

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, May 22.

- **Children's Services Five-Year Plan:** Council has adopted the Children's Services Five-Year Service Plan following a presentation by Children's Services Manager Tammy Kealey-Donaldson earlier this month. She explained the county is the system manager for children's services and is responsible for planning, administration and operation of licensed child-care programs. It also coordinates and administers delivery of Ontario's Child Care Fee Subsidy; develops local service plans in coordination with school boards and local providers; oversees local EarlyON Child and Family Centres; supports local service providers in terms of governance, finance, operations and service planning; provides oversight to ensure provincial standards for quality; and writes the service plan. The five-year plan exercise sought information about community needs; identifies strategic priorities, outcomes and steps for implementation; identifies and addresses service gaps and opportunities; supports service coordination; aligns with municipal interests and provincial direction; and demonstrates consultation and accountability in the plan. Ms. Kealey-Donaldson outlined the provincial direction for child care and the new approaches in terms of affordability, flexibility (choice and availability) and maintaining high standards of care. The service plan included an extensive consultation process. Ms. Kealey-Donaldson noted the importance of child care in terms of supporting families, as well as social/economic benefits that make the community attractive to families and employers. The plan identifies seven priorities over the next five years, including promoting more early childhood educators in the county, increasing the number of child care spaces and hours of service, making efforts to keep costs affordable, advocating/supporting the necessity for special needs services, providing professional development activities to Early Years providers, reaching out to more isolated populations and at risk families, and increasing French-language programming. For more information, contact Tammy Kealey-Donaldson, Children's Services Manager, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2301.

- **Warden Sending Letter to Health Minister:** Council passed a motion authorizing the warden to send a letter to Hon. Minister Christine Elliott, Health and Long-term Care expressing council's concerns about announcements related to health units. The province recently announced the number of health units in Ontario will be reduced from 35 to 10 regional entities, and that the funding formula will change, although municipal budgets have already been passed for 2019. "Council supports the local health unit's view and encourages you to work with our health unit and other stakeholders to mitigate all negative financial impacts to municipalities, especially for 2019," Warden Richard Kidd (Beckwith Reeve) states in the letter. He encourages consultation prior to the implementation, along with appropriate municipal representation and no loss of service to the community. Health units that would be similar to Leeds, Grenville and Lanark for the new regional entity, he indicates, would include Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, and the Hastings Prince Edward health units, which have similar populations with urban centres on the St. Lawrence/Lake Ontario and towns and hamlets throughout. It also encourages no division of the current health unit. "If the health unit is split between two new regional public health entities, it will compromise the public health programs and services currently delivered." Warden Kidd also expressed concerns about the financial impact of the change in the cost-sharing formula between the province and municipalities, which is estimated to be more than 1 per cent of the levy. "Council asks you to reconsider this change in funding and ensure that any changes are done outside of the current fiscal year for municipalities," he said, adding Lanark County Council "is proud of our health unit, its exemplary work, services and programs it provides to the residents of Leeds, Grenville and

Lanark, and asks you to ensure this is paramount moving forward.” For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.

- **Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, June 12, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, June 12 (following County Council); Corporate Services, June 12 (following Community Services). **County Council, Wednesday, June 26, 5 p.m.;** Public Works, June 26 (following County Council); Economic Development, June 26 (following Public Works); **Special County Council, June 26 (following Economic Development)**. 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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