Present: Councillor B. McHattie (Chair), T. Cooper (Vice Chair)
Councillor T. Whitehead, R. Adams, J. Dolbec, A. Tokaci

Absent with Regrets: Councillor S. Merulla

Also Present: T. McMeekin, M.P.P.
B. Curtis, M.P.P.’s Office
T. Tollis, Director, Budgets and Finance
S. Paparella, Legislative Assistant, City Clerk’s Office

THE SOCIAL SERVICES DOWNLOADING STEERING COMMITTEE PRESENTS REPORT 06-002 FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. Province’s Delay on a Decision respecting the Uploading of Social Services (Item 4.1)

   (a) That a letter be sent from the Mayor to the Premier and leaders of all other parties, on behalf of the Social Services Downloading Steering Committee, insisting that the City of Hamilton be represented on the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review Committee.

   (b) That the letter request clarity as to the make-up of the Committee to ensure that representation from local social service agencies and the business sector are included at the discussion table.
(c) That all local area MP’s and MPP’s be copied on the letter to the Premier.

FOR THE INFORMATION OF COMMITTEE:

(a) CHANGES TO THE AGENDA (Item 1)

(i) T. McMeekin, M.P.P. and Bernadette Curtis, from the M.P.P’s office, are in attendance to speak to the Province’s delay on a decision to upload Social Services.

(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 2)

None were declared.

(c) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 3)

The minutes of the April 6, 2006, meeting of the Social Services Downloading Steering Committee were adopted and approved, as presented.

(d) Province's Delay on a Decision respecting the Uploading of Social Services (Item 4.1)

After a lengthy discussion between members of the Social Services Downloading Steering Committee (SSDSC) and Mr. McMeekin, it was determined that the following points be included in the letter to the Premier and leaders of all other parties:

- Congratulate the Province for recognizing the Committee’s initial request.
- The Committee is looking for fiscal relief in terms of the current/downloaded social services burden.
- Relief/assistance should not cause tax increase to residents of Hamilton, unless absolutely necessary - move funding around.
- Provincial Task Force should be broadly consultative; to include representatives from social services agencies and businesses within the Hamilton community.
- Request adequate interim funding be put in place until the SSDSC has had an opportunity to further discuss and put forward recommendations.
- City of Hamilton/SSDSC expects immediate action after the 18 months, which started in August 2006.
• Alternative to above is to have the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review Committee respond, prior to the 2007 provincial election.
• Other municipalities (GTA) can afford and should share in the social services burden.
• Many municipalities have benefited from downloading - Hamilton has not.
• City/SSDSC wants relief - not a switch in issues/one time funding.
• Send copies to leaders of other parties (Conservatives, NDP) - request a response and remind them that this will affect ALL parties.
• Respect principle of matching variable cost with variable revenue streams.

(e) ADJOURNMENT (Item 8)

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor B. McHattie, Chair
Stephanie Paparella
Legislative Assistant
September 29, 2006