



MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DISTRICT
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

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

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MINUTES
of the January 26, 2006
MANITOULIN-SUDBURY DSSAB BOARD MEETING
held at the Espanola DSSAB Mead Street Board Room

Present: Pat Best, Collin Bourgeois, Ray Chénier, Earle Freeborn, Leslie Gamble, Frank Gillis, Bruce Killah, Mike Lehoux, Laurier Low, Bud Rohn, Richard Stephens, Maureen Van Alstine, 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

Regrets: Fern Bidal

Media: Cindy Laundry, Mid-North Monitor

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Outgoing Chair, Ray Chénier, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed members of the Board of Directors to this the first regular meeting in 2006.

2.0 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Resolution No. 06-01 Moved by: Earle Freeborn **Seconded by:** Collin Bourgeois
THAT the agenda be adopted as presented. **Carried**

3.0 YEAR 2006 BOARD ELECTION

In standing with the DSSAB Act's Regulation 278/98 requirement that the governing board shall ANULLAY elect one of its members as Chair at its first Board meeting of every new calendar year, Mr. Chénier vacated the Chair and called upon Gary Champagne, CAO, to preside over the election of a Chair for the 2006 calendar year.

3.1. Chair Nominations & Election

The call for nominations to the Chair was opened.

Moved by Les Gamble that Frank Gillis be nominated.

Moved by Dale Van Every that Ray Chénier be nominated.

There were no other nominations. Both gentlemen allowed their names to stand.

A count of the secret ballots cast identified Ray Chénier as the elected Chair for the 2006 calendar year. Ray thanked the Board for their confidence in him and assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3.2 Vice-Chair Nominations & Election

The Chair called the nominations for Vice-Chair opened.

Moved by: Earle Freeborn that Dale Van Every be nominated.

There were no other nominations.

Accepting to let his name stand, Dale van Every was declared Vice-Chair of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB for the 2006 calendar year.

3.3 DSSAB Committees & Membership

The Chair proceeded to outline the existing Board Committees and the membership of each of those committees.

He suggested that those committees remain in place with their existing members and that each Committee decide on its Chairmanship at their next scheduled meeting. With Board consensus re: same, the Chair asked each of the members of each of the Board's Committees if they were prepared to continue to sit on each individual Committee. All members confirmed their willingness to remain on the Committees in question.

Resolution No. 06-02 Moved by: Earle Freeborn **Seconded by:** Maureen Van Alstine
THAT the Board confirm that the membership of each of the Board's Committees be identified as follows:

Finance Committee: Fern Bidal, Les Gamble, Frank Gillis, Mike Lehoux, Bud Rohn, Maureen Van Alstine and Ray Chénier (ex officio);

Human Resources Committee: Fern Bidal, Earle Freeborn, Frank Gillis, Bruce Killah, Maureen Van Alstine and Ray Chénier (ex officio);

EMS Planning Committee: Pat Best, Collin Bourgeois, Les Gamble, Richard Stephens and Ray Chénier (ex officio);

Property Committee: Collin Bourgeois, Earle Freeborn, Mike Lehoux, Laurier Low, Bud Rohn, Dale Van Every and Ray Chénier (ex officio). **Carried**

4.0 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

5.0 CLOSED SESSION

Resolution No. 06-03 Moved by: Dale Van Every **Seconded by:** Collin Bourgeois
THAT the Board move into closed session at 10:10 a.m. to discuss Human Resources and Property matters. **Carried**

Resolution No. 06-04 Moved by: Earle Freeborn **Seconded by:** Richard Stephens
THAT the Board adjourn this closed session at 10:40 a.m. **Carried**

6.0 MINUTES

6.1. Adoption of Minutes of November 24, 2005

Resolution No. 06-05 Moved by: Maureen Van Alstine **Seconded by:** Laurier Low
THAT the minutes of the November 24, 2005 Board meeting be approved. **Carried**

7.0. BUSINESS ITEMS

7.1. Closed Session Report

Items discussed during the Closed Session included

- Wikwemikong 2005/06 EMS Budget approval concerns
- EMS Station Hours of Service
- H.R. matters

7.2. Best Start (Early Learning and Care) Initiative

Gary gave an update on the progress of the Best Start Community Planning process being coordinated by the DSSAB across the Manitoulin-Sudbury District jurisdiction. He began his presentation by encouraging members to read the two provided OMSSA documents in their folders: [A Compelling Case for Investing in Children \(May 2005\)](#) and

Investing in Quality Child Care and Early Learning Opportunities Makes Sense.

Background:

- The provincial government's Best Start initiative is a ten year initiative. It is an Ontario government initiative that was made possible thanks to the Federal funding committed to Ontario by way of a Federal-Provincial Early Learning & Care Agreement.
- Ontario's Best Start initiative has two components to it: (i) a licensed child care component and (ii) a neighbourhood hub component.
- As part of the first component, it is Ontario's intention to see a massive expansion of the licensed child care spaces available across Ontario.
- It is the Ontario government's expectation that all new child care spaces created in the province will be opened in Ontario's publicly funded schools.
- As part of its second component, it is Ontario's intention to see schools become the "neighbourhood hubs" through which families will be able to locally access the full range of publicly funded **and integrated** community health and social services "early learning" supports and programs that children between the ages of birth and six may require to be as developmentally prepared as they can be to learn when they reach school age (age six).
- It is Ontario's plan to see its Early Learning and Care (Best Start) initiative fully implemented over a ten year time frame: from 2005/06 to 2015/16.
- It is Ontario's expectation to see the Best Start initiative implementation carried out in phases over the next ten years.
- Ontario has assigned the responsibility of coordinating the Best Start community planning process to its CMSMs & DSSABs (37 Upper Tier Municipalities/UTMs and 10 DSSABs), each of which is expected to oversee the design of a Best Start model appropriate to their given jurisdiction.
- The first phase of the initiative sees our DSSAB assured \$5.1 Million (100% federal-provincial funding) over the first three years (i) to implement 110 new licensed child care spaces in a number of schools throughout our jurisdiction, and (ii) to coordinate the Best Start community planning process that is expected to outline the community's vision of what the Best Start initiative should look like once fully implemented in ten years.
- The DSSAB met the first of its Best Start obligations by submitting its 2005/06 Child Care expansion portion of the Best Start Plan to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) at the end of October 2005 and by initiating the community consultation process prescribed by this same provincial government Ministry (MCYS).
- The next of the province's outlined Best Start planning expectations sees the DSSAB providing the province with the outline of the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start "**Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan**" prepared by the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Best Start Network table participants in response to the consultations thus far carried out across the Manitoulin and Sudbury Districts.
- The draft **Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan** is to be submitted to MCYS by the end of January 2006. It is expected to include
 - (i) the DSSAB's Child Care Plan for the years 2006/07 and 2007/08; and
 - (ii) the outline of the vision that the community has of what the Best Start initiative will look like when fully implemented; and
 - (iii) a rough outline of the community planning process that will need to be put in place to see the ten year vision come about.
- It is the expectation of the province (MCYS) that the governing bodies of the core members and signatories of the Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network (i.e. - the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB, the jurisdiction's eleven School Boards and Schools Authorities, the Sudbury and District Health Unit and the MCYS Regional Office)

will inform the province of their endorsement of the ***Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan*** by no later than the end of March, 2006.

Current Funding Status

- Ontario has committed to provide the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB \$5.1 Million of 100% funding over the three year period expiring March 31/08. This consists of \$3.465 Million of operating funds and \$1.715 of capital funding. The DSSAB is in return expected to
 - (i) See 110 new school-based licensed child care spaces created; and
 - (ii) Coordinate the Manitoulin-Sudbury community Best Start Integrated Implementation planning process in standing with the guidelines established by the province.
- The province is committed to the 100% funding of the Best Start initiative for a period of five years (up to end of March 2010).
- The DSSAB has thus far been flowed its 2005/06 Best Start allocation of \$1.4 Million.
- Opened in 2005/06 were 16 new school based licensed child care spaces in Gore Bay and 66 new school based licensed spaces in Espanola.
- The DSSAB's member municipalities, like all Ontario municipalities, are concerned re: the unknown municipal cost sharing expectations of them, if any, re: those ongoing Best Start community commitments in place once the five year 100% provincial funding commitment has expired. Whether or not the province will at a future point in time revert to the historical (80% provincial-20% municipal) child care funding formula or some other formula is all speculative at this time.
- With the newly elected Federal Conservative Government on record that it will not honour bilateral child care agreements [e.g. - Ontario Best Start Agreement] signed between the outgoing Liberal government and the provinces in the months prior to the recent elections beyond one year (2006/07), there is a good deal of uncertainty re: the province's readiness to unilaterally proceed with its Best Start initiative without the financial assurances of the Federal government.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury Best Start Network

- Ontario's Best Start Implementation Guidelines clearly set out the expectation that its 47 municipal service managers (UTMs & DSSABs) will oversee the design and implementation of the Best Start integration model appropriate to their given jurisdiction through the coordination of a Best Start community planning process that involves the creation of a Best Start Network Table whose minimum membership is prescribed by the province as is their task to outline the community's vision of what the Best Start initiative should look like once fully implemented in ten years
- The key role of the Best Start Network is to express the "community vision" of the network of integrated school-based Early Learning and Care services that should be made locally available to our jurisdiction's children and families over the course of the coming ten years and how best to go about implementing same.
- It is the DSSAB's provincially assigned role to coordinate the work involved in the Best Start community planning process.

The (draft) *Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan*

- The draft ***Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan*** focuses on the long-term vision re: the design of the children's services delivery system that should be locally available to facilitate a pre-schooler's smooth integration into the school system at age six. The Best Start objective remains to see children ready and eager to learn by the time they start school. The planning process is built on a list

- of agreed to principles.
- The ten year objective identified by the Best Start Network is a Best Start Hub in all elementary schools in our two Districts that have a JK/SK presence. It projects that each Hub will include a licensed child care capacity and be the local site through which publicly funded community health and social (early learning) support services and programs are integrated and available to children and families. The aim is to see all publicly funded children's services integrated through the Hub with the aim being to see services brought to children rather than children brought to services, notwithstanding the appreciation that certain specialised services will never be available at sites other than more remote Northern or provincial settings.
 - It is the province's expectation that the Plan will be endorsed by the earlier identified core members (signatories) of the Network by no later than the end of March, 2006.
 - Circulated and discussed with Board members were a series of **District maps** that outlined such information as:
 - the location of the 28 elementary schools in our two Districts;
 - the location and number of children under the ages of six in our Districts;
 - the location and percentage of the over 20 years of age population of our Districts who do not have a secondary school graduation certificate;
 - the location and percentage of the private households in our District with a household income of less than \$20,000/annum.

Also addressed was Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) generated Early Development Instrument (EDI) data that speaks to the overall school readiness of our four regions' preschoolers to learn at school by the time they reach grade one.

McMaster University defines "not ready to learn" as those children who fall into the lowest 10% of scores in one or more of the following domains: Physical Health and Well-Being, Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, Language and Cognitive Development and Communication Skills and General Knowledge.

The data generated through the EDI and other early year screening and assessment tools (e.g. – tools used by the province's Public Health Units and others) are intended to help communities determine how well they are doing in supporting families in their efforts to see their young children meet their developmental milestones.

In the discussion/comments that followed:

- Ray Chénier spoke to his concerns re: the presentation, accuracy and interpretation of the EDI data shared with Board members. He noted that the information would, at first blush, suggest that the districts' preschoolers are not well served.
- Richard Stephens wanted it to be known that the Manitoulin Municipal Association shared his two concerns re: the Best Start initiative:
 - (i) that government, through the Best Start initiative, was getting too involved in the business of bringing up children, a responsibility that belonged with families, not government; and
 - (ii) the unknowns re: the municipal cost sharing implications after the initial five year full funding period was over.
- Noting that he shared Richard's views, and was speaking on his own behalf and not necessarily his municipality's, Frank Gillis expressed his concerns re: the need for any of the Best Start programs for three year olds. He pointed out that

his prime concern rested in knowing whether the DSSAB has any real choices in the matter or if it isn't already a done deal. Gary explained that the role that the province directed the DSSAB and its 46 municipal service manager counterparts to play in the Best Start planning process was that of the coordinator of the "community planning process" that Ontario clearly indicated was not to be a "municipal plan" but a "community plan".

- Gary also pointed out that the key message that many of the DSSAB's counterparts were choosing to make clear to the province was that while they could endorse the community plan for their jurisdiction, this endorsement should not be construed to mean DSSAB or municipal approval to cost share any of the Best Start services put in place once the province's five year 100% full funding time frame came to an end.
- Expressed opinions re: the role of the municipalities as the elected representative voice of their communities led the Chair to explain that, as unpleasant as it might be to accept, the province had, as far back as 1991, clearly emphasised the difference between "community" and "municipality".
- Ray Chénier also made it clear that the DSSAB's role with this initiative was no different from that of DSSABs and municipalites when it came to any of the public services and programs that the province directed them to manage and administer on the province's behalf. The DSSAB, like municipalites, are told by the Ministry to do the work - there is no choice in the matter.
- Frank spoke to the importance of making sure that Best Start information presentations were made to all of the DSSAB's member municipalities. Gary concurred and repeated early expressed offers to do so.
- The DSSAB's mandate is to plan, coordinate and manage the child care service system in our Districts. Its mandate specific to the Best Start Initiative is to coordinate the community planning process over the next ten years.
- Noting the presence of the media, Frank Gillis wanted to clarify his earlier remarks and make it clear that he is not opposed to any program that deals with children, and that the concern is one of fiscal responsibility and the possibility that the provincial government can decide to halt funding at its will.
- Citing that some county governments were still on record as opposed to the introduction of kindergartens and junior kindergartens, the Chair noted that the matter of the state's involvement on the children's early learning front was not an easy one to resolve.

The CAO noted that, per Ministry directives, a copy of the ***Best Start Phase One Integrated Implementation Plan*** prepared by the Manitoulin-Sudbury Network would be circulated to DSSAB Board members as well as to the governing boards of all of the mandated Best Start Network signatories for their consideration. It is the Ministry's expectation that signatories will indicate if they endorse the community plan or not by no later than the end of March, 2006.

8.0. REPORTS

8.1. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.1.1. EMS Planning Committee

Noting that the matter had been addressed in camera, EMS Committee Chair, Les Gamble, reported that the Committee had met and that the ensuing confidential report circulated to the Board. He asked Board members to provide their comments or questions re: the report to the Committee by way of the CAO's office.

8.1.2. Finance Committee

In Fern Bidal's absence, Gary reported that the Committee was continuing to meet on the 2006 Budget, that work is proceeding well and that the Committee is keeping to its schedule.

8.2. CAO REPORT**8.2.1. Operational Management Reports**

The following Departmental Reports were circulated:

- **Ontario Works Report**
- **Social Housing Report**
- **Emergency Medical Services Report**

The item 7.2. Best Start presentation/discussion replaced this month's Children's Services Report. There were no questions on the Ontario Works and Social Housing Reports.

EMS Report

Frank asked whether it would be possible for a municipality to purchase the defibrillators that are being replaced with the MOHLTC grant money, assuming that they are in good working order. Ray asked that a policy be drafted up around this possibility and that it be brought to the next Board meeting.

Richard informed the Board that he had read the CAO circulated Provincial Auditor's Report on Land Ambulance, found it most interesting and encouraged everyone to take the time to read it.

8.2.2 Strategic Management Report

This month's report consists of the Best Start Initiative Update and Discussion identified as Item 7.2.

9.0. CORRESPONDENCE**9.1. Municipality of Assiginack and Township of NEMI**

Letters received from the Municipality of Assiginack and the Township of NEMI re Land Ambulance Services were reviewed and acknowledged.

10.0. ADJOURNMENT

Resolution No.06-06 Moved by: Frank Gillis **Seconded by:** Dale van Every

THAT we do now adjourn at 11:50 a.m. until the next regular meeting to be held at 10:00 a.m. on February 23, 2006 in the DSSAB's Espanola Mead Boulevard Board Room.

Chair

Chief Administrative Officer
(Secretary Treasurer of the Corporation)