

District Services Board Notes

Year-end surplus projected

At the September meeting of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB), chief financial officer Connie Morphet told the board that a year-end municipal share surplus of \$189,928 is projected. This surplus includes an Ontario Works surplus of \$17,907 while Social Housing is under budget by \$65,492 as is Emergency Medical Services by \$107,798. In addition, non-reserve interest revenue is forecasted to be \$1,269 under budget.

2015 budget to proceed

DSB CAO Fern Dominelli explained that the DSB's 'lame duck' (restricted powers) period occurs following the election, unlike municipalities, and that they would proceed with the 2015 budget before the election as they have the authority to do so.

The Territory Without Municipal Organization (TWMO) candidates for the DSB have all been acclaimed, he noted, and will again be represented by Edgar Lovelace (Dawson and Robinson), Bruce Killah and David Leonard.

Funding announcements

The DSB received word from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) that it would be receiving \$191,635 in Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding for 2014-15.

The DSB also learned that that it received \$160,000 for its 2014-15 funding for the Investment in Affordable Housing pro-

gram. Allocation for the final five years of the program (2015-20) will be based on the new census data and will be provided once this data becomes available.

Mr. Dominelli explained that the majority of these dollars are spent on the Ontario Renovates program. This money could be used to construct new affordable housing, but with less and less funding, "we can't do much."

EMS reports

The board learned that there is money coming from the province to replace aging defibrillators, among them those within the DSB.

The North East Local Health Integration Network review of the non-urgent patient transfer system was also noted by the board, which is still in operation and has had much success over the 17 months. A total of 939 patients (from Manitoulin and Espanola hospitals) have been moved between facilities with crews travelling 181,675 kilometres.

Overall utilization is 68 percent, which is very high, Mr. Dominelli said, "and indicative of a system that is functional and efficient."

There will be requests for proposals coming soon from the Northeast LHIN to find a permanent solution to the non-urgent patient transfer program, which is still a pilot project, "and I'm looking forward to that," Mr. Dominelli said.

Mr. Dominelli also spoke of community

paramedicine, a push by the Ontario government that will see paramedics assuming a larger role in community health other than just EMS services. The DSB recently partnered with the Cochrane and Algoma DSB to create a joint submission for funds from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for a paramedicine pilot project, which has been approved to the tune of \$212,000.

Some paramedicine projects could include blood pressure clinics as well as follow-ups with patients who were discharged from hospital and returned home by the paramedics themselves.

Gore Bay's ambulance station will be included in the pilot project.

Jobs for Youth

Central Manitoulin DSB rep Derek Stephens commended the DSB, on another successful summer of Jobs for Youth, which covers the cost of summer employment at area businesses for at-risk youth or youth from disadvantaged communities.

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

Mr. Dominelli attended the Association

of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference with the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) and the Sudbury East Municipal Association, meeting with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. They were able to speak to the minister on the locally-relevant topic of non-urgent patient transfers and the fact that southern Ontario non-urgent patient transfers are funded 100 percent by the province.

Mr. Dominelli also met with Minister of Education Liz Sandals on the topic of what the province plans to do with space for full-day Kindergartens in small schools and the topic of surplus schools and the possibility of them being transferred over to the DSB.

With representatives from the MMAH, the groups discussed concerns with the funding formula for affordable housing as the statistics are skewed since information previously gathered on the now-defunct long form census forms is no longer available. (These forms were discontinued by the federal government prior to the last national census on the grounds that they sought too much information that the government deemed was private).