

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

2 APRIL 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
5 March 1998.**

CARRIED

INQUIRIES

The following inquiries were made by Chair Munter:

1. ELDER ABUSE

What programs exist in Ottawa-Carleton to deal with the issue of elder abuse, particularly
elder abuse in the ethnocultural communities? Are these programs sufficient?

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- Notes: 1. Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by Committee.
2. Reports requiring Council consideration will be presented to Council on 8 April 1998 in
Community Services Report No. 6 or on 22 April 1998 in Community Services Report No. 7

2. HEPATITIS C

There are an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 people infected by Hepatitis C in Ottawa-Carleton, many of whom don't even know it. What measures are in place to prevent the spread of this virus? Are these measures adequate?

3. ADVANCEMENT OF FUNDS PRIOR TO FINAL BUDGET APPROVAL

Councillor Holmes inquired if the Social Services Department would be advancing the next 25 percent of funding to agencies in April. She made reference to Housing Help, an agency that the Region funds, having received 25 percent of their 1997 grant, and having expressed concern about what will happen in April.

Commissioner Stewart referred to Corporate Policy [Section 4.3.8.] that delegates authority to the Treasurer to pay interim grants, prior to Council approval of the budget. The payment is limited to 25 percent of the previous year's grant. He noted the sensitivity of this part of the budget, being 100 percent discretionary money. He confirmed that a Council directive was required for the Department to make subsequent payments. The Department, aware of this issue since early January, had anticipated that some agencies would face cash flow difficulties between the 1 April and 13 May 1998 (final budget approval). The Department's strategy was to deal with agencies experiencing difficulty on a "what-of" basis. Commissioner Stewart stated that it would no longer be an effective strategy if final budget approval was further delayed. In that situation, alternative solutions would need to be identified.

Commissioner Stewart outlined a few options, such as a motion to request Council to direct the Department to grant a further one, two or three-month's equivalent payment. If this was done in a formal way, there was a possibility that other grant streams would seek similar payments. He noted that it was a larger issue than just the funding relationship between the Social Services Department and its community partners.

Commissioner Stewart, responding to a question by Chair Munter, stated that each agency would be affected differently. Those agencies with significant funding from other sources would probably have enough cash flow to manage through this period. It would be more difficult for the smaller, leaner agencies whose core funds come from the Department. In anticipation of these difficulties, he had asked staff to be prepared to recommence payments within a few days of final budget approval. If the approval process was prolonged, a direction from Council would be in order to make a one or two-month payment.

Chair Munter expressed concern that some agencies would have to incur financing costs to bridge the next few months, if they are not advanced funds. Commissioner Stewart confirmed that this scenario was a possibility. He reiterated that the options are to advance payments to all agencies or to resolve issues of particular agencies, as they occur.

Councillor Holmes proposed to move a motion to approve a two-month advance to those agencies, who at the Department's discretion, needed it. Commissioner Stewart suggested including a condition in the motion that continuation of service was jeopardized.

Councillor Loney spoke to the earlier supposition of the possibility of other agencies wanting similar payment. He referred to a direction for the Arts Grants that no money was to be advanced prior to final budget approval (in previous years, up to 50 percent was advanced). He expressed concern that this was an inconsistent message and that a corporate policy, to address unusual budget cycles, was needed. Councillor Loney stated he supported payments being made on a discretionary basis versus a blanket approach.

Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen agreed with Councillor Loney that such a corporate policy was required. She suggested that if advanced payments were made, they should be at a reduced amount. In the event of a budget reduction, agencies would be able to spread the reduction over fewer months.

Moved by D. Holmes

That Council approve the Health and Social Services Departments be given the authorization to advance, up to two months, payment to those groups that the Departments believe would otherwise be unable to deliver the program(s) that the Region funds.

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 8 April 1998 meeting.

CARRIED

PRESENTATION

1. PRESENTATION OF REPORT ON CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES OF ONTARIO
- A/Co-ordinator, Community Services Committee report dated 1 March 1998

Mr. David Calvert, President, OPSEU Local 454

Mr. Calvert stated that the report entitled, "*Put The Children First,*" discusses the workload at the Children's Aid Society (CAS) of Ottawa-Carleton and what may happen as a result of potential provincial cutbacks in funding.

He explained that social services within the province have developed in a patchwork way. Ottawa-Carleton is considered "rich" in children's services with 23 agencies and having 5-8 percent more funding than the provincial average. He stated there have been more budget cuts and reductions in services since the new provincial government was elected. Mr. Calvert cited an example that two years ago, CAS had one of the best group home networks established however, it has been dismantled and privatized. As a result, CAS has had to deal with the subsequent problems. Another example is the cutbacks to the Emergency Circumstances Review Process, which is a way for the government to initially underfund a service and then top up at year-end to accommodate the increased demand for the service.

Mr. Calvert stated there has been a substantial increase in the number and severity of CAS referrals within Ottawa-Carleton, as a result of cuts to welfare and the resulting increased stress placed on families. He opined that the situation may get worse as there is a risk of cuts to early intervention services, such as social services in the school boards, and other agencies that CAS works with to help families before a more complex, high-cost service is required.

Mr. Calvert referred to the findings of the Child Mortality Task Force which examined the deaths of children served by the CAS. He stated the media's perception was that front line workers were responsible for the tragic outcomes. He argued that if front line workers don't have the tools and the time to do their jobs, they cannot be expected to deliver on the mandate for the *Child and Family Services Act*. The bureaucratic response has been to increase the need for accountability and case documentation. In the report, OPSEU agrees with all the initiatives to fix the system, as long as workload is negotiated with the province. Without that, all the other things being put in place, won't serve the children of this Region any better than the current system.

Although the Region no longer funds CAS, Mr. Calvert believes it still has a vested interest in the services provided. He concluded by asking for Committee and Council endorsement for the report.

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council approve:

- 1. That the Regional Government recognize the importance of services to children and in so doing supports the recommendations of the "Put the Children First" report;**
- 2. That this report be sent to the Minister of Community and Social Services**

CARRIED
(dissent D. Beamish)

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Community Services Committee receive this presentation for information.

RECEIVED

RESPONSES TO INQUIRIES/MOTIONS

2. **RESPONSE TO INQUIRY CSC NO. 01(98): IMPLICATIONS OF EARLIER HOSPITAL DISCHARGES**
- Medical Officer of Health report dated 1 March 1998

That the Community Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

3. RESPONSE TO INQUIRY CSC. NO. 02(98): INITIATIVES REGARDING PROSTATE CANCER

- Medical Officer of Health report dated 1 March 1998

Dr. Cushman clarified for Chair Munter the risk/benefit analysis of screening for prostate cancer. He stated the risk of doing more harm is substantial and that a number of professional bodies have indicated that currently, in terms of a public health measure, there are no cost-effective screening tests available that can be applied to wide spread use.

Referring to a statement in the report, Chair Munter asked why there has been a lack of research for causality beyond family history. Dr. Cushman responded the lack of research was likely a combination of lack of funding and the complexity of disease.

Moved by W. Byrne

That the Community Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

4. RESPONSE TO INQUIRY CSC NO. 05(98): SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR GRADES 7 TO 9

- Medical Officer of Health report dated 10 March 1998

Moved by M. McGoldrick-Larsen

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

DEFERRED

COUNCILLOR'S ITEM

5. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY GROUP

- Councillor D. Holmes report dated 1 March 1998

Moved by D. Holmes

That Council approve the establishment of the Environmental Health Advisory Group, as per the Terms of Reference attached to the report.

CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Moved by W. Byrne

That the Rules of Procedure be waived to add consideration of issues related to ambulance service and membership of the Social Housing Working Group to the agenda, and;

That the Community Services Committee move IN-CAMERA to discuss legal issues and matters related to identifiable individuals, under Sections 11(f) and Section 11(b) respectively, of the Procedures By-law (112 of 1994).

CARRIED

Moved by W. Byrne

That the Community Services Committee meeting resume in Open Session.

CARRIED

APPOINTMENTS: SOCIAL HOUSING WORKING GROUP

Moved by A. Loney

That Community Services Committee and Council approve the appointments of Marni Capp, Planning Department and Linda Capperauld, Social Services Department as the two regional staff representatives on the Working Group.

CARRIED

Moved by A. Loney

That the Community Services Committee and Council approve:

- 1. The appointments of Mr. Derek Ballantyne, Ms. Catherine Boucher, Mr. John Cook, Ms. Olga Tasci, Ms. Sandra Vezina, and Ms. Louise Fisher, as voting members on the Social Housing Working Group;**

2. **The appointments of Marnie Cappe, Planning Department and Linda Capperauld, Social Services Department as the two regional staff representatives on the Working Group, and;**
3. **The participation of non-voting members, representing other housing providers, social service agencies and individuals, with experience or expertise in social housing to complement the Working Group's efforts.**

CARRIED, as amended

Moved by A. Loney

That Council be requested to waive the notice required under the Procedure By-law and consider this item at its 8 April 1998 meeting.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

16 April 1998

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR