

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
PUBLIC HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**PHSSC 3-2023
Tuesday, March 7, 2023
Council Chamber / Video Conference
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON**

Committee: Bateman, Bradley (Regional Chair) (via Video Conference), Chiocchio (Committee Co-Chair), Craitor, Diodati (via Video Conference), Insinna, Ip, Jordan, Kaiser, Morocco (Committee Co-Chair), Siscoe, Whalen, Witteveen

Other Councillors: Ganann (via Video Conference)

Absent/Regrets: Easton, Sorrento

Staff: D. Barnhart, Chief of Staff, Governance (via Video Conference), C. Cousins, Director, Homelessness and Community Engagement, R. Ferron, Acting Chief/Director, Emergency Medical Services, Dr. M. M. Hirji, Acting Medical Officer of Health, A. Jugley, Commissioner, Community Services, Dr. A. Kasmani, Associate Medical Officer of Health, S. Klair, Director, Children's Services, K. Lotimer, Legislative Coordinator (via Video Conference), P. Martel, Manager, Emergency Management, A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, R. Pearson, Manager, Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Compliance, G. Scharback, Deputy Regional Clerk (via Video Conference), M. Sergi, Commissioner, Planning & Development Services (via Video Conference), J. Spratt, Legislative Coordinator, M. Todd, Manager, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, R. Tripp, Chief Administrative Officer, L. Watson, Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, D. Woiceshyn, Director, Housing Services (via Video Conference)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Co-Chair Chiocchio called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy

Lori Watson, Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, and Marc Todd, Manager, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities, provided information respecting Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy. Topics of the presentation included:

- Poverty in Niagara
- Rate of Inflation 2019-2022
- Social Assistance Rates
- Income Standards
- Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy
- What We've Heard
- Levers for Change - Social Determinants of Health
- Steering Committee
- Governance Structure
- Measures of Success

4. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 COM 7-2023

Homelessness Prevention Plan Investment Plan 2023-24

Moved by Councillor Witteveen

Seconded by Councillor Kaiser

That Report COM 7-2023, dated March 7, 2023, respecting Homelessness Prevention Plan Investment Plan 2023-24, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the Ministry mandated Homelessness Prevention Plan (HPP) investment plan for the 2023-24 funding allotment **BE APPROVED**.

Carried

5.2 COM-C 22-2023

Councillor Appointment to the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) Steering Committee

Moved by Councillor Ip
Seconded by Councillor Jordan

That Correspondence Item COM-C 22-2023, being a memorandum from A.-M. Norio, Regional Clerk, dated March 7, 2023, respecting Councillor Appointment to the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) Steering Committee, **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Craitor
Seconded by Councillor Insinna

That two (2) Regional Councillors **BE APPOINTED** to the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy Steering Committee; and

That Councillors Bateman and Ip **BE APPOINTED** to the Niagara Poverty Reduction Strategy Steering Committee for the remainder of this term of Council.

Carried

5.3 PHD 2-2023

Extension of Ministry of Health Dedicated Offload Health Care Provider Funding Initiative

Moved by Councillor Whalen
Seconded by Councillor Siscoe

That Report PHD 2-2023, dated March 7, 2023, respecting Extension of Ministry of Health Dedicated Offload Health Care Provider Funding Initiative, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the Regional Chair **BE DIRECTED** to write to the Ontario Minister of Health, Deputy Minister, Associate Deputy Minister for Health Integration & Partnerships, and the Assistant Deputy Minister for Emergency Health Services, to express disappointment that the Ministry will not consider the question of whether the Emergency Department Technician (ED Tech) is an acceptable health care provider to receive funding in accordance with the Offload Health Care Provider program, and to urge reconsideration of this decision.

Carried

5.4 PHD 1-2023
Emergency Management Year End Report

Moved by Councillor Witteveen
Seconded by Councillor Insinna

That Report PHD 1-2023, dated March 7, 2023, respecting Emergency Management Year End Report, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That Regional Council **APPOINT** a member of Council as a representative on the Niagara Region Emergency Management Program Committee.

Carried

5.5 COM 9-2023
Asylum Seekers Transferred to Niagara Falls – Request for Immediate Temporary Funding

Moved by Councillor Siscoe
Seconded by Councillor Whalen

That Report COM 9-2023, dated March 7, 2023, respecting Asylum Seekers Transferred to Niagara Falls – Request for Immediate Temporary Funding, **BE RECEIVED** and the following recommendation **BE APPROVED**:

1. That the Regional Chair **BE DIRECTED** to send a letter to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, requesting one-time provincial funding of \$5,959,200, for the delivery of Ontario Works (OW) and discretionary client benefits to address the critical services pressures associated with the provision of social assistance to Asylum Seekers currently placed in Niagara by the federal government.

The following friendly **amendments** were accepted by the Chair, and the mover and seconder of the motion:

2. ***That the Regional Chair BE DIRECTED to send correspondence to the Federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship requesting financial support to offset the local impacts of the growing number of asylum seekers who are being located to Niagara, as well as urging the minister to take all appropriate steps to ensure the impact of asylum seekers entering Canada are being distributed across the country; and***

3. ***That a copy of the letter BE SENT to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and local area MPPs.***

The Chair called the vote on the motion, as amended, and declared it,

Carried

5.6 COM-C 23-2023

Motion Respecting A Call to the Provincial Government to End Homelessness in Ontario

Moved by Councillor Ip

Seconded by Councillor Insinna

WHEREAS the homelessness crisis is taking a devastating toll on families and communities, undermining a healthy and prosperous Ontario;

WHEREAS underinvestment and policy choices of successive provincial governments are significant contributors to the homelessness crisis;

WHEREAS the Auditor General's 2021 report found that the funding allocation model for homelessness is incorrect and results in several municipalities, including Niagara Region, being underfunded by the province to address homelessness;

WHEREAS homelessness requires a range of housing, social service, and health solutions from government;

WHEREAS homelessness is felt most at the level of local government and the residents that they serve;

WHEREAS municipalities are doing their part, but do not have the resources, capacity, or tools to address this complex challenge; and

WHEREAS leadership and urgent action is needed from the provincial government on an emergency basis to develop, resource, and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent, reduce and ultimately end homelessness in Ontario.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That Niagara Regional Council **CALL** on the Provincial Government to urgently:
 - a) Acknowledge that homelessness in Ontario is a social, economic, and health crisis;
 - b) Commit to ending homelessness in Ontario;

- c) Work with AMO and a broad range of community, health, Indigenous, and economic partners to develop, resource, and implement an action plan to achieve this goal; and
2. That a copy of this motion **BE SENT** to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, the Minister of Health and to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

The following friendly **amendment** was accepted by the Chair, and the mover and seconder of the motion:

2. That a copy of this motion **BE SENT** to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, the Minister of Health, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and **local area MPPs**.

The Chair called the vote on the motion, as amended:

Recorded Vote:

Yes (13): Bateman, Bradley, Chiochio, Craitor, Diodati, Insinna, Ip, Jordan, Kaiser, Morocco, Siscoe, Whalen, Witteveen.

No (0).

Carried

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

6.1 PHD-C 2-2023 2024 Eclipse

Patricia Martel, Manager, Emergency Management, provided information respecting 2024 Eclipse. Topics of the presentation included:

- Background
- The Experience
- 2017 Case Study
- Regional Emergency Management Next Steps

Moved by Councillor Witteveen

Seconded by Councillor Jordan

That Correspondence Item PHD-C 2-2023, being a memorandum from P. Martel, Manager, Emergency Management, dated March 7, 2023, respecting 2024 Eclipse, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

Councillor Information Request(s):

Provide regular updates respecting preparations for the 2024 Eclipse.
Councillor Witteveen.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

8. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Regional Headquarters.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Councillor Chiochio
Committee Co-Chair

Councillor Morocco
Committee Co-Chair

Kelly Lotimer
Legislative Coordinator

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk