

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, Oct. 24.

- **Lanark Lodge Survey Results Received:** Council received the results of the 2018 Lanark Lodge Resident/Family Satisfaction Survey, and overall feedback was positive. Interim Lanark Lodge Director Jennie Bingley presented the results at the community services committee meeting earlier this month. The surveys can be completed online or on paper and have taken place annually since 2007. Ms. Bingley reported the Lodge scored 90 per cent or above in terms of families being made to feel welcome, nursing staff being caring and compassionate, overall satisfaction with nursing services, the dining area being pleasant, enjoyable activities, overall satisfaction with medical services, cleanliness and general repair and upkeep of the home, overall satisfaction with the home, and recommending the home to others. High scores (80 to 90 per cent) were received around communication, staff responsiveness to care needs, meal quality and choice, programming, medical care, home-like environment and control of unpleasant odours. Ms. Bingley noted opportunities for improvement (below 80 per cent) included knowing who to approach with specific issues, meeting religious needs, and handling of personal clothing. “The lowest score, 65 per cent, was related to physical functioning and mobility being maintained or improved through therapy programs,” she said. “This is understandable given residents are entering the home more debilitated and farther along in the dementia journey.” The Lodge is in the early stages of the “Butterfly Program,” which helps residents with dementia with their emotional needs. Ms. Bingley noted concerns have been raised about heat, and the ministry has found the home to be in compliance with the legislation. “The overall feedback was positive and complimentary towards staff,” Ms. Bingley said. “Management and staff are proud of this feedback, but are keen to address the areas identified as opportunities for improvement.” For more information, contact Jennie Bingley, Interim Director of Lanark Lodge, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1320.
- **Housing Study Approved in Principle:** Council has approved in principle the Housing Study for Lanark County and Smiths Falls, which aims to assess housing needs and analyse demand while providing concrete actions. Social Services Director Emily Hollington, in her previous role as Housing Renewal Coordinator, presented the study at the community services committee meeting earlier this month. The process to holistically assess the county’s housing situation began in February under council direction. Ms. Hollington explained the process included Statistics Canada data, input from local municipal planners and service managers, data from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, as well as public consultation that included three public meetings, public and service provider surveys, and feedback from about 300 residents and 20 service providers. The study examined trends in age distribution, household size, tenure (renter/owner), median household income and prevalence of low-income. Priority areas were identified, including a need to improve access to affordable housing; a need to improve housing options (including accessible units); a need for additional supportive services partnered with permanent housing, recognizing marginalized groups; and a need to improve coordination and collaboration in the community. Ms. Hollington outlined five strategic directions, including increasing the supply of affordable housing with a schedule to meet and maintain service level standards; planning for a diverse range of housing choices; stabilizing and revitalizing the current social housing stock; ensuring an adequate supply of appropriate, supportive and universal housing; and educating the community on local housing needs and demands and offer incentives to developers building affordable housing. Ms. Hollington said the study will be used to inform the county’s 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Plan. For

more information, contact Emily Hollington, Director of Social Services, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2101.

- **Lanark Lodge Budget Concerns Outlined:** Council received the 2019 Lanark Lodge draft budget as information following a presentation by Interim Director Jennie Bingley at the community services committee meeting earlier this month. Ms. Bingley indicated the budget may include a substantial increase to the levy, and outlined issues the long-term care home is facing around insufficient direct care-to-resident staffing ratios; insufficient provincial funding and ongoing staffing shortages. “Management is not seeking a commitment from council at this time,” she said. “Rather, this is an opportunity to provide continued awareness of the state of long-term care in Ontario and receive feedback prior to finalizing the budget to be presented to the new council.” Management is undertaking a detailed review of capital needs and is also recommending an increase in direct care staffing of personal support workers (PSW). “Ontario seniors are entering long-term care homes when they are older, frailer and in need of more medical and personal care than ever before,” Ms. Bingley said. “This measurement is defined as resident acuity, which is continually rising without corresponding funding and staffing increases.” An increase in PSW hours would increase the amount of personal care received by residents. Ms. Bingley indicated private homes can show profitability compared to municipal homes due to wage differences, economies of scale for purchased services and a lower corporate services overhead, but Lanark Lodge, as a municipally operated home, consistently has one of the highest wait lists in the South East Local Health Integration Network. She added all long-term care homes have high care needs. “The province should provide a sufficient and fixed level of funding per bed to all homes, which would help stabilize care for residents and reduce the current administrative burden to secure funding.” Ms. Bingley added the higher acuity of residents has not led to significant staffing increases. This has increased workloads, which leads to burnout, injuries, poor morale and staff retention issues. “There is a dire shortage of health care workers in Ontario, which exacerbates the problem.” Lanark Lodge is undertaking efforts to make it attractive to new employees and to improve retention. The budget is expected to be finalized early in the new year. For more information, contact Jennie Bingley, Interim Director of Lanark Lodge, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1320.
- **CERB Contract Renewed:** Council has authorized the renewal of an agreement with the Ontario Provincial Police for a five-year term to provide 9-1-1 Central Emergency Reporting Bureau (CERB) services. At the corporate services committee meeting earlier this month, Emergency Services Coordinator Garry Welsh explained 9-1-1 systems use a call centre, referred to as a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Incoming 9-1-1 calls are transferred by Bell to the PSAP and the location and phone number is provided. Lanark County has had agreements with the OPP CERB in North Bay since 2002, when 9-1-1 became available here. It is the county’s primary PSAP. The CERB call centre acts as the primary contact then routes the call to the appropriate emergency services. Mr. Welsh indicated the OPP has a service level objective of answering 95 per cent of all calls within two rings, which it has exceeded. As well, it has a fully technical redundant system with a backup call centre and duplicate Bell 9-1-1 infrastructure, and it can handle language translation services and text-to-911 for individuals who are hearing impaired. “To date, the level of service with this same provider has met the needs of the community at a competitive cost,” Mr. Welsh said. For more information, contact Garry Welsh, Emergency Services Coordinator, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1503.
- **Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Nov. 14, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, Nov. 14 (following County Council); Corporate Services, Nov. 14 (following Community Services).

County Council, Wednesday, Nov. 28, 5 p.m.; Public Works, Nov. 28 (following County Council); Economic Development, Nov. 28 (following Public Works). All meetings are in Council Chambers unless otherwise noted. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!

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