
 - A/Co-ordinator, Corporate Services & Economic Development Committee dated 4 February 1998
 - Extract of Draft Minute Corporate Services & Economic Development Committee, 03 February 1998

Staff Presentation

Ms. Kelly McGee, of the Legal Department, explained that in the current Ottawa-Carleton (O-C) land ambulance system there are private operators and the provincial government directly providing land ambulance service. Under the *Services Improvement Act*, the responsibility for land ambulance service is being transferred to the Region in two phases; on 01 Jan 1998, the RMOC assumed the costs of the service and, on 01 Jan 2000, the RMOC will be responsible for ensuring the proper provision of the service. "Proper provision", as defined in the *Act*, includes selecting land ambulance providers, ensuring proper management, operation and use of land ambulances, and supplying vehicles, equipment, services etc. Until 01 Jan 2000, the Minister of Health (MOH) is responsible for the proper provision of land ambulance service and will bill the RMOC for associated costs. However, under the *Act*, the RMOC may request the MOH to move up the 01 Jan 2000 date, and directly assume all associated costs with land ambulance service.

The Ottawa-Carleton (O-C) Regional ambulance service is the provincial service directly provided by the Ministry. As previously stated, the RMOC can negotiate for an earlier transfer of this service however, in addition to selecting a provider, the RMOC must also assume all of the responsibility and control over the entire existing system. The MOH has confirmed that the *Act* will not allow RMOC to ask for any *individual* component of the existing ambulance service before the year 2000.

If Council chooses to select an earlier date for the assumption of the year 2000 responsibilities, there is a protection period (until 31 Dec 1999) outlined in the *Act* for many of the existing operators. Protected operators include those with licences before the

protection period began 01 Jan 1998, and those receiving temporary licences from the Minister during the protection period for a service that was previously provided by the province directly.

Ms. McGee clarified that the staff report refers to the land ambulance service for Osgoode. The existing Osgoode operator is not protected because this is a contracted service, which expires 31 March 1998. The MOH has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP). The new operator will receive a temporary licence for the period of 01 April 1998 to 31 Dec 1999. All licences for existing operators expire on 31 Dec 1999 unless the RMOC has selected one of those existing operators to begin service under RMOC control on 01 Jan 01.

Ms. McGee also explained that if the RMOC does not come up with a model and an operator by 30 Sept 1999, the existing operators will automatically continue to provide their current service for one year, beginning 01 Jan 2000.

Ms. McGee stated that staff intend to bring a comprehensive report to the COMMITTEE and Council by the end of April, outlining options and strategies available to the RMOC leading up to 01 Jan 2000. Ms. McGee stated that since the writing of the original report, the CAO of Osgoode is no longer eligible to represent the RMOC on the selection Committee as Osgoode will be making a RPF submission.

Questions to Staff

Ms McGee confirmed for Chair A. Munter that private operators use Ministry-owned ambulances and equipment. She also confirmed that should the RMOC choose the option of moving the transfer date forward, it could proceed to privatize the Ministry operation and put the remainder up for bid when the protection period ends 31 Dec 1999. Another option would be for the RMOC to assume and take complete control of the service prior to 01 Jan 2000.

Public delegations

Rene Berthiaume & John Kibsey, Rural Metro of Ontario

Mr. Berthiaume, Vice- President of Community Affairs & New Business Development, provided a brief background of Rural Metro of Ontario. Rural Metro of Ontario, comprised of seven operators, is owned by Rural Metro Canada, a subsidiary of Rural Metro Corporation, an American-owned company. He shared their mission statement, core values and highlights of Ontario operations. In Eastern Ontario, Rural Metro operates in Nepean, Osgoode, Hawksbury, Casselman, Embrum, Morrisburg, Winchester, Prescott and Kemptville.

Mr. Berthiaume stated that the company is seeking to work collaboratively with the RMOC. He stated his belief that the current land ambulance operators in Ottawa-Carleton, including Rural Metro, are experts in providing that service and can share a wealth of knowledge with the RMOC, so that the RMOC can be a good buyer of ambulance service. To that end, he has provided the Committee with a copy of the contracting guideline document prepared by the Ontario Ambulance Operators Association and a copy of a draft RFP document⁷.

Mr. Kibsey, Operational Manager for Osgoode & District Ambulance Service, provided operational details for Osgoode ambulance service. Rural Metro is the current operator in Osgoode, and bordering rural areas. They respond to 2000 calls/year and were one of the first rural communities to have 911 and Advanced Life Support Paramedics (2 staff). Mr. Kibsey concluded that Rural Metro was proud of its community involvement and hopes to continue to operate this service.

In response to a question by Chair Munter, Mr. Berthiaume stated that the RFP process came sooner than expected, as they are still dealing with the new regulations under *Bill 152* and the evolving issues associated with those changes. He reiterated that the RMOC should meet with ambulance operators and establish the process it wants to go through in making the transition. Mr. Berthiaume opined that it was important for the RMOC to examine all options, including choosing individual operators or having one service

Mr. Steve Hallam, Liaison Officer, Ottawa-Carleton Paramedic Association (OCPA)

Mr. Hallam began by stating he spoke on behalf of OCPA and the patients they serve. He referred to the Ontario ambulance system as a sprawling, fragmented patch work organization. He stated that mismanagement of this essential public service has resulted in inefficiencies, fiscal irresponsibility and improper life-threatening patient triage protocols and regulations implemented without public accountability. Mr. Hallam cited examples of inconsistencies and disorganization within the Dispatch system involving both Basic- and Advanced-Life Support ambulances, and which, he pointed out, the RMOC will inherit from the province.

Mr. Hallam expressed concern about the possibility of deregulation of ambulance services by the provincial government. He stressed that potential deregulation increases the need for the RMOC to take more active and local control of pre-hospital care.

Mr. Hallam encouraged the Region to solicit input from the people who work in the field, when instituting a local solution. He opined that this is an opportunity for the Region to provide a sound, high quality pre-hospital care system by directly overseeing ambulance operations and eventually revamping an inefficient and overwhelmed Dispatch system. Mr. Hallam suggested that partial fire/ambulance integration may be starting point for cost-savings and increased efficiency⁸.

⁷ Note: These reference materials are held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

⁸ Note: A copy of the briefing notes for this presentation are held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

Mr. Randy Caverly, Regional Director, Ambulance Division of Ontario Public Service Employees' Union (OPSEU)

Mr. Caverly explained that OPSEU represents ambulance workers, dispatchers, mechanics, office staff and paramedics in the Ottawa area. He is also an ambulance officer.

Mr Caverly began by sharing the experience an ambulance officer who works for one of the new ambulance companies and has complained that he is being prevented from participating in his town council's examination of this issue. His employer is worried that the township may put in a bid under the RFP, and therefore be a competitor. Mr. Caverly expressed his belief that the contribution of this individual to the community was being co-opted for private gain by the company.

Mr. Caverly stated that as a result of Mega-week announcements, the Ministry will no longer be involved in the budgeting or the day-to-day control of operations. The regulating body and the funding body are going to be separate and distinct. Operators will be free to move funds around within their budget and extract profit. Mr. Caverly opined that there will be pressure within the new system to generate revenue at the expense of service and assets.

Mr. Caverly suggested that in order to realize the intended efficiencies of downloading, it will be necessary for the Region to reduce the service duplication of the current five services by creating one regional service. He cited an Emergency Services Review commissioned by the MOH in 1991, which resulted in the recommendation for a single public system. He also cited the optimal performance model as applied by the Ernst & Young Study of Metro Toronto in 1997. The study found that there was still significant public distaste in Canada for private sector involvement and concluded that the best option was a public regional service delivery model.

In conclusion, Mr. Caverly stated that the RMOC should adopt a plan to create a region wide public ambulance service and it should begin that plan with the ongoing RFP in Osgoode and the MOH announced RFP in the Ottawa-Carleton region, and continue the process at the end of the protection period.

Questions

Ms. McGee confirmed for Councillor Kreling that staff were aware that the province wanted to stop the direct delivery of ambulance and therefore, wanted to put out an RFP for the O-C regional ambulance service. As well, she confirmed that the Region had discussion with the province and were informed that the RMOC could not be a party to the development of the RFP. She stated that the Region had not received the MOH letter referred to by Mr. Caverly.

Ms. McGee clarified that if the province issues an RFP for the O-C regional ambulance service, the Region has two options (similar to the Osgoode situation) - to bid on that service or exercise the provision of the *Services Improvement Act* that allows the RMOC to assume the year 2000 responsibilities ahead of time.

Chair Munter expressed concern that the Region could be in position to inherit, on 01 Jan 2000, a privatized ambulance service which covers Ottawa, Vanier, Rockcliffe and most of Gloucester and Nepean, whether it likes it or not. In response, Ms. McGee confirmed that the O-C regional ambulance service covers approximately 50% of all ambulance service in this Region and any contracts initiated by the province, between now and then, will expire on 31 Dec 1999. The system in place on 01 Jan 2000 will be the system created by Regional Council.

Chair Munter agreed that there will be private contracts expiring prior to 01 Jan 2000 but pointed out that the system will have already been privatized, whether or not the Region supports the privatization of the system. The Region could de-privatize it, but not without difficulty.

Bill Cole, President, Ottawa Professional Firefighters Association (OPFA)

Mr. Cole distributed a letter to members of the Committee prepared by the Association and himself, in preparation for this meeting⁹.

Mr Cole began by explaining that OPFA is affiliated with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), comprised of 230,000 members. IAFF has studied each and every privatization of ambulance service that has occurred in the United States. The OPFA has access to this information and will make it available at this Committee's request.

Mr. Cole noted there has already been significant debate on the privatization of ambulance service in Ontario and Canada which centres on the basic premise of essential services for profit.

⁹ Note: A copy of this correspondence is held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

Mr. Cole emphasized that this discussion should encompass more than just the renewal of the Osgoode contract, and include the whole issue of the privatization of an essential service in our community.

Chair Munter read the motion put forward by Councillor Beamish.

Committee Discussion

Councillor Beamish, in speaking to his motion, stated that if it is imminent that a RFP is going out for the O-C regional service, it is urgent that the Region get control of the situation. The Region should take advantage of the opportunity to have a say in where its money is going and how service is delivered in Ottawa-Carleton.

Chair Munter stated the Provincial Government wants to privatize the bulk of the services, without RMOC involvement, even though the Region has to pay the cost. He stated he was not prepared to see the Provincial Government gut an essential service and then turn it over to the Region on 01 Jan 2000. He stated that if the Region is to have responsibility for ambulance service, then the Region must start making decisions about its structure. Chair Munter, referring to the latest news of an RFP for O-C region, expressed concern about turning an essential service into a series of competitive bid processes. He stated the Region has an obligation to ensure a high quality, responsive service.

Councillor Loney stated he supported the motion, and although he has no pre-determination of what the service should look like, agreed that Council needs to examine its options.

Councillor Kreling put forward an amendment to the motion, which requests the province not proceed with any further RFP's with respect to land ambulance services in Ottawa-Carleton.

Councillor Byrne and Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen both expressed their support for the motion and amendment.

Ms. McGee confirmed for Councillor Loney that there was no specific time requirement for formal notice of early transfer year 2000 responsibilities. The legislation merely states, "with the Minister's approval". Councillor Loney suggested it may be more effective to have firm date to go before Council. Under those circumstances it would be awkward for the province to proceed with an RFP.

Councillor Holmes stated she was strongly in favour of moving as quickly as possible to preclude the RFP being issued by the province for the O-C regional ambulance service.

Moved by D. Beamish

WHEREAS Regional Council now has to pay the bill for ambulance service in Ottawa-Carleton without the ability to have any input on the operation of a service we are responsible for;

WHEREAS, if Council is responsible for the costs of this service, being able to fully control it and make policy decisions about budgets and structure would ensure that this service is delivered as efficiently as possible to serve our community;

RESOLVED THAT Council Approve that we assume full responsibility for ambulance service as soon as is practical;

FURTHER THAT staff be directed to submit a report to the next meeting of Community Services Committee outlining some of the key issues and decisions that need to be taken to make this happen; and

FURTHER THAT Regional Council strongly requests that the provincial government make no further requests for proposal for land ambulance services in Ottawa-Carleton; and

FURTHER THAT this position be communicated to the Ministries of Health and Municipal Affairs, and local MPP's.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That Councillor A. Loney, working with staff, represent the RMOC on the Request for Proposal (RFP) Selection Committee for Osgoode Land Ambulance Service.

CARRIED

Moved by D. Holmes

That Council be requested to waive the notice required under the Procedure By-Law and consider this item at its meeting of 25 Feb 98.

CARRIED

4. EVALUATION AND COMMUNITY MONITORING: ONTARIO WORKS
- Commissioner of Social Services report dated 22 January 1998

Public Delegations

Ms. Susan Learoyd, Social Planning Council and Linda Lalonde, The Anti-Poverty Project

Ms. Learoyd explained that both the Social Planning Council (SPC) and The Anti-Poverty Group are members of the project team monitoring Ontario Works. The intent of her presentation was to establish a framework for a relationship between this Committee and the project team, and to provide a brief update on the project team's activities planned for the next year. (Note: Report previously distributed and listed on Agenda).

As background, Ms. Learoyd stated that the project team is responding to a motion by this Committee to form an arms-length, broadly represented group to evaluate the success of the Ontario Works project at a one-year and two-year mark. The project has begun and resources are available. The SPC has taken the lead in bringing the project team together.

Ms. Learoyd stated the focus of planned activities is to capture the experience of clients who are participating in Ontario Works. They have planned a series of focus groups, beginning in April and continuing in the Fall/Winter. The project team would like to return to this Committee in September with a mid-way report, and again at the end of the year with a final report. In addition, Ms. Learoyd requested that the project team be able to bring forward issues and make recommendations as required.

Ms. Lalonde informed the Committee that the project team's grant application to the Trillium Fund had been turned down, on the basis that independent, arms-length monitoring of a regional Social Services Department program is, in the opinion of the Trillium Foundation, a regional responsibility. There is an appeal pending.

Questions to Presenters

Councillor Holmes asked if the project team had enough funds to do its job. In response, Ms. Lalonde acknowledged that the project was not going to be as comprehensive as initially planned. They are relying on Community Resource Centres and other partners to provide information on individuals who are not members of the four focus groups.

In response to a question by Councillor Holmes, Ms. Learoyd stated the project team was in the process of developing a monitoring tool for agencies to use to examine issues brought forward by clients. Participation will depend on the initiative of particular agencies.

Commissioner Stewart stated that as of December 1997, there were 10,560 registered participants for employment supports (exceeded target) and 32 community placements

(below target). The Department was in the process of finalizing details for the employment placement portion of Ontario Works. To date, the Department has contacted 1200 - 1300 non-profit and public sector organizations in Ottawa-Carleton and has registered 160 community placement possibilities. Responding to Councillor Holmes' inquiry, Commissioner Stewart stated he was disappointed that the Trillium grant had been denied. He stated he believed the project team's focus on the experience of clients added value to the Department's evaluation.

Councillor Loney stated that if the appeal of the Trillium grant is unsuccessful, Committee should consider more funding for this worthwhile evaluation project.

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

RECEIVED

5. REDISTRIBUTION OF SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE SPACES
- Commissioner of Social Services report dated 26 January 1998

Staff Presentation

Commissioner Stewart explained that the jobsOntario (JO) program began in the early 1990's, and over a period of time 707 spaces were allocated. Originally, it was a 100-percent provincially funded. It eventually reverted to 80/20 cost sharing and the social criteria gradually weakened. He concluded that, in reality, there were no longer JO spaces.

Commissioner Stewart stated that this report is part of an overall exercise that the Department is engaged in with the child care community. The goals are to find efficiencies within the system, to maintain the number of spaces, and to withstand some of the requirements for restraint. This report is one step toward other activities in the reallocation of subsidized spaces. He stated his belief that these are balanced proposals that will ensure the continuity of quality system of child care in the Region.

Ms. Roadhouse Bresnehan spoke about the process used in the redistribution exercise, as outlined in report. The Department has had discussions with child care groups and agencies over the past 2-3 years. Feedback from the community is that two separate streams of criteria are difficult to administer, there is a shortage of subsidized spaces, and there is no common definition of equity. Ms. Bresnehan stated that of the three options examined, the Department chose to focus on the 165 spaces that have been floating through the child care community. This option is the least disruptive because the remaining 542 spaces are allocated to address other issues such as equity, viability or access.

Questions to Staff

Councillor Holmes asked whether or not the Department could guarantee there would be no centres closed as a result of the redistribution. Commissioner Stewart responded there were no guarantee because there are other variables influencing the economic viability of child care centres. However, he stated economic viability of the centres is the number one criteria, and the rationale for the option chosen. Commissioner Stewart pointed out that, looking at other municipalities, there is no one model of how child care subsidies are used. Some municipalities have used a market approach; signing agreements with as many child care agencies as possible. The disadvantage to this approach is economic instability.

Councillor Beamish questioned how the allocations address the needs of parents, and wondered if there was more concern for the economic viability of agencies. Commissioner Stewart responded that the focus is on communities where there is a demonstrated inability of programs to attract fee payers, therefore there are a larger number of parents who are in financial need and won't be able purchase these services and are therefore in need of a subsidy. The Department wants to address that need with this reallocation process.

Councillor Beamish, referring to criteria 4 & 5, asked if there are statistics available to demonstrate that these populations are being under-served. Commissioner Stewart confirmed that services for these groups are disproportionately low.

Public Delegations

Ms. Shelley Bond, Vice-Chair of the Child Care Council

Ms. Bond explained that the Child Care Council (CCC) represents all aspects of child care, including licensed home child care, independent providers, group care, non-profit, profit, liaison members (school boards) and other child care services.

The CCC passed a motion to support the report recommendations on the redistribution of subsidized spaces as long as this report is seen as a stop-gap measure in the immediate response to the redistribution of JO spaces and not as a precedent setting option. Ms. Bond pointed out that with the new budgeting process for 1998, capital funding should not be forgotten.

Councillor Holmes asked how much was expected in the 1998 capital funding. Commissioner Stewart stated that no direction had been given to staff and that no figure was proposed for investment in the Child Care Capital Fund. He reminded Committee that previous requests for capital funds were met by transfers from the Contingency Fund. Commissioner Stewart will confirm whether or not a direction was given for the designation of capital funding in the 1998 budget.

Mr. Sam Bhergava, Director of a profit, and a non-profit child care centre.

Mr. Bhergava urged the Committee to defer the approval the staff recommendations until the overall goals, policies and direction in child care were clearly determined. He stated that the main driving force for the recommendations were to allocate more subsidized spaces to save some licensed sector centres from closing, and questioned whether the recommendations were in the best interest of parents and taxpayers.

Mr. Bhergava opined that the staff recommendations made a complete 180 degree turn around in the policy of JO spaces. He believes the new proposal takes away the freedom of parents to choose a particular child care centre. In addition, Mr. Bhergava recommended that the Region take steps now to allow all subsidized spaces on a floating basis. He believes this can be done gradually without destabilizing the system. He opined that the recommendations have misplaced priorities. The priority is families needing assistance and not the protection of the child care system. The Regional does not have a mandate to protect all its suppliers. The financial implications of the recommendations need to be examined.

Mr. Bhergava referred to his own centre which has seen rise in demand, particularly from young single parents on assistance, yet the centre has had to downsize. He concluded his presentation by suggesting the Region allow floating subsidies for the families on assistance, seek better balance of subsidized and full fee paying spaces, and determine the need for a protected sector within child care, that requires special consideration.¹⁰

Questions

Councillor Kreling asked staff to respond to the observations expressed by Mr. Bhergava. Commissioner Stewart responded that some municipalities have adopted a floating space modality. A component of this is a centralized waiting list, which he has advocated for in the past. Commissioner Stewart stated it is the Department's business to ensure that public funds are used to support a quality child care system. In order to achieve this, the Department must be observant of the economic reality of the system. There is a plan to proceed with discussions, with agencies that are presently 100% subsidized, to look at ways to attract fee payers, but he acknowledges it may not be practical in some situations, for example, the Head Start program. Commissioner Stewart stated that if the concept of a centralized waiting list is revisited there would need to be considerable consultation with stakeholders.

Ms. Bresnehan confirmed for Councillor Kreling that the timeframe for redistribution is quite quick and she anticipates having a report to Committee within a month. Ms.

¹⁰ Note: A copy of Mr. Bhergava's briefing notes are held on file by the Committee Co-ordinator

Bresnehan clarified for Councillor Beamish that the 165 spaces are not really floating, because they tend to stay in a particular agency.

In response to a query, Mr. Bhergava clarified that he is advocating for floating spaces because he would like his centre operating at full capacity, and would like to attract clients based on the merits of his centre. He questioned the basis on which some centres are guaranteed economic viability, noting he has not had such a guarantee in operating his centre.

Ms. Cindy Magloughlin, President, Ottawa-Carleton Child Care Association

Ms. Magloughlin explained that the Child Care Association was comprised of over 50 not-for-profit child care agencies with purchase of service agreements with the Region. She stated that these agencies have sacrificed 2.1% off their bottom lines over last 2 years in order to preserve JO spaces. She stated the Association wants to ensure a high degree of accountability with regard to the use of these spaces.

Ms. Magloughlin expressed concern about wording of some of the criteria and absence of other important criteria. She stated that when viability is an issue, the Association wants to ensure that this is solely because of a lack of subsidized spaces and that public dollars are not being used as a remedy for poor management practices. Quality should be a consideration for the distribution of subsidies, and therefore assessment of the status of a licence should be taken into consideration.

Ms. Magloughlin asked for clarification on criteria # 5. Ms. Bresnehan confirmed that this was the only circumstance that a for-profit centre would receive an additional subsidy.

Ms. Magloughlin noted that no consideration had been given to prioritizing by age group and stated that infant spaces are in greatest demand.

Questions

Councillor Byrne stated she was opposed to a centralized list/floating spaces because it would create instability in the system. She questioned staff about the overall occupancy rate. Commissioner Stewart responded that because there is a 40 percent turnover rate on an annualized basis, it is very difficult to have all subsidized spaces filled everyday. This turnover is taken into account in the budgeting process/per diem setting.

Ms. Bresnehan estimated that there were less than 10 for-profit agencies among the 126 agencies from which the Region purchases services (this figure was later modified to 5 agencies by Councillor Kreling).

Councillor Loney asked about the timeframe for meeting with agencies and examining opportunities/attempts to attract fee payers. He suggested that specific targets should be

set as an incentive for centres (i.e. reducing proportion of subsidized spaces from 100 to 90 percent). Ms. Bresnehan confirmed for Councillor Loney that criteria # 5 focused on for-profit centres serving high-need communities.

Councillor Loney moved the report.

Committee Discussion

Councillor Beamish put forward a motion to have staff prepare a report on the issues and options regarding floating spaces in the Ottawa-Carleton child care system.

Commissioner Stewart informed Councillor Holmes that there are approximately 6300 subsidized spaces, of which 103 spaces are in for-profit agencies.

Councillor Holmes stated she would not support Councillor Beamish's motion. She stated she was not prepared to put the financial stability of every agency in the Region at risk by having floating spaces. She continued to argue that she was tired of the fighting between for-profits and not-for profit agencies, and the demands from for-profit agencies for more subsidized spaces. She believes this undermines non-profit agencies, and wondered how a centre could be considered for-profit when up to 50% of its spaces were subsidized by the public. Councillor Holmes put forward a motion that all subsidized spaces be removed from the for-profit daycare. She agreed there should be more subsidized spaces, and therefore the Region should go to the province and ask for more spaces.

Commissioner Stewart provided the following statistics - there are 10,000 licensed child care spaces in the region, of which 6300 are subsidized spaces. Of these 6300 spaces, 103 are located in for-profit centres. The report deals with 165 subsidized spaces. Based on these numbers, Councillor Kreling stated he hoped the Committee would not support Councillor Holmes' motion.

Councillor Loney put forward a motion that Councillor Holmes' motion be tabled, and that staff be instructed to look at the issue and bring back a report to Committee. He stated he believed it would be fundamentally wrong to pass Councillor Holmes' motion without giving stakeholders the opportunity to respond.

Councillor Doucet stated, in general, he supported Councillor Holmes' motion. He opined that the human element is often lacking in staff reports and that this particular report does not reflect the tremendous commitment of those working in day care centres.

Councillor Byrne expressed concern that if floating spaces are transferred to high need areas, parents in lower need areas may lose access to child care. She stated that she believed it was fundamentally wrong for a for-profit centre to have a higher proportion of subsidized spaces than a non-profit centre (based on figures provided by Mr. Bhergava of his two centres).

Chair Munter, referring to Councillor Holmes' motion, opined that a motion of this magnitude required more time for consideration and discussion. He opined that it is not fair to staff to write a report that is unlikely to be implemented. He suggested it would be beneficial for the new members of the Committee to have a briefing on some of the history of these child care issues.

Moved by A. Loney

That the following Motion be tabled and that staff be directed to prepare a report on the matter

CARRIED (D. Holmes,
D. Beamish dissented)

That all subsidized spaces be removed from the for-profit day cares.

TABLED

Moved by D. Beamish

That staff prepare a report on issues and options regarding floating spaces in the Ottawa-Carleton child care system.

LOST

Moved by A. Loney

That the Community Services Committee and Council approve the following parameters for the current redistribution of subsidized spaces. The following priorities are to be used to redistribute spaces. Available spaces will be allocated to agencies that:

- 1. Face closure due to economic viability because of a demonstrated lack of full fee payers in the community they serve;**
- 2. Were affected by the provincial redesign of Children's Integration Services and therefore lost four subsidized spaces to this redesign;**
- 3. Serve exclusively low income parents or other disadvantaged groups such as young single parents, or have been impacted by changing demographic needs in their community;**
- 4. Serve francophone parents in low-income communities;**

5. **Are for-profit centres that have not previously been allocated many subsidized spaces but have a high need in the communities they serve;**
6. **Serve low income aboriginal parents;**

Priority will be given to agencies that fit one or more of these criteria.

CARRIED

6. ONTARIO WORKS REGULATIONS: UPDATE ON CHANGES ANNOUNCED BY THE MINISTER ON FEBRUARY 2, 1998
- Commissioner of Social Services report dated 10 February 1998

Moved by W. Byrne

That this item be deferred to the next Community Services Committee meeting.

DEFERRED

INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

1. City of Toronto Initiative to Relocate Homeless Families
- Commissioner of Social Services memorandum dated January 1998
2. Update on Garderie Sunflower Co-operative
- Commissioner of Social Services memorandum dated January 1998
3. Correspondence from Harmony House
- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee memorandum dated January 1998
4. Report from Social Planning Council
- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee memorandum dated February 1998

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

5 March 1998

Community Services Committee
19 February 1998

27

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR