



# District of Sault Ste. Marie

## Social Services Administration Board

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

### SOCIAL HOUSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES For Tuesday, March 23, 2004

Plummer Boardroom, Civic Centre 12:00 p.m.

**Present:** P. Mick L. Madonna J. Curran  
**City Staff:** R. Cobean G. Avery A. McRae  
J. Crawford  
**DSSMSSAB Staff:** K. Streich-Poser A. Nanne (notes)  
**Regrets:** D. Overboe

The Social Housing Committee meeting was called to order by committee chair P. Mick at 12:08 p.m.

1. Review of the Minutes from the December 18, 2003 Social Housing Committee Meeting.

The minutes were reviewed and approved by the Social Housing Committee members.

2. Sault Ste. Marie Social Housing Corporation

- ◆ Orientation

G. Avery distributed binders to the new Social Housing Committee members to provide orientation and background. He discussed the difference between the Social Housing Corporation and Social Housing Programs.

P. Mick inquired about the status of existing problems with people bouncing from property to property with arrears owing. G. Avery informed the committee that there is a computer system in place to track these people.

J. Curran asked how the funding works in regards to the Rent Supplement Program. He was instructed that the SSM Housing Corporation pays the landlord the difference between the market rent and the amount owed by the tenant. J. Curran then voiced concerns about the possibility of landlords to making false claims. G. Avery told him that the SSM Housing Corporation controls the numbers and calculates the supplement. The landlord and tenant have a separate agreement and the SSM Housing Corporation is the 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

G. Avery wrapped up by asking if there were any further questions and once again stressing the importance of the recognition of the SSM Housing Corporation and the Social Housing Programs as two separate entities.

◆ 2004 Budget

The 2004 budget was provided to the Social Housing Committee as information prior to the upcoming DSSMSSAB board meeting. G. Avery noted that the budget takes into account the actual costs incurred in 2003 as well as the expected increases in utilities, insurance and a modest increase in general operations. These increases will account for the savings that the SSM Housing Corporation experienced in 2003.

The SSM Housing Corporation expects a modest increase in the area of general operations and plans to maintain current service levels. It is the intention of the SSM Housing Corporation to meet the minimum service levels required and to keep their assets in line with other nearby properties as dictated by the neighborhood they are located in.

L. Madonna asked what percentage increase we are experiencing in regards to insurance. G. Avery informed the committee that the SSM Housing Corporation experienced a 50% increase during the last year.

J. Curran expressed an interest in seeing the 2003 actual figures included in the SSM Housing Corporation budget.

◆ Audit Process

K. Streich-Poser discussed the audit process for the SSM Housing Corporation. She reviewed the audit information provided by BDO Dunwoody. Previously the approach to be taken by the auditors as it pertains to the SSM Housing Corporation has been brought forward to the Executive / Finance Committee for review.

3. Sault Ste. Marie Social Housing Programs (Non-Profits)

◆ Orientation

R. Cobean also supplied an orientation binder to the Social Housing Committee members. He suggested that in the future it might be more cost effective to provide a "disc" of information.

R. Cobean administers the Social Housing Programs on behalf of the DSSMSSAB. The Social Housing Programs administers service agreements with downloaded provincial non profit and coop providers. Housing Programs does not have service agreement with downloaded Federal Housing providers and have to follow the Federal program criteria. The Social Housing Programs duties include:

- **Operational reviews** - Housing Properties function independently over a 3 year period. After that time, an operational review is conducted that includes a full audit and very detailed examination.
- **Capital requests** - All Capital expenditure requests are dealt with in accordance to proper procedures and provincial legislation.
- **The appeal process for Rent Geared to Income candidates** - G. Avery is the original recipient of all appeals and as a result is unable to partake in the initial appeal decision.
- **Advice:** Providing suggestions to the DSSMSSAB Board regarding the Social Housing Program
- **Monitoring:** Ensuring that the Social Housing Providers submit the proper government paperwork in a timely fashion.
- **Intervention:** Assist Social Housing providers experiencing financial difficulties - R. Cobean will work with providers experiencing financial/operational difficulties. He also has the ability to transfer Service providers in Difficulty to the Provincial Government but this can be very costly and he has always worked with Housing Providers to find better solutions.

L. Madonna inquired about the length of the Social Housing waiting list. G. Avery responded that there are currently between 400 and 500 people on waiting list. He also noted that this is an improvement over the 800-1000 people that were historically on the list. L. Madonna commented that this number is still high and was informed that the list consists of a number of people that are waiting for placement in a specific property.

◆ Ranking Date for Centralized Waiting List

R. Cobean suggested that the policy for the Ranking Date for the Centralized Wait List be rewritten to account for tenants choosing to add new properties to their list of preferences after they have already been on the wait list. He would like to ensure that the new selections added to a client's preferences are not included on their original wait list date. This eliminates their being able to jump ahead of other tenants. It was suggested that the Social Housing Committee recommend a change the policy by presenting a resolution at the March 25<sup>th</sup> DSSMSSAB Board meeting. The committee agreed to bring the matter forward.

◆ Sale of Frontage to City of Sault Ste. Marie

R. Cobean informed the committee that the City of Sault Ste. Marie is interested in purchasing frontage property from Neech-Ke-When Homes Inc. at 152 Second Line W. The City requires the property in order to move the PUC poles for the widening of

Second Line. R. Cobean will receive documentation from the City and also requires a resolution from the DSSMSSAB to approve the sale of the land. The Social Housing Committee agreed to bring the resolution forward.

- ◆ Update on Capital Reserve Investment Profile

Housing Providers are required contribute to the Provincial Capital Reserve Investment administered by the Social Housing Services Corporation, prior to December 31st of 2003. The Providers that have not yet made their deposit were given an extra month to do so. Any Provider not following this direction is in direct contravention of the Social Housing Reform Act. R. Cobean is pleased to note that all of our Housing Providers have complied with this requirement.

A. McRae asked that a list of the Investment Funds could be provided to the DSSMSSAB. R. Cobean felt that privacy issues might prevent him from providing this information to the Board. A. McRae voiced concerns that the Capital Reserve Investment may not be maximizing its investment potential and feels that the details of the Investment Fund would help the DSSMSSAB with Financial Planning and Risk Management.

P. Mick asked if the DSSMSSAB should consider approaching the Province about this issue. R. Cobean commented that the Province is content with the current Capital Reserve Investment Policy and Legislation.

- ◆ La Chaumiere Update

La Chaumiere Inc. has completed the cleaning and clearing of one unit while a second unit has failed mold tests and also needs to be redone and a third unit may need to be rebuilt. R. Cobean informed the committee that the Housing Provider is responsible for these upgrades and repairs and anticipates that this issue will soon be coming to an end.

#### 4. Overview of Social Housing Services Corporation

- ◆ Northern Ontario Nomination Process

K. Streich-Poser provided some background about the Social Housing Service Corporation. She reviewed handouts with the committee regarding the purpose of this division. K. Streich-Poser also discussed the fact that Joanne Thompson is currently finishing up her term as the NOSDA representative on the Social Housing Service Corporation and that NOSDA is looking for a format to hold nominations for the next representative to this Board. As a result, NOSDA has forwarded a proposal to the DSSABs to review and is asking the Boards to approve their proposed process before the September Annual NOSDA meeting on Manitoulin Island.

## 5. New Social Housing Initiatives

### ◆ Rent Bank

K. Streich-Poser discussed the Rent Bank with committee members. She took part in a recent telephone conference introducing new Rent Bank Provincial Program that will be administered by the DSSMSSAB. No further information has been provided since that time.

### ◆ Rent Geared to Income (RGI) Block Funding

The Homelessness Rent Supplement Program may be changed to a Block Funding Grant format. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is looking for Business Plan submissions from the Service Providers to show how each plans to administer this Block Funding. R. Cobean will be working on the Business Plan and bringing it forward to the Board once it is complete.

## 6. Next Meeting - June 2004

The next Social Housing Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, June 24 at Noon.

## 7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

