

MINUTES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON

THURSDAY 18 MAY 2000

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

12:00 P.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Munter

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

Regrets: L. Davis, D. Holmes

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Community Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the regular meeting of 4 May 2000, as amended at the request of Councillor W. Byrne.

CARRIED, as amended

PRESENTATIONS

1. TRENDS ON POPULATION AGING - IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING
- Committee Co-ordinator report dated 2 May 00

Mr. Hubert Frenken, member of the Board of Directors of the Council on Aging, made a presentation to Committee outlining facts that should be considered in planning for future programs and budgets. He made reference to the 1999 Fact Book on Aging, produced by The Council on Aging.

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

2. Items requiring Council approval will be presented on 14 June 2000 in Community Services Report No. 47.

Mr. Frenken noted that from 1996 to 2026 the percent of population in the Ottawa area that will be 65 and over will increase from 11.1% to 18.9% of the total population. He noted that the corresponding dependency ration will increase from 17.6 to 29.1. This ratio compares the 65 and over group to the 20-64 population.

Mr. Frenken noted that policy makers should be reminded that aging is very much a women's issue as 56% of the population in the 65-74 age group are women, 63% are women in the 75-84 age group, and 74% are women in the 85+ age group.

Mr. Frenken noted that the creation of the new City of Ottawa provides a unique opportunity to develop policies and programs that will reflect the needs of the aging population of Ottawa-Carleton. He noted that the potential will exist to coordinate the efforts of diverse groups and agencies serving the aging population, and to bring existing services together in one area.

In reply to a question from Councillor A. Loney, Mr. Frenken stated that it is likely that as the population ages, there may be an impact on future retirement age, and older individuals working longer and postponing retirement.

Councillor W. Byrne inquired what type of funding the Council on Aging receives. Mr. Frenken replied that the City of Ottawa provides an annual grant of \$47,000, and the province provides the Council with the equivalent of 2 grants for elderly person centres.

Councillor Byrne suggested that the Council should approach the Transition Board with a request for consideration of a budget allocation in the 2001 agenda. She noted that groups serving the aging population should join forces and ensure that the Transition Board is aware of their future needs.

Mr. Alex Cullen, Executive Director of the Council on Aging, stated that there is a significant demand for service that is not presently being met due to funding limitations. He noted that the Council has written to the Transition Board, with a suggestion that some of the savings to be realized from amalgamation should be directed towards services and programs for this growing sector of the population. He added that the Council is making a similar presentation to all local municipalities.

In reply to an inquiry from Councillor Byrne, Mr. Cullen confirmed that the Council has met with other organizations, groups and partners to discuss coordination of services and identify potential funding opportunities in the new City.

In response to a question from Councillor Byrne, Mr. Cullen noted that the Council has worked with the Health Department in the past on various initiatives.

That the Community Services Committee receive this presentation for information.

RECEIVED

2. AMBULANCE HEALTH SERVICES: RESPONSE BY THE PROVINCE TO THE FUNDING REQUEST FOR CAPITAL BUDGET AND SHORT TERM ACTION PLAN
- Medical Officer of Health Report dated 3 May 00

Dr. Robert Cushman, Medical Officer of Health, summarized the report for members of Committee, noting that there are patient care issues which will be affected by the province's refusal to cost share the capital budget and short term action requests. He noted that both requests are an integral part of the ambulance system.

Dr. Cushman advised that in December 1999 Regional Council approved a Capital Budget of \$3,568,500, based on anticipated 50/50 or \$1,784,250 funding from the province. The province has agreed to pay \$232,631 or 25% of the cost to replace the existing defibrillators, leaving the Region to pay the remaining \$697,681 (75%) and provided no additional funding on the requested items.

Dr. Cushman advised that in Council's February 2000 direction to staff, it was anticipated that the Region would fund 50% of up to 4 to 6 million dollars required for interim requirements which would provide some immediate relief to the problems of the existing ambulance system.

Dr. Cushman noted that the Short Term Action Plan consists of 5 items that will achieve some interim relief or improve the existing system. Since the request was made, the Province has not agreed to any funding for interim measures. Dr. Cushman proposed that members of the Community Services Committee may want to confirm their commitment to funding 50% of the cost, at a total of \$1.8 million dollars to be directed where it is most needed, in staffing to enhance emergency call coverage that would provide improvements in response time.

Dr. Cushman noted that the funds requested for the capital items were previously approved by Council, but the short term action items require Council and Transition Board approval. He added that these expenditures are inevitable and required to ensure there is no problem with patient care.

In response to an inquiry from Chair Munter, Dr. Cushman confirmed that if Council re-affirms their commitment to 50% of the requested amount, \$1.8 million, that this amount will have a positive impact on patient care, response times and service. He added that this is an opportunity to improve the system.

The total cost for the ambulance system is estimated at 20-25 million dollars, and funding has not yet reached those levels.

In reply to a query from Chair Munter, Dr. Cushman confirmed that in order of priority the requested items for the short term action plan are as follows:

- Staffing and vehicle enhancement (emergency) - \$2,800,000
- Fleet Maintenance - \$150,000
- Training and Orientation - \$100,000
- Staffing and Vehicle Enhancements (Non-Emergency) - \$481,310
- Supply and Inventory Control - \$60,000

Dr. Cushman advised that if Council confirms its commitment for 50% of the requested funds, there will be a shortfall and staff will have to re-evaluate and re-prioritize the items.

Chair Munter inquired whether it is possible to allocate \$1.8 million dollars to the short term action plan in 2000. Mr. Kent Kirkpatrick, Commissioner of Finance, noted that the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee will be dealing with the disposition of the 1999 operating surplus to the Region-wide Capital Reserve Fund. He noted that following approval of that report it is anticipated that there will be sufficient funds in the account to provide for this requirement on a one time basis.

Dr. Cushman confirmed that the capital budget priorities are as follows:

Operations Related:

- New Ambulances - \$700,000
- Additional Medical Equipment - \$210,000
- Maintenance Investment - \$172,000
- On-board Data Collection System - \$150,000
- Unforeseen contingency - \$250,000
- Additional/Replacement Medical Equipment for Existing Ambulances - \$129,000
- Communication - \$100,000
- New City of Ottawa logos - \$64,500

Dispatch Related:

- AMPDS - \$50,000
- Regional Radio System - \$500,000
- GPS/AVL (vehicles and dispatch) - \$225,000
- Consultant - \$150,000

Chair Munter commented that the Minister of Health was recently quoted as saying that the province will pay 100% of the costs associated with municipalities assuming dispatch services, and that the Region should operate on this assumption. Dr Cushman clarified that there are a number of items associated with dispatch that are related to the emergency call centre and may not be funded 100% by the province.

Chair Munter suggested that Committee proceed with the previous plan to provide 50% of the requested budget for both the capital items and the short term action plan, contingent on approval by Council and the Transition Board.

Councillor D. Beamish requested clarification of the funds under discussion. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that the 2000 budget as approved by Council constituted gross spending authority of \$3.6 million dollars based on a cost sharing agreement of 50% with the province, which would result in 1.8 million dollars in expenditures by the Region. That spending authority has been approved, but would require consideration by the Transition Board. The report previously considered by the Transition Board was based on spending 50% regional funds, but is now based on 100%. He noted that as the nature of request has changed significantly it will have to be re-evaluated. The funds are available in the Region wide capital reserve fund should Council and Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee approve the staff recommendation.

In response to a question from Councillor Beamish, Dr. Cushman clarified that the budget requests associated with the short term action plan are operational in nature, rather than capital. He reiterated that a 50% contribution by the Region does not fully meet the first priority listed in the short term action plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Beamish, Dr. Cushman noted that the figures presented are based on start dates of April 1 and are annualized. He confirmed that if operational funds are increased for 2000 they are not likely to be decreased in 2001, so the cost will become ongoing, but these are required costs for a quality service.

Councillor Beamish commented that based on this assumption, the Transition Board will be required to increase the budget by 7.2 million dollars for 2000 and 2001, if cost sharing is not achieved from the province.

Chair Munter suggested that the items be prioritized for the existing capital dollars already identified in the budget. He suggested that Committee allocate ½ of the full amount requested for the short term action plan contingent on a report coming forward from Finance noting that the funds are available.

Mr. Kirkpatrick confirmed that a report will be coming forward recommending that 5 million dollars be placed in the region wide reserve fund.

Councillor Beamish inquired whether there are any other anticipated draws on these funds to be placed in the reserve. Mr. Kirkpatrick responded that there may be some potential items or draws from the Social Services Department, but there have not been any items formally identified for those funds at the present time. Chair Munter stated that the request should go forward to Council with a report from Finance.

Councillor Beamish stated that he would like to see any other requests for funding out of the reserve fund identified in this report. He urged Committee to provide the complete funding and advise the Transition Board what the real cost of the ambulance service is, as this will have to be funded on the future.

Councillor A. Loney inquired what problems other ambulance providers have been encountering on this issue. Dr. Cushman noted that the Department is hopeful that the province will recognize that ambulance services are under-funded in the province and are hopeful that cost sharing on some basis will be achieved.

Councillor Loney inquired whether bulk ordering of ambulances results in faster delivery of the vehicles. Dr. Cushman noted that pooled purchases result in a better price for municipalities, but there is a long lead time between ordering and receiving the vehicles.

Councillor Loney commented that if the ambulances are not delivered in this year, it is possible that some of the immediate pressing needs for funding and vehicle enhancements will not be required until next year.

Councillor Loney questioned whether more service can be provided without new ambulances. Dr. Cushman replied that he is confident that the service can be improved by increasing time on the road with existing vehicles.

Councillor M. McGoldrick-Larsen made reference to Councillor Beamish's comment concerning possible additional requirements for funding of social services items. This should be itemized in relation to a reduced Ontario works caseload in a future report.

Chair Munter stated that he does not support funding 100% of the required costs as the province has a responsibility to cost share this service. He read a motion into the record supporting funding of 50% for both the capital budget and short term action plan.

Chair Munter noted that the short term action plan will serve to put more vehicles and hours of service on the road. He noted that it is important to avoid setting the precedent of paying for 100% of the service when the province has a responsibility to fund 50%.

Councillor Loney inquired whether the short term action plan is for the full year or from July 1, 2000. Dr. Cushman noted that the original intent was to budget the resources from 1 April, but realistically it will be 1 July before these items can be implemented.

In reply to a query from Councillor Loney, Dr. Cushman noted that the ambulance service providers are willing to provide additional service, and have many part time staff willing to work.

Councillor Loney expressed support for the motion, indicating that the province should be reminded of its responsibility to cost share the service.

Councillor H Kreling inquired whether there presently ambulances sitting idle. Dr. Cushman noted that there is an issue of system design, with certain hours over-serviced, and certain hours under-serviced, and funding will be used to get as many units on the road during peak times as possible.

In reply to a question from Councillor Kreling, Dr. Cushman stated that in principle, the province has made a commitment to fund ambulance services on a 50/50 basis, and to pay 100% of dispatch services.

Councillor Kreling noted that he has continually supported funding ambulance services in Ottawa-Carleton, as the community is not being well served, and there is a need to prepare to assume the full service. He noted that the province has not maintained its commitment to fund 50% of its share in other communities, including Toronto.

In response to an inquiry from Councillor Beamish, Ms. Joanne Myles, Manager, Land Ambulance, noted that in the case of Toronto the City paid more than its share in the beginning, however the province now pays 50%, and dispatch is funded 100%. She added that she would have to confirm this information.

Councillor Beamish inquired whether there are presently vehicles idle during peak periods. Ms. Myles replied that there are spare vehicles held in reserve in the event of potential breakdown, and these will be used to add hours during peak periods, with an associated increase in required maintenance.

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

That staff proceed with the priority items in the approved 2000 Capital budget, namely new ambulances, additional medical equipment and maintenance investment, not withstanding the province's refusal to fund it's share of these necessary investments; and,

FURTHER THAT Committee and Council allocate \$1.8 million to implement the short-term ambulance action plan, prioritizing more hours of service and more ambulances on the road in 2000, not withstanding the province's refusal to fund it's share of these improvements, subject to the Finance Department identifying the source of funding, prior to Council approval; and,

FURTHER THAT the foregoing is subject to Transition Board approval.

CARRIED as amended

SOCIAL SERVICES

3. PARTNERS FOR JOBS: PROGRESS REPORT

- Social Services Commissioner report dated 25 April 00

Mr. Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services, summarized the Partners for Jobs Progress Report for members of Committee. He outlined the progress made to date, mandate and action phase of the project, accomplishments and next steps. Commissioner Stewart summarized the following key points including: an employment strategy targeted to unemployed and under-employed residents; an action phase with a mandate to implement strategic directions, priority actions and to develop new partnerships.

Commissioner Stewart noted that there were some significant accomplishments including approximately 34 new partnerships initiated and underway, the implementation of the pilot programs outlined in the original report, policy and program changes that reflect changes to service delivery, emergency assistance and employment transition fund in the 2000 budget, and creative job retention strategies. He added that the Department has increased market communication about its programs and is advertising and looking for new partners. There have also been gross savings in terms of social assistance not paid as a result of participation in the programs.

The full text of the presentation is available on file with the Committee Co-ordinator.

Commissioner Stewart introduced Ms. Sherri Torjman, author of the Caledon Institute of Social Policy *Survival of the Fittest Employment Policy*. Ms. Torjman summarized the highlights of the study, noting that the partners for jobs program is a wonderful initiative, and a way to address issues of unemployment and under-employment, with community based problem solving. Policy barriers that keep people out of employment system and labor market, and components and a description of the employment system are analyzed in the report.

Ms. Torjman noted that there have been substantial modifications to existing programs in the last few years, and a common weakness has been identified for all of the programs. All programs have a “creaming” effect, wherein the people targeted are those who need the least help possible, and program funding is based on the numbers of people who obtain employment. There are very few transition supports for people moving away from these programs, and training and apprenticeship supports are lacking.

Ms. Torjman suggested that the first step for the Region would be to examine the Ontario Works program and the barriers in place, as well as child care and transportation issues. She suggested that the Region could play a leadership role in 4 areas: customized training; transition supports; job retention; and access to capital.

Chair Munter commended Ms. Torjman and Commissioner Stewart on the reports.

Councillor C. Doucet noted that many people have expressed great difficulty in making the transition off of programs, with a loss in subsidized daycare, housing and transportation. Councillor Doucet suggested the issue may be one of inadequate wage levels, rather than high taxes. He noted that this issue is difficult to address at the local level. Ms. Torjman noted that the job retention issue is one that includes both wages and services, and the Institute is working on a report to examine this issue.

In response to a comment from Councillor Doucet, Ms. Torjman advised that every effort is made to write both the long and short version of reports in order to communicate effectively, and spread the information.

Councillor W. Byrne complimented Ms. Torjman on the comprehensive report. She noted that many areas were addressed that impact on poverty. She inquired whether the findings of the report will also be presented to provincial and federal level standing committees or the Transition Board. Ms. Torjman noted that this information has been widely distributed, and may be presented to the Transition Board if requested.

Councillor Byrne suggested that a copy of the report be forwarded to the Minister of Finance, to reinforce the importance of these programs.

Councillor A. Loney inquired whether there is a follow-up on individuals who take jobs and then return as clients of social services within one year. Commissioner Stewart commented that these situations are somewhat wage driven, but are complex. He added that the Department has just taken 2 staff and reassigned them as Workforce retention workers, who will build a caseload from people who are leaving programs and in order to assist them to sustain work activity, and provide information on supports and services available.

Commissioner Stewart commented that there is a misconception that the as the economy is booming, there is not an unemployment problem. He noted that there is a mismatch between skill levels and available employment, with 22,800 on the caseload in the area.

In response to a question from Councillor Loney, Commissioner Stewart expressed confidence that the Partners for Jobs program has enough vitality and flexibility in strategies that it can have an impact. He added that the issue of education is fundamental to the success of the program.

Councillor Loney suggested that an apprenticeship program to attract mechanics to an organization like OC Transpo would be a positive initiative for the corporation and workers. Commissioner Stewart noted that OC Transpo has been very cooperative in partnering on the job issue.

That the Community Services Committee and Council receive the Partners for Jobs Progress Report for information.

RECEIVED

4. ALLOCATIONS OF ONE-TIME 100% PROVINCIAL GRANT OF \$550,000 FOR DOMICILIARY HOSTELS
- Social Services Commissioner report dated 27 April 00

That the Community Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

5. REVISED ONTARIO WORKS EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE FUNDING MODEL AND ONTARIO WORKS SERVICE PLAN
- Social Services Commissioner report dated 26 April 00

Mr. Dick Stewart, Commissioner of Social Services, made a detailed presentation on the Ontario Works Employment Assistance Funding Model. He highlighted that the new elements of the system are based on the requirement to earn revenue based on successful community placements, training and employment. The new structures are flexible, however the employment assistance budget is not sufficient to assist clients in becoming part of the local labour market. This budget will be supplemented from other areas. He added that community placement targets are also imposed.

Commissioner Stewart stated that there are 3 levels of services: basic, intermediate and advanced. Municipal strategies have been developed in two key areas to optimize results through community participation and Jobs First. There are three types of Community placement: matched, which are placements with non-profit organizations; self-initiated which capture volunteer activity; and community projects which encompass special projects with community groups and organizations.

The detailed presentation is available from the Committee Co-ordinator.

In response to an inquiry from Councillor Beamish, Commissioner Stewart noted that the Department will work diligently to reach 100% of the targets, and have been working to increase community partners and placement positions.

In reply to a question from Chair Munter, Commissioner Stewart noted that there is a difference between matched and self-initiated community placements, however all placements must be accountable in order to be included as part of the targets. He confirmed that third party documentation is acceptable for volunteer hours.

That Community Services Committee and Council approve the projections for active participation and the budget estimates for employment assistance for the Ontario Works Service Plan 2000-2002 to be submitted for approval to the Provincial Area Office.

CARRIED

6. FAMSAC - AN EMERGENCY FOOD SERVICE IN NEPEAN

- Social Services Commissioner report dated 25 April 00

- Response to CS Inquiry No. 26(00)

Councillor A. Loney suggested that the possibility of available space for FAMSAC be discussed with the City of Nepean, as they have a number of facilities in Bells Corners that may be suitable. He noted that an inventory of all buildings and facilities in the new City should be conducted to accommodate situations like the one described in the report in a cooperative manner.

Chair Munter stated that Councillor McGoldrick-Larsen indicated that FAMSAC has seen the report and are satisfied with it at this time.

Councillor W. Byrne noted that this possibility was previously investigated when groups in the Bayshore area were looking for new space, and the City of Nepean was approached and advised that there was no available space in any of their facilities.

With the concurrence of Committee, Councillor Loney directed Commissioner Stewart to contact the City of Nepean to determine if there is any space available in any of their facilities to accommodate the needs of FAMSAC.

That the Community Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

COUNCILLOR'S ITEM

7. NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY - LOCAL INITIATIVE
- Committee Co-ordinator report dated 9 May 00

That the item on National Aboriginal Day - Local Initiative be deferred to the meeting of 1 June 2000.

CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

15 June 2000

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR