



District of Sault Ste. Marie

Social Services Administration Board

- Ontario Works
- Child Care
- Social Housing
- Land Ambulance

COMMUNITY CHILD CARE COMMITTEE

MINUTES Monday, November 22, 2004

Thompson Boardroom, Civic Centre at 1:30 p.m.

PRESENT: V. Burns L. Madonna L. Turco
CITY STAFF: A. McRae J. Crawford F. Lake
DSSMSSAB STAFF: K. Streich-Poser A. Nanne (notes)

The meeting was called to order by committee chair L. Turco at 1:35 p.m.

L. Turco extended a welcome to those attending the meeting.

Review of Minutes from the August 16, 2004 Community Childcare Committee Meeting.

The committee reviewed the minutes. There were no errors or omissions and the minutes were accepted.

Charles Coffey - Update

F. Lake provided an update for the committee about the upcoming Charles Coffey presentations. The organizing committee is meeting on a weekly basis in preparation for the upcoming seminar. There will be a series of Coffey presentations with various target groups. City representatives will convene at 11:00 am followed by a luncheon at noon and Social Service Agencies will attend an afternoon session.

This week follow-up phone calls have been made to try and solicit a greater response and a news release was sent out in an effort to generate greater community awareness and reaction. Another advertisement has will be released today. L. Madonna will inform the Prince Township council at tomorrow nights meeting and extend an invitation to all members. L. Turco will contact the radio community and attempt to give this event more press. The response date will be extended to allow for more responses.

F. Lake added that they continue to be optimistic about the Charles Coffey presentation, the community attendance and the effect that this will have on

Sault Ste. Marie. We are known as a "last-minute" community and responses are not usually forthcoming until the very end.

During the session Mr. Coffey will be changing his focus to address those specific groups in attendance. He is looking to target some very important sectors of the community in relation to the Early Years.

Status of New Funding - Update

F. Lake provided handouts updating the committee about the status of the new Child Care funding. She stated that the 25 new subsidized spaces approved at the last DSSMSSAB Board meeting could actually be stretched to 29 spaces. RM Moore School is housing the newly subsidized spaces.

The alternative school has now extended their hours of service until 5:30 pm and the Queen Street and Dacy Road centres have implemented earlier start times. F. Lake is pleased that they were able to do so much with these funds.

K. Streich-Poser asked about the need to spend the funds before the end of the year-end. In the past the surplus was allocated for Health and Safety issues. F. Lake commented that she is unsure if the same rules apply and will speak to Ron Mackinnon from MCSS about this issue. She also commented that the Ministry is tracking these funds directly and wants to ensure that the additional spaces are implemented immediately.

K. Streich-Poser asked about the five billion dollars in funding being announced and whether it is a new fund. F. Lake responded this is not a new fund but rather what the total funding will grow to.

F. Lake commented that she has heard that the Best Start program will be announced later this month. The needs requirement for this program and subsidized funding will be updated. Financial assessment may be reviewed along with operational hours and needs requirements. This could put a strain on child care staff and expand the waiting lists until capacity levels are increased.

The Ministry is looking to amalgamate child care programs with local schools. F. Lake has recognized the need to get out and discuss this issue with the School Boards and has already established ties with the Public Board and the French Board. F. Lake met with the Huron-Superior Board last week and continues to meet with the Algoma District School board. Right now there is very little space within the schools. The introduction of the Jr. High school for grade 7 and 8's could open up some space. Transportation savings for the school boards could occur if children attend before and after school programs within their own schools.

F. Lake suggested that the next meeting could also be held at RM Moore. Lunch is difficult for the schools but it may be a good location to see this new system in place.

There were no further questions or comments and the committee viewed this as a good news story!

F. Lake's only concern is that we do not have a contract for this funding. This funding will continue into 2005 and F. Lake will provide regular updates of the situation. K. Streich-Poser commented that this is a good time for Child Care and that it is good to see things moving ahead and moving forward.

Other Business

No other business was discussed.

Schedule Next Meeting – February 2005

The next Community Child Care Committee meeting will be held on Monday, February 14th, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.