

Kenora District Services Board

Ontario Works / Child Care Committee Minutes of the February 14, 2007 Meeting

Attendance: Kim Thain – Chair
Ray Leray, Joyce Timpson, Sten Lif, Dianne Apland, Toni Thurbide

Call to Order: 6:20 p.m.

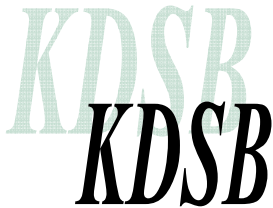
Purpose of the meeting was to review the four budgets prepared by the Director of Ontario Works and Child Care and the Director of Finance.

Dianne had prepared power point presentations for each of the four budgets.

Child Care

The Child Care budget had an overall decrease of 1.61% with the six main streams of funding, fee subsidy, special needs, resource centre, wage subsidy, Ontario Works and pay equity reflecting similar figures to the 2006 actuals with two exceptions. The special needs budget line was decreased by \$101,518 as a result of the Ministry of Community and Social Services taking back one of its programs and funding that program 100%. The overall cost of the program was \$101,158, with 20% being the local share. The second area of discrepancy was the Ontario Works Child Care budget which ended up \$103,244 over budget in 2006. The 2007 budget for OW Child Care is set for approximately the same as last year. Dianne explained that with the new income testing guidelines and new KDSB policies for OW children, the budgeted figure should be sufficient and the deficit should not be reoccurring.

Although the Child Care Budget is coming in under last year's there was a caution expressed. The funding over last year's budget requested by the centres was dealt with through the Best Start funding which is 100% provincial. The Best Start funding may not be available in future years to sustain child care requests and we may be just putting off the inevitable, a large increase in the child care budget. The need for additional funding from the province was discussed at length with members of the committee agreeing that municipalities must lobby the government for a more stable base funding model from the province.



Kenora District Services Board

Best Annualized Budget

With the creation of 164 new spaces the KDSB secured annualized funding of \$1,229,476.00. This annualized funding was budgeted for; Administration \$122,947.00, programming \$958,520.00, planning \$28,800.00 and wage enhancement \$119,200.00. The province has stipulated the dollar amounts to be set aside for planning and wage enhancement. They have also allowed a cap of 10% for administration costs. The remainder of the budget was put into programming, supporting the new best start spaces and covering off those costs identified in the child care budget as requests over last year's budget in the areas of fee subsidy, special needs, and wage subsidy.

Best Start Unconditional Grant

The budget for the Best Start Unconditional grant contains the following budget lines; unallocated capital \$100,000, Planning \$30,000, Start up \$50,000, stabilization \$300,000, administration \$85,000, advertising \$20,000, and Quality Assurance Program \$15,000. This will leave a balance of \$144,678 in the future viability budget line.

Ontario Works Budget

The Ontario Works budget was dealt with in two parts; the uncontrollable portion of the budget including Client benefits, National Child Benefit Supplement Reinvestment and Client Employment benefits. These amounts are dependent on Ontario Works legislation, how many people apply for Ontario Works and what level of funding they are eligible to. Dianne explained that staff had increased the budget line for client benefits by approximately 4% to accommodate a 2% increase in benefits legislated by the provincial government in 2006 as well as the expected increase in client benefits due to a larger caseload. This portion of the budget is \$4,640,000.00

The second part of the budget is the operational budget for both the front line offices and the KDSB office. A spread sheet outlining the funding requested by municipalities was attached to the presentation. Special interest was expressed by the committee with two budget requests from the Town of Sioux Lookout, the first being a request for additional benefit funding to cover vested sick time for employees. Sten explained to the committee that this type of request had been received previously by the board and had been denied. The second request by the Town of Sioux Lookout was an increase in rent representing a 269% increase. Joyce brought up the point that Sioux Lookout had



Kenora District Services Board

been under charging for their municipal space in the past and were bringing the rent in line with what other municipalities were charging. Kim felt that this type of increase was not acceptable and should not be included in the budget. The budget was to be presented to the Finance Committee with the vested sick time deleted and the rent remaining in for the time being.

Dianne noted that some municipalities have been very cooperative in the past, trying to keep their budgets low in view of the fact the KDSB board has been asking for close to 0% increases while other municipalities have been submitting the maximums they feel they are entitled to.

The employment plan outlined by Dianne would see an employment supervisor for the district hired, as well as an additional employment caseworker in Kenora and a Life Skills trainer for the district. There were also some training dollars attached to the plan. The total allocation for the employment plan was \$193,799.00 which would be cost shared with the province at 80/20.

The focus of the employment plan was an investment in the OW clients and the future economic health of the region. Discussion centered on the supports currently available in communities, the end of the adult education program, programs administered by the provincial government and programs currently offered by OW.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Minutes Approved by Committee: *February 26, 2007*

Motion to approve the minutes: *Ray Leray*

Seconded by: *Joyce Timpson*