



MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DISTRICT
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

CONSEIL D'ADMINISTRATION DES SERVICES
SOCIAUX DU DISTRICT DE MANITOULIN-SUDBURY

210 Mead Boulevard, Espanola, ON P5E 1R9
Telephone: (705) 862-7850
Facsimile: (705) 862-7805
<http://www.msdsab.net>

210, boulevard Mead, Espanola ON P5E 1R9
Téléphone: (705) 862-7850
Télécopieur: (705) 862-7805
<http://www.msdsab.net>

MINUTES
of the February 23, 2006
MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DSSAB BOARD MEETING
held at Espanola's DSSAB Mead Street Board Room

Present: Pat Best, Fern Bidal, Collin Bourgeois, Ray Chénier, Earle Freeborn, Leslie Gamble, Frank Gillis, Bruce Killah, Bud Rohn, Richard Stephens, Dale Van Every

Staff: Gary R. Champagne, CAO
Suzanne Bouchard, E.A. (Recording Secretary)
Connie Morphet, Director of Finance
Fern Dominelli, Director of Social Services
Peter Bradley, Manager, Housing Services
Aurel Malo, HR Services
Jeff Horseman, Director of EMS
Karen Dominick, Community Programs Supervisor
Iain Stephen, Information Systems Manager

Regrets: Mike Lehoux, Laurier Low, Maureen Van Alstine

Media: Cindy Laundry, Mid-North Monitor
Michael Erskine and Joy Simon, Manitoulin Expositor

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Ray Chénier, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Fern Bidal asked that items listed under 7.2.1.5. Finance and Administration be moved to item 7.1.1. Finance Committee.

Resolution No. 06-07 Moved by: Dale Van Every **Seconded by:** Collin Bourgeois
THAT the agenda be adopted as amended. **Carried**

3.0 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4.0 CLOSED SESSION

Resolution No. 06-08 Moved by: Pat Best **Seconded by:** Fern Bidal
THAT the Board move into closed session at 10:05 a.m. to discuss Human Resources and Property matters. **Carried**

Resolution No. 06-09 Moved by: Dale Van Every **Seconded by:** Fern Bidal
THAT the Board adjourn this closed session at 10:25 a.m. **Carried**

5.0 MINUTES

5.1. Adoption of Minutes of January 26, 2006

Resolution No. 06-10 Moved by: Collin Bourgeois **Seconded by:** Bud Rohn
THAT the minutes of the January 26, 2006 Board meeting be approved. **Carried**

5.2 Board Computers

Iain spoke to the identification of the “server queuing difficulties” that explained why Board members had not received any of the DSSAB generated correspondence sent to them since approximately February 7th. Iain Stephen explained that he was in the process of preparing a Report on the different implementation options to address the issue.

Iain informed those Board members who spoke to other individual computer problems they were experiencing that he or Greg would have to see each individual and his/her computer in order to assess the problems unique to each.

6.0. BUSINESS ITEMS

6.1. Closed Session Report

Items discussed during the Closed Session included

- Wikwemikong 2006/07 EMS Budget
- Espanola Ambulance Station purchase
- Killarney and Espanola Ambulance Station schedules
- H.R. matters

Resolution No. 06-11 Moved by: Bruce Killah **Seconded by:** Collin Bourgeois

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board approve the purchase of the Queensway property in Espanola for the purposes of the Espanola Land Ambulance Station at a cost of no more than \$180,000 (price includes required renovations); and
THAT the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB self-finance the cost of renovations and the purchase of the approved new Espanola Land Ambulance station with the required sums taken from the DSSAB's Working Fund Reserve which is to be reimbursed at no interest to the DSSAB over a twenty-five year period ending in the year 2030. **Carried**

Resolution No. 06-12 Moved by: Fern Bidal **Seconded by:** Les Gamble

THAT the Board approve the Budget Committee's recommendation that the 2006/2007 Wikwemikong Ambulance Service operating budget be set at \$1,079,929 and that said budget be submitted to the MOHLTC. **Carried**

6.2. Province's Affordable Housing Program (AHP) Initiative

The CAO reminded members that the housing programs that the province introduced under the umbrella of the AHP initiative were first discussed at the October, 2005 Board meeting. The DSSAB's Administration at that time reported that it was of the opinion that the administrative hoops, conditions and funding attached to each of the involved programs available to us made it difficult for the Administration to recommend that the Board proceed with the implementation of these AHP initiatives in our Districts. Pointing out that this opinion might change once the MMAH's promised program Guidelines were available or once the Ministry had had the opportunity to address the DSSAB's identified concerns.

Citing the Housing Department AHP Report provided in their Board packages, Gary indicated that little had changed since October. The DSSAB's Administration remains unfortunately unable to indicate that it would be in the best interest of the DSSAB to take

up the administration and implementation of the AHP program initiatives as currently designed and funded.

Referring to his Department's Report, Peter Bradley spoke to some of the program design concerns around the viability of the Affordable Housing Program in primarily rural and remote Northern communities, the reported Federal government inflexibility re: the "In situ" matter and the continued absence of promised program guidelines. The Report includes background and analysis information as well as the proposed resolution that Administration was to come back with for Board consideration at their March meeting.

6.3. Best Start (Phase 1) Integrated Implementation Plan

The proposed Best Start Phase 1 Integrated Implementation Plan was circulated to Board members. Although the results of the recent Federal Election have changed the direction of the previous government's proposed Best Start Program, the DSSAB is being asked by the Province to continue the planning process.

The Plan must be approved by the DSSAB Board, as well as by the School Boards and the District Health Unit that operate within our service management boundaries by no later than March 31, 2006.

It is very unclear at this point how much funding will be provided for the Program in future years. Board members expressed a feeling of discomfort with the uncertainties at hand. The concern is that the province may well try to leave municipalities with a very large financial commitment expectation if and when the Federal government stops funding the Best Start initiative Program. .

Karen Dominick spoke to the identified children's services envelopes to which our already received \$1.38 million allocations were being applied.

Board members were clear in expressing the view that while they were ready to see the DSSAB continue to coordinate the Best Start community planning process as directed by the province, they also clearly expressed the view that no ongoing municipal dollar commitments should be going to any of the Best Start initiatives; that if and when the province requests a municipal share to meet Best Start commitments this would be brought to the Board's attention for its further review and determination.

The Chair instructed the DSSAB's Administration to prepare a DSSAB position paper and draft resolution on the Best Start initiative for review at the Board's March meeting.

6.4. Land Ambulance Services 50-50 Funding Announcement

Following up on circulated correspondence re: the Premier's announcement, Gary reported that, in the absence of any details re: the announcement he could only say that it is Ontario's stated intent:

- To move to providing municipalities the full 50% of the Land Ambulance services funding that municipalities always claimed they were entitled to per the funding agreement stipulated when land ambulance service management was divested to UTMs and DSSABs;
- To reach true 50/50 funding in 2008; and
- To provide \$300 Million to that end over a three year period beginning with the 2006 EMS budget; and
- To provide the additional \$300 Million of provincial funding in three instalments: \$50 M in 2006; \$100 M in 2007 and \$150 M in 2008.

Responding to Board member questions, the CAO noted that:

- he did not know what portion of the additional \$50 M available in 2006 would be forthcoming to the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB;
- on news of the 50/50 announcement he informed the province that it would not reach true 50-50 funding until such time as the MOHLTC began to adopt the practice of paying the TWOMO share of the municipality's share of the EMS budget in the budget year in question as was the practice of those other Ministries that DSSABs have cost-sharing arrangements with.

Noting that recently received correspondence from the MOHLTC's Emergency Health Services (EHS) Branch seemed to suggest that some of these new provincial dollars would allow the DSSAB to direct the municipal dollars saved through this announcement to other EMS pressure points was rather confusing in that it would suggest that the MOHLTC is asking us to continue to 100% fund certain approved service expansions or enhancements, and the reaction of Board members to same, Gary assured the Chair that he would endeavour to get Ministry clarification on the matter and hopefully be in a position to provide the Board with further specifics as to how the announcement would affect the DSSAB at the March meeting.

7.0. REPORTS

7.1. BOARD COMMITTEES

7.1.1. Finance Committee

(i) **Interim Audit Letter** - Fern Bidal reported that the Committee had looked into the details of the Interim Audit and was satisfied with the details of the written reply to same provided by the DSSAB's Director of Finance.

He added that the Budget planning process was moving along well and according to schedule. He noted that the Committee was confident that it could present the Board with its recommended Year 2006 budget at the March meeting.

Following up on a point previously raised by Richard Stephens, Frank Gillis expressed the view that the DSSAB should in future years endeavour to have the coming year's budget prepared prior to the end of the current year's operations, that is to say by December 31st in lieu of March 31st of the year being budgeted.

The Chair concluded by noting that while the DSSAB was preparing its budget within the timeframes established for DSSABs by the province and had always done so, the DSSAB's Board could certainly choose to try to have the annual budgeting process advanced to see its next year budget completed before the end of the calendar year in question.

Mr. Chénier asked the Budget Committee to look into the possibility of proceeding accordingly in future years.

Resolution No. 06-13 Moved by: Earle Freeborn **Seconded by:** Bruce Killah
That the Board accept the report of the Finance Committee. **Carried**

7.1.2. EMS Planning Committee

Les Gamble reported that the EMS Planning Committee had met on February 22nd and was now prepared to bring their recommendations to the Finance Committee for their consideration in the preparation of the 2006 Budget year to be presented to the Board at its March meeting.

He indicated that the Committee's recommendations spoke to modified and enhanced service coverage in the Sudbury-East region that potentially affected all three stations in that region, enhanced service coverage in the Manitoulin region that directly affected one station, and the possible introduction of Lead Hands across all four service regions.

Les pointed out that while some of the recommended changes could be introduced in relatively short order, others could be delayed until the due consultations with the affected municipalities and OPSEU had occurred.

Les, through the Chair asked Aurel Malo to briefly speak to some of the HR matters that needed to be more fully discussed and analysed, in consultation with OPSEU and other stakeholders, before any implementation could take place.

Resolution No. 06-14 Moved by: Les Gamble **Seconded by:** Earle Freeborn
That the Board accept the report of the EMS Planning Committee. **Carried**

7.2. CAO REPORT

7.2.1. Operational Management Reports

The following Departmental Reports were circulated:

- **Ontario Works Report**
- **Social Housing Report**
- **Emergency Medical Services Report**
- The Children's Services Report this month consisted of the item 6.3 update on the status of the province's Best Start initiative and the Manitoulin-Sudbury Network's Best Start Phase I Integrated Implementation Plan.

There were no questions on either the Social Housing or EMS Operational management Reports presented.

Ontario Works Report

Fern Dominelli briefly elaborated upon MCSS indicated changes to its Ontario Disability Support Programme (ODSP). Effective April 1st, able-bodied spouses who are not caregivers will be required to be referred to our Ontario Works offices for employment services placement and training assistance services just as is already the case for other dependent adult family members.

Fern noted that while our Administration agrees with the underpinning objectives of the changes, the impact and the cost of these additional OW Department demands will be carefully monitored to determine if they are indeed offset by the cost savings that will allegedly be generated by these changes. Fern indicated that we are awaiting further details on these ODSP changes from the Ministry (MCSS) and that we would be sharing these with Board members. Fern indicated that MCSS expects all of its 47 CMSMs and DSSABs to develop "Joint Implementation Plans" re: the expectations and commitments of each re: this new ODSP change.

Dale van Every asked why the spouse of an ODSP recipient would have to go to the OW office for work placement and assistance if they were not asking the OW Office for financial assistance. He asked why they would be expected to go out and get a job. He noted that this was starting to sound a lot like state dictatorship.

Fern pointed out that the DSSAB pays 20% of an individual's social assistance cheque whether the person is on OW or ODSP. He pointed out that an able bodied single person on OW receives \$536/month and a disabled single person on ODSP receives \$901.

Fern pointed out that a social assistance recipient's cheque increased in accordance with each dependent family member in the household.

He noted that anything we could do to assist recipients and/or their able bodied spouse and dependents find work and reduce the extent of their dependency on the public purse was, in principle, a good thing at both the individual level and at the collective community level.

Les Gamble asked if someone who was on ODSP was on for the rest of their life or if they at some time qualified for CPP. Fern explained that it depended on whether or not the person had contributed to CPP. If not, depending on qualification for ODSP benefits, he could be on ODSP until he qualified for OAS.

Finance and Administration Report – Connie explained that the DSSAB's auditors would be in to complete the year end audit in the coming week.

Resolution No. 06-15 Moved by: Richard Stephens **Seconded by:** Mike Lehoux
 THAT the CAO's Operational Management and Strategic Issues Reports be
 accepted. **Carried**

8.0. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1. Municipality of French River (Letter dated February 2, 2006)

Collin asked if there would be a reply provided to the Municipality of French River letter asking for a meeting re: possible EMS coverage changes at the Noëlville station or if these would simply be implemented and the municipality informed of the changes once they were done.

Board Chair Ray Chénier indicated that as a member of the EMS Committee who had been present at the prior night's EMS Committee meeting, Mr. Bourgeois knew fully well what was going to transpire over the next month and knew as well that the required consultations with the stakeholders of the area would take place before any final decision would be taken.

Mr. Bourgeois retorted by noting that consultation is one thing but that consultation that comes after the budget is struck is simply a matter of going through the motions of the exercise.

Les Gamble, EMS Committee Chair, intervened to state that the only recommendations that the Committee supported be acted on without going through the due consultation steps discussed in Committee were those proposed for the Mindemoya and Killarney stations and that the changes proposed to the Hagar and Noëlville changes be contingent upon the Board's conclusions at the end of the due consultation steps. Ray Chénier indicated that the Committee had arrived at that recommendation to the Board and that the Board would make its decision known with adoption of the Budget recommendation to come after its meeting with the EMS Committee.

Fern Bidal, Budget Committee Chair, noted that he saw it as only reasonable that the Board only make its decision re: recommended Hagar and Noëlville station changes at the end of its consultations.

9.0. ADJOURNMENT

Resolution No. 06-16 Moved by: Dale Van Every **Seconded by:** Bud Rohn
 THAT we do now adjourn at 11:50 a.m. until the next regular meeting to be held at 10:00 a.m. on March 23, 2006 in the DSSAB's Espanola Mead Blvd. Board Room. **Carried**

Chair

Chief Administrative Officer
 (Secretary Treasurer of the Corporation)