

Social Housing

As we move toward a more “tenant-focused” philosophy in our Social Housing Department, it is important that we have a clear idea of what that means to us. The housing staff recently participated in a visioning exercise to define and build on that philosophy. The following *Vision & Values Statement* was developed by the staff:

“Beyond Bricks & Mortar”

Our Values

*Improved quality of life;
Housing that is safe & affordable;
Working together to promote positive change;
Empowerment of tenants, staff & community;
A holistic approach to service; &
Housing that staff are proud to deliver & tenants are proud to live in.*

My sincere thanks to the housing staff for sharing their ideas and working together to develop a vision for social housing for the present and future years.

Child Care

The Ministry of Children & Youth Services recently announced that the Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board (RRDSSAB) will receive an additional \$124,200 for Best Start Wage Improvement Funding. This unexpected funding will go directly to the child care sites to improve staff wages.

Provincial Land Tax (PLT) Reform

PLT continues to move forward. The Thunder Bay District unincorporated area is currently circulating a petition regarding the province’s intent to implement PLT as of 01 January, 2009, without holding further public consultations. The province did hold meetings throughout Northern Ontario to share information and collect feedback from participants, over four years ago. Since that time, there has been no further consultation as to the actual implementation and very little information provided.

Riverview Manor Aging at Home Proposal

The RRDSSAB was pleased to participate as part of a working group who have developed and submitted an *Aging at Home Proposal*, in response to the Northwest LHIN’s Call for Proposals. The *Proposal* requests funding to renovate specific housing units at Riverview Manor in Rainy River to accommodate those with physical challenges and creates unique partnerships to provide necessary services on-site; the intent is to allow seniors to remain at home. It is expected that we will receive word as to our *Proposal’s* success by July, 2008.

The partners include Riverside Health Care, Town of Rainy River, Community Care Access Centre, Northwest Independent Living Services, and RRDSSAB.

Transitional Housing: Unfortunately, although the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines did receive our *Transitional Housing Study Proposal* in November, 2007, we have not heard back as to our ability to access Area Service Board (ASB) funds presently held in trust by the Town of Fort Frances on behalf of the Rainy River District Municipal Association. All partners, including Riverside Health Care, Atikokan General Hospital, Northwestern Health Unit, District Mental Health Services for Older Adults, Town of Rainy River, consumer representatives, and RRDSSAB anxiously await their reply.

Board Governance Training

On 04 June, 2008, members of the board were invited to participate in Board Governance training with Ruth Armstrong, MBA, Vision Management Inc. Ruth visited our DSSAB over ten years ago, when she was contracted by the province to provide DSSAB Board training for all DSSABs in Northern Ontario.

At the conclusion of the training, Ruth summarized the session by saying that she found our Board “very refreshing” and “very well organized”, and spoke highly of our Board policies. She commented that “lots of Boards could learn from this Board”.

Annual Staff Meeting

During the afternoon of 04 June, 2008, we gathered with our staff to celebrate their successes over the past year and to participate in an interactive presentation with Ruth Armstrong titled “*Change-ability*”. From her presentation we learned many things about change, some which follow:

Stability – true stability – is an absence of progress.

The world hates change yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.

Complex systems, like weather and organizations, can be powerfully affected by very small, remote influences.

Nobody makes a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.

Long Term Service Awards: Several employees were recognized & presented with tokens of appreciation at the meeting for their years of service including:

5 years	Andree DeVabre
	Shae Felix

Matthew Jackson
Kristie McQuay
Cheryl Morrison
Melanie Sheppard
Bosko Stopa
Chris Wielinga
Roger Wilson

10 years Coralyn Hershey

15 years Karen Antonson
GayDonna Baker
Lucille MacDonald

20 years Gabriele Emond

Human Resources

Since the last board meeting, we have seen the following HR activity:

NAME	TITLE	STATUS	EFFECTIVE DATE
Adam Brimble	Paramedic	leave replacement (internal)	19 May, 2008
Terry Carmody	Student Custodian	summer student - FF	20 May, 2008
Jamie Stus	Student Custodian	summer student - Atik	26 May, 2008
Anne Barnard	Custodian	resignation	12 June, 2008

An 'Aha' Moment from Ruth Armstrong:

Two caterpillars are conversing & a beautiful butterfly floats by. One caterpillar turns & says to the other: "you'll never get me up on one of those butterfly things".

Respectfully Submitted,
/d Dittaro