



Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Community Services Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

9:45 a.m.

Regional Council Chamber

150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, Ontario

Present were: Chair G. Lorentz, L. Armstrong, E. Clarke, S. Foxtan, T. Galloway*, D. Jaworsky, H. Jowett, K. Kiefer, J. Mitchell, J. Nowak, K. Redman, K. Seiling, S. Shantz, S. Strickland, B. Vrbanovic.

Absent: D. Craig

Motion to go into Closed Session

Moved by H. Jowett

Seconded by D. Jaworsky

That a closed meeting of the Administration and Finance Committee be held on Tuesday, November 22, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. in the Waterloo County Room in accordance with Section 239 of the Municipal Act, 2001, for the purposes of considering the following subject matters:

- a) potential litigation and receiving of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege related to a legal matter

Carried

Motion to Reconvene Into Open Session

Moved by S. Foxton

Seconded by L. Armstrong

That Committee reconvene into Open Session.

Carried

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under “The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”

None declared

Delegations

- a) Sarah Shafiq, Community-at-Large member, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council appeared before Committee with respect to Report CPC-16-01, Charter for Inclusive Communities. She provided background information on the initiative and the perceptions in the community. She stated the charter acknowledges that hate crimes exist and society stands up for the rights and dignity of everyone. A copy of her [presentation](#) is appended to the original minutes.

Councillors gave their support for the charter and the need to be an inclusive society. In response to a question on how this information will be promoted, the charter will be shared with community partners. It was suggested it also be circulated to AMO and FCM and promoted through social media.

Moved by J. Mitchell

Seconded by K. Redman

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo endorse the Charter for Inclusive Communities as attached to Report CPC-16-01;

And that it be circulated to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

Carried

- b) Birgit Lingenberg cancelled her delegation and requested to appear at the December 6, 2016 Community Services Committee meeting.

- c) Sharon Giles and Carrie Speers, Co-Chairs, The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee appeared before Committee with respect to Report CSD-EIS-16-14, Ontario Works Discretionary Benefits Realignment. S. Giles expressed concern with the proposal and they understand the demand for discretionary benefits exceeds Provincial funding. She noted the difficulty in choosing service levels and the gaps that exist. She requested Committee to support Option 2 and not cut anything from the budget. A copy of the [presentation](#) is appended to the original minutes.

*T. Galloway left the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Commissioner Community Services introduced the report and gave an overview of the information.

A question was raised with respect to the dental program for the ODSP and Ontario Works. Carolyn Schoenfeldt, Director Employment & Income Support, advised the dental program is mostly for children and there is no program for dentures.

There was a concern that the proposal is not sustainable and it was suggested Option 3 with an amendment may be a better choice. It was requested that staff do additional research by asking other municipalities their situation and with the addition of consideration given to co-pays or to lengthen the period people would wait for items such as eyeglasses and bring this back to budget.

*T. Galloway entered the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Concern was expressed that we cannot hit the most vulnerable in our society, and additional money is needed to take care of our own.

There was support for Option 3 and acknowledging that the need continues to grow. Staff contacted other municipalities and it was noted the co-pay causes a hardship to the client and the vendor. There was discussion of the \$600,000 amount and that it represents the projected overexpenditure for 2016 based on year to date expenses. A request was made for a detailed list of where the overexpenditures are and different ways to handle issues.

There was discussion about more funding from the Province for cost of living, etc. and D. Bartholomew-Saunders advised there has been no cost of living from the Province on any programs. He stated the Province is not interested in entertaining any discussion about social programs as their focus is on the basic income guarantee.

Committee asked if month 13 when funding ends has been included. D. Bartholomew-Saunders advised it has been calculated into the 2017 caseloads but not included in the discretionary benefits so it may have some impact.

It was agreed to refer Option 3 to budget with a request for additional information. Staff are to investigate what other Regions are doing with respect to this issue.

Moved by E. Clarke

Seconded by S. Strickland

That The Regional Municipality of Waterloo forward Option 3 as detailed in report CSD-EIS-16-14: Ontario Works Discretionary Benefits Realignment to Budget Committee for consideration.

Carried

Consent Agenda Items

Request to Remove Items From Consent Agenda

There were no requests to remove items from the consent agenda.

Motion to Approve Items or Receive for Information

Moved by K. Kiefer

Seconded by S. Foxton

That the following items be approved:

- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo advocate with the Federal Government for adequate funding of the Immigration Partnership and local settlement and language training services to enable the successful settling, working and belonging of immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region.
- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, in its capacity as Service Manager under the *Housing Services Act* (HSA);
 - (a) Consent to the amalgamation of the community housing corporations of Kitchener Alliance Community Homes Inc. (KACHI) with Victoria Park Community Homes Inc. (VPCH); and
 - (b) Seek any required consents from the Ministry of Housing and other Service

Managers where VPCH also owns property as described in Report CSD-HOU-16-17 dated November 22, 2016; and

- (c) Authorize the Director, Housing Services to authorize or amend any documentation or agreements that may be required as a result of the amalgamation in a form satisfactory to the Regional Solicitor

And that the following items be received for information:

- PHE-CRS-16-02, 2016 Public Health Budget Approval
- PHE-HPI-16-09, Safe Drinking Water Program Update
- PHE-CFH-16-02, NutriSTEP® Screening: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Accountability Indicator Update
- CSD-DES-16-01, Community Services Department Integrated Service Delivery Pilot
- CSD-EIS-16-16, Overview of Changes to the Family Support Unit
- PDL-CUL-16-12, Celebration of Canada 150 in the Region of Waterloo

Carried

Regular Agenda Resumes

Reports – Planning Development and Legislative Services

PDL-CUL-16-11, Regional Support for Cultural Information and Collaboration

K. Seiling proposed an amendment to the first clause of the motion to provide a 2% increase to the core groups and the balance to the 2017 operating budget.

A question was raised if there was consideration to tying this report to the report on the Administration & Finance Committee agenda regarding the Arts Fund. K. Seiling stated the two reports are being done separately as the intent for the Arts Fund was to have no levy impact in 2017 and this money will flow back into the levy.

Staff was asked if the \$20,000 will be available to all cultural organizations. Lucille Bish, Director Cultural Services responded it will be potentially shared by all cultural organizations and the plan is to hold a forum to get community input on priority projects that would benefit all community groups.

There was a question about the Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI) placemaking funding. Mike Murray, Chief Administrative Officer advised CEI has two priorities; one being finding a successor organization for the grand social website and the other is for

the creative placemaking program. There are pilot programs in the works and they will be substantially complete by the end of 2016.

Moved by K. Seiling

Seconded by E. Clarke

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve a re-allocation of \$141,000 of arts and culture funding previously granted to Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI) as follows, effective January 1, 2017:

- a) 50% (\$71,000) be allocated as follows - \$15,000 to provide a 2% increase to the core cultural organizations currently receiving Regional grants and the balance of \$56,000 be applied to reduce the 2017 operating budget;
- b) 35% (\$50,000) to maintain and enhance the cultural information on the Tourism website, ensuring that it engages both residents and visitors;
- c) 15% (\$20,000) to fund collaborative cultural initiatives including projects, sponsorships or research in support of cultural organizations across the Region;

And that the matter be forwarded to December 14, 2016 Budget Committee for consideration.

Carried

Information/Correspondence

- a) There were no items pending on the Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking List.

Other Business

G. Lorentz noted the ION public art is on display in the lobby at 150 Frederick Street, Kitchener and invited Committee members to view the displays and provide comments.

Next Meeting – December 6, 2016

Adjourn

Moved by K. Redman

Seconded by J. Mitchell

That the meeting adjourn at 10:41 a.m.

Carried

Committee Chair, G. Lorentz

Deputy Clerk, L. Wetzel

Good morning respected chair, counselors and community members. Thank you for this opportunity to talk about the Charter for Inclusive Communities.

This charter was launched by a national advocacy group, called the National Council of Canadian Muslims in July 2016. A few of Waterloo Region's community members wrote letters to elected leaders about it at the time. I brought it up 2 months ago after reading that the City of Hamilton has endorsed it.

For me, the Charter highlights the issue of Islamophobia that is at times amiss from our discourse on hate & discrimination. Hate crimes based on religion ^{& race} constitute the highest #. And this data is based on just the criminal cases of course. I coordinated a hate crimes project for the coalition of Muslim women. Our initial intent was to provide support to those Muslim women who have been victims of hate crimes. We had to change that goal to education and awareness about the importance of reporting a hate crime or an incident. We documented crimes like someone spitting, headscarf pulling, eggs thrown. But most were not criminal in nature so were hate incidents like a Muslim woman who had recently started wearing a headscarf was told to "not start blowing us up now", many comments and slurs about Prophet Mohammad and such on GRT buses etc.

So where is this hate coming from? Academics have argued from the politics of fear spurred by the War on Terror. More people are killed by toddlers and furniture in a year than the Terrorists here in North America. At a more systemic level, a 2011 report by American Progress found 42.6 million dollars were being spent on think tanks promoting Islamophobia. Last month, the Southern Poverty Law Center issued a journalist's guide to anti-Muslim extremists. What was fascinating for me was to see that some of these anti-Muslim extremists like Ayan Hirshi Ali were invited as guests by one of my favorite news analysis programs on TVO, The Agenda by Steve Paikin. Apart from the news media, Islamophobia also comes from the arts and culture area unfortunately. There is a lucrative industry around the perception of Muslim women as oppressed and Muslim men as violent oppressors. You can see this popular genre in our local library as well.

So Islamophobia exists, it is spreading and now with the US elections it will spill over and grow. What the charter does is to acknowledge that Islamophobia exists. And I hope that by signing it we as a community bring it up in policy making, program development etc. This hate has to be countered as deliberately as it is being spread. Even though endorsing the charter is a symbolic gesture, it will mean a lot to our community that our leaders acknowledge Islamophobia as another manifestation of hate. This recognition will further cultivate belonging of marginalized communities. And I hope this acknowledgement will positively influence other areas and levels of government to include Islamophobia as a form of hate and prejudice.

Good morning, my name is Sharon Giles and with me is Carrie Speers. We are the co-chairs of the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee. We are here today to add our voice to the concerns about the cuts in discretionary benefits for Ontario works.

The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee is a committee of Council, whose mandate is to provide advice on identifying, preventing, and removing barriers for people with disabilities.

Many people with disabilities rely on assistance provided through Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).□ Every one of the benefits these programs provide are critical to those who receive them. They make the difference between being a part of daily living, and being left behind

We understand that the demand for discretionary benefits was exceeding our current provincial and municipal funding, and that in 2016, it is projected to be \$600,000 over budget

We know that is not an easy task. Cutting budgets never is. Staff have done their due diligence and have met with community stakeholders including GRAAC.

But you have given us impossible choices. How do you decide between a hearing aid or vision assistance? A food hamper or medical supplies? I am totally dependent on a wheelchair for mobility. Even with the Assistive Devices Program, a wheelchair could cost an individual an additional eight or \$10,000. As one of our GRAAC members remarked, when ODSP requires that your savings account does not exceed \$5,000, how are you supposed to come up with that difference?

But Waterloo Region must find that money somewhere else. The Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee strongly urges that you do not eliminate any of these benefits and continue to provide municipal funding.

The people that use these services have nowhere else to turn. These are real quality of life issues. We strongly support Option 2, and urge you to do the same