



Accommodations

- The Building Committee has completed an extensive review of all options and the work completed by the Committee, since August of 2000, in order to determine the most suitable alternative for new accommodations for the RRDSSAB. Significant concerns with the building and its effect on clients, staff and Board continue. The Building Committee will be presenting a report to the Board at the October Board meeting, in order to proceed with resolution on this long-standing issue. As part of that presentation, a staff representative will address the Board to bring forward staff issues, particularly relating to confidentiality and the client's right to privacy. We are in a bind, at present, as we do not have the space to house additional staff.

Land Ambulance

- We have forwarded a letter to the Minister of Health & Long Term Care expressing our interest in having a RRDSSAB representative serve on the proposed Land Ambulance 'Table'. Given our history of advocacy and our ongoing dialogue with this particular Ministry, we would hope that our request will be given serious consideration. To date, we have not had a reply from the Minister's Office (letter sent 19 Sept/05) .
- Unfortunately, Riverside has not signed their *2005 Operating Budget*. I did forward a letter on the Board's behalf (20 Sept/05) indicating the need to sign as quickly as possible and, to date, have had no response to the letter nor a signed budget. We continue to flow cash at the 2004 level which inaccurately reflects a surplus on the RRDSSAB's financial statements. It is the time of year when we must begin to plan for next year's budget.
- Dan McCormick has been working with the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care, as a Northern representative, to develop a solution to the Ministry's funding of calls to First Nations. The Ministry has indicated their willingness to reach a new funding model, however, there is mixed reaction to the options being presented. Unfortunately, the Northern DSSABs are somewhat 'at odds' as to how to handle the matter, some presenting an 'all or nothing' attitude which we cannot support, given our current

funding situation. Our DSSAB will continue to pursue all avenues to seek resolution, particularly as this is critical to any decisions our Board will make regarding the need to reduce services. The RRDSSAB hopes to avoid that situation and the FN funding may assist in addressing our funding needs.

Child Care

- Best Start is here and proceeding in a frenzy of activity. The timelines for submissions of the Child Care Service Plan, Infrastructure Plan and Best Start Implementation Plan are extremely tight. Jeannette Cawston has been hired as the Best Start Coordinator to facilitate the planning process. We are still working on a job description for a support position to assist Jeanette and Kim with the project and other child care program-related duties. We have begun Best Start consultations throughout the District; you will notice newspaper and radio ads in the near future, inviting full participation by District residents. The key to our success is the involvement of all stakeholders, including parents who are often difficult to draw to meetings. Discussion with the various School Boards is ongoing. This is an exciting initiative and we are proud to be the lead in the process.

Social Housing

- With the announcement of the Affordable Housing Program, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has been conducting information sessions for Service Managers across the Province. At a session held recently in Thunder Bay, the MMAH representatives were not able to provide any additional information on the "remote" component which is of most significance to our area. We will therefore, submit an expression of interest for the program, although this does not commit us in any way. It simply leaves the door open for us, otherwise our allocation would be quickly absorbed by the Ministry and redirected to another Service Manager. We hope the focus of the 'remote' funding on renovation and repair will better suit our needs.
- RRDSSAB staff continue to work with Atikokan Urban Native Housing. We will be looking at a new property management system in our DSSAB, in order to address the current and anticipated future needs for property management of non-profit housing in our District.

Ontario Works

- Once again, Service Managers from across the Province are looking at the uncontrollable rising costs of the Ontario Disability Support Program

(ODSP) and, with that, proposing the elimination of cost-sharing or transferring the administration to the existing Service Managers.

Victim's Services

- The Ministry of the Attorney-General has just announced funding for the Victim's Services Program, following a one year wait. RRDSSAB, as host agency, is responsible for developing job specifications, hiring and housing the staff.

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Dittaro, CAO
07 October, 2005