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Sep 11, 2024 · 100 tweets · [adamadonaldson/status/1833911965481402438](https://twitter.com/adamadonaldson/status/1833911965481402438)

Coming up at 1 pm, it's this month's Social Services Meeting at Wellington County. This is what's on the agenda:



First up, 65 Delhi St. Transitional Housing Construction Project - Status Report #7. The exterior of the building is done, major work on interior is done. Installation of services complete except water. Next month, they're finishing up site work plus int. finishing.

The building should be complete by December if not November. There will also be a credit back to the county, so the project has saved money.

Cllr O'Rourke asks if there will be an opportunity to promote the opening when it happens. Anderson says probably, not sure about the timing. Wilson asks if O'Rourke means open house. O'Rourke is thinking something like tour of Shelldale.

Social Services administrator Louisa Artuso says they will have a grand opening in early January, and people will start moving in mid-to-late Jan

Receipt of report approved.

Next, Financial Statements as of August 31, 2024. Treasurer O'Dwyer says there will be a more detailed variance report next month. Notes higher caseload for OW, as well as higher line item for supplies due to 1 time funding. Childcare is tracking on budget.

Higher grants and subsidies are noted in social housing, which is due to the overlap of the granting fiscal year with the County fiscal. On affordable, things are track on budget, but there do seem to be higher costs for heating and cool. Nothing too significant.

O'Rourke asks about recent announcement of \$12 million. O'Dwyer notes that the money was actually received 2 years ago and is reflected in current budget though it was only

announced a few weeks ago.

Motion to approve financial statements approved.

Next, Tender Award - Accessible Unit Conversions. his project will see five, two-bedroom, rent geared to income units, including three in Guelph, be converted into fully accessible units for people who use wheelchairs including doorway widening, bathroom renos and new appliances.

The winning tender goes to Ritestart Limited in Burlington for \$1.65 million.

Cllr Busuttil asks if there's a target for accessible units. Staff says CMHC target is 240 units, or about 20%, of the county's housing will be accessible.

Cllr Bulmer asks about impact on the waiting list for an accessible unit. Artuso says they can bring that back.

Motion to approve the tender approved!

Next, Tender Award - Generators for Child Care Centres. This is to install generators at three area Childcare and Learning Centres, one in Fergus, one in Mount Forest and the Willowdale Child Care and Learning Centre here in Guelph.

The winning tender is MJM Electric Limited of Ariss for nearly \$406,000.

Busuttil asks if there's any money set aside for green updates with this project. Artuso says no b/c the buildings are old. The goal is to install generators in case there's a power loss so that they don't have to close service for the day.

Motion to approve the tender approved.

On ambulances, Bulmer says he would like have a question answered the next time Chief Dewar is here: He's wondering about the impact of CTS closure on paramedic services.

DCAO Clack-Bush says that paramedics will be ready to respond, don't want to leave community with the impression they won't be able to cope. Having been talking to Guelph CHC about their stats, the ones who overdose and don't go to hospital.

Note: Jean Hopkins from the WG Drug Strategy talked about the effectiveness of diverting overdoses from the ER on last week's Open Sources:



#### Open Sources (Ep. #483) Show Notes for September 5, 2024

This week on Open Sources Guelph, it's back to school time! In the spirit of learning and continuing education we will open our minds and exercise our takes by tackling the big news stories o...


<https://opensourcesguelph.com/2024/09/05/open-sources-ep-483-show-notes-for-sept...>

Clack-Bush says that she can get data from Guelph CHC and bring that back to next month's meeting.

Anderson says he has questions about HART Hubs, with the Guelph one be ready by the time the CTS closes. Clack-Bush says Mayor Guthrie has been looking at this, and b/c Guelph is one location losing CTS, our application is different from others. Need transition plan by 09/20.

Full application needs to be in by October 18, and it is expected that upon completion of the application and its receipt, Guelph will automatically get cleared for the \$6.5 (ish) million for a HART Hub.

O'Rourke asks about the time crunch when there's no location identified, there might be a gap in service, and is there a plan to address the gap? Clack-Bush says she doesn't know when they'll announce, but the intention is to roll this out quickly. What does that mean? 🤖

Artuso says that a working group has been struck \$1.3 million is reserved for housing alone, and they are currently looking at how to phase out CTS and transfer to HART Hub. Guelph CHC has components, so they're building on it & they're confident that someone will open  expand

Artuso adds that these are "demonstration" sites, so they need to tweak but they're working on limited funding which presents a challenge. Anderson notes that there will be a full report on this at the next meeting.

Busuttil asks for a motion to approve the verbal update so that it's on the record. Motion approved.

Next, New Child Care Funding Approach and Incremental 2024 Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Administrative Funding. Mandy Koroniak, Director of Children's Early Years notes that this is an Info report about funding changes due to \$10/day program.

Starting in January, daycare centres not participating will no longer be eligible for some provincial funding. Costs for daycares in the program base fees starting in January will be capped at \$22 per day for parents.

Busuttil asks if any operators are opting out of anada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System. Koroniak says no.

O'Rourke asks if losing subsidies will have negative impact on spaces. Koroniak says it's hard to determine right now.

Motion to receive the report for information approved.

All childcare services providers, including the ones in Guelph, are going to have their own PA Day on Friday November 29. (This is also a PA Day for schools.)

Half the day will be dedicated to a “community-wide professional learning opportunity” and the other half will be for “team-specific learning for programmes.”

EarlyON service providers will be having their own professional development day on Wednesday October 23.

Motion to approve this report is passed.

Next, 2020-2024 Wellington Service Delivery Area Ontario Works Caseload Profile Report. Krista Card, the new director of Ontario Works, presents.

The trends:

Identified below are some key trends from the mid-year 2024 report:

- The caseload has increased 1% above pre-pandemic levels to 2,095 cases.
- 35% of all beneficiaries reliant on Ontario Works assistance in the County of Wellington and the City of Guelph are children under the age of 18.
- Caseload distribution remains in line with previous years with 80% of Ontario Works recipients residing in the City of Guelph and 20% of recipients residing across the County of Wellington.
- The gap between the number of men and women receiving Ontario Works assistance narrowed to 52% female and 48% male.
- Single individuals continue to represent the greatest share of the Ontario Works caseload, followed by sole support parents.
- The average length of time households remain on assistance is 31.5 months in 2024, below the provincial average of 36 months.
- Cases with no fixed address account for 7.1% of the total Ontario Works caseload, a slight increase from 2023.
- The number of asylum claimants on the Ontario Works caseload has doubled compared to 2023, to 5.6% of the total caseload.

Caseloads are now at pre-pandemic levels as of July, but this is a trend being seen across Ontario. There's also an increase in immigration claimants due to the gap in OW and housing costs. People are staying on assistance longer, although Wellington is below ON average.

Busuttil asks about "no fixed address" is that mail or a living address. Card says it could be people using the WC office, and is not comfortable providing address or are unhoused and/or couch surfing.

Cllr Cork asks about the under 18s, who are they? Card says they could be young people with special needs, but it also counts depends of those receiving assistance.

O'Rourke asks about the advocacy on getting increases to OW so that people can move beyond survival. Not sure another motion is going to help. Card says most recent was at AMO, but there's advocacy across multiple areas too.

Anderson adds that they only had 15 minutes, and he compared his notes to those from a municipality in eastern Ontario and they were the same notes. They know the issues is there so it's a question of how much more support will they give up and when.

Warden Lennox says he was not encouraged by the conversation at AMO. The program is intended to be temporary and that's why they don't want to make it supportive and liveable. There's a lot of advocacy left to do.

Busuttil says there needs to be strong leadership and a campaign, advocacy is more than delegating it's about the issue front and centre every day. She says she was disappointed with AMO, and the burden comes onto the municipalities.

Anderson notes that Councillor Diane Ballantyne (who's here) has just been appointed to the AMO Board. CAO Wilson says that staff can't take a role in street advocacy, also JSSLAC needs to remember that the ONgov cancelled basic income pilot...

...the ONgov is focused on housing, and housing only, which would be great if we could get everyone on OW a construction job.

Lennox says he finds it frustrating b/c this links to homelessness, because if OW is below what people need for housing, they're in a "poverty trap" and more and more people are going to fall into that trap.

Artuso says that they advocated to tie OW to low income rate, and presented the costs and how they compared to how much money people get from OW. There's more analysis that needs to be done, and closing the gap will cost millions. Staff can put together that data.

Ballantyne says that report will be important because it will show starkly though data how big the gap is. Anderson says it won't be an issue to pass such a report on to the Minister of Housing too. O'Rourke notes that unhoused people don't get the shelter benefit, seems cynical.

Cllr Duncan asks if the feds put any money to OW for the immigrant claimants? Card says there's been no additional funding for those seeking asylum thru OW, O'Dwyer adds that the only fed funds they've gotten is \$500k in IRCC funds.

Motion to receive the report approved.

Next, Property Tax Exemption for Clifford Non-Profit Housing Corporation. County has entered into a new capital municipal funding agreement now that the mortgage has expired here.

Busuttil asks if there's every been a cost benefit analysis of these agreements. People don't get Trillium benefits if there rental doesn't collect property taxes, so this is another barrier. O'Dwyer says it's a known issue, they've done some digging but need more data.

There's also been some convo about changing the legislation because this might be an unintended consequence. Paul Skinner, Interim Director of Housing Services, says they've

been pushing MMAH to push the Ministry of Finance to resolve this.  
Recommendation, with additional of the French-language school boards, approved.

**Recommendation:**

That the County of Wellington pass a by-law pursuant to Section 110 of the Municipal Act, 2001 authorizing a municipal capital facilities agreement; and

That the County of Wellington pass a by-law pursuant to Section 110 of the Municipal Act, 2001, authorizing the exemption of the Clifford Non-Profit Housing Corporation premises from municipal and education property taxes effective January 1, 2025; and

That written notice of the by-law be provided to the Ministers of Finance, Education and Housing, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, the Town of Minto, the Upper Grand District School Board, and the Wellington Catholic District School Board; and

That the 2025 Housing Services budget and ten-year plan be adjusted to reflect the cost reduction resulting from the property tax exemption; and

That the savings resulting from the education portion of the property tax exemption be reinvested in future capital repairs of housing stock through the Housing Capital Reserve.

Next, Upbuilding! Non-Profit Homes (Guelph) Inc. Pre-Development Funding Request. Upbuilding! is planning an 18-unit expansion of their Fife Road property and are currently pursuing funding through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Fund.

That requires detailed drawings and specifications. Upbuilding! is asking for some help with those pre-development costs, and County staff is recommending the offer of \$50,000 through the Shared Housing Regeneration Reserve

Skinner notes that one of the barriers that non-profit housing corps face is these pre-development costs, because there's so much work that has to be done before they can even apply for funding. Essentially, they have to start construction in 120 days of approval.

Busuttil asks if there's any available funding streams for pre-development. Skinner says there is a CMHC stream for seeding funding, but if that requires a project to be fairly far along. Skinner says this pot exists to help current partners get projects going.

Recommendation: That the Committee recommend to County Council to approve up to \$50,000 from the Shared Housing Regeneration Reserve to Upbuilding! to support pre-development costs for 50-60 Fife Road to the satisfaction of the Social Services Administrator and County Solicitor.

Lennox asks if there's any Information about projects that weren't able to address this gap? Skinner says they've noticed some projects not end up successful on their funding request for the project, but not many are dropped while putting together an application.

Bulmer says he's seen proposals hit a lot of different barriers like security deposits to secure a building permit. Is it possible to backstop some fees so that projects can get over the hurdle and help them on their way?

Skinner says part of the RFP process is looking to municipalities for potential savings like waiving fees. However looking at a formal program to make waiving those fees pro forma might be worth looking at.

Next, Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Co-Investment Funds Renovation and Repair Programme Update. This is the 2022 funding that was just announced.

The County received a \$12 million commitment from the CMHC as part of their Renovation and Repair Programme and the money will go to the maintenance needs at County-owned housing units.

he goal of the upgrade is to help reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions through new insulation, energy efficient windows and doors, roof repairs, new heating and cooling systems and more.

The County will also be kicking in \$14.5 million in additional capital spending, which will also require the hiring of two full-time staff members in order to implement.

The program will run till the end of 2025 and expects to meet all requirements by that time.

O'Rourke asks about the timeline for repairs. Skinner says it's underway, it's a complicated budget but the first year was largely planning based. Most of the work will be done over the next 1.5 years.

Motion to receive report for information approved.

Next, 2024-25 Winter Response Plan. Skinner says this is response to a Guelph motion in May. Housing staff will start outreach this month.

Starting on October 1, individuals living rough will be offered temporary accommodation at the old Norfolk Manor, or a hotel, they will also be offered tangibles like tents, sleeping bags, tarps and other winter supplies.

There's also money budgeted for transportation, food and hygiene and the rental of storage lockers to secure belongs in a safe, secure and accessible location.

Budget. No federal funds right now, but County will be monitoring.

Item:	Total (7 months)
Temporary Accommodation and Tangibles	\$560,000
Accessible Storage	\$6,800
Transportation	\$8,000
Food Security and Hygiene Products	\$87,500
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$662, 300</b>

Busuttill says she's concerned about temp housing and would like to have a conversation about the continuum and where something like tiny homes can be discussed. Artuso says staff provided assessment in July, their definition is the one in Fredericton and not a structured encamp.

Busuttil says something needs to happen beyond a tent and a sleeping bag. Would like to look at a structured encampment as an emergency response measure.

Artuso says she believes that there's good coverage for giving people a temporary place to go and that there's support services, it just looks different than what people want with a temp. structured encampment.

Lennox asks if there's a service gap that he doesn't know about, are services not getting to people with current continuum? Busuttil says when she looks at the City, there's encampments in places and they say the shelters aren't meeting their needs, trying to find safe place...

...for them to congregate while something more permanent is being sought for them. In the meantime, they have a community, and that should be supported too.

Lennox says he thinks that County staff has already said that they're dedicated to serving people and is not sure why we need to talk about the continuum. Busuttil says that reassuring.

Bulmar says if the City wants to building something they don't need the County's permission, and the County isn't standing in the way. New CAO Baker says the City is not a social service provider so to move forward w/o the County puts the two govs out of sync.

Artuso says that if the City wants to continue the conversation they can do that, but they have to take a look at the need for individuals. Is there a gap? Yes, not everyone wants a congregate setting, and we need to look at short and long-term needs.

People With Lived Experience Advisory group will meet at the first time at the end of September. All these new groups are coming together very, very quickly and the first step is consulting with people with lived experience, and then find the gaps and address them.

Artuso says that she's heard that some people want to live outdoors regardless, otherwise they're looking at 2 actions on homelessness: Prevention and Housing, and there's no enough \$\$ for those two things.

Artuso: Prevention is the priority because they don't want to create more unhoused people. About 10-17 beds available to people on a nightly basis so they have to be convinced that they need more money for emergency housing.

Wilson says that he hopes the report doesn't feel deficient in some way, but this is about the plan. A conversation about the continuum can happen later, and this was a challenge to put together over the summer as it is.

Clack-Bush notes that the motions from the temporary structured encamp. meeting are coming up and that was about how they \*may\* fit into continuum. Also, there's still a lot of work b/c still looking for land. The urgency is for winter plan.

Downer acknowledges the work on the report, and notes how Norfolk is able to accommodate couples and some pets. Notes that there's still a lot of questions about the permanency of tiny homes, and the need to define the outcome.

Downer asks if the County tracks the number of people that have refused shelter space? Artuso says they don't track that, the goal is to present people the option and understand their needs and concerns. Will probably have to start tracking, but they don't want to identify peeps.

In other words, they will be collecting the data but not releasing it because they don't want to demonise people that prefer living rough to staying at a shelter. The conversations with those folks are ongoing.

Downer asks if there's any overlap with the funding provided at the Aug 28 meeting? Artuso says there's \$25k for tangible items that aren't covered by other sources and that might be outside the winter response plan. Making sure the lines are clear for funding source.

Artuso adds that it's likely that this money will be covered by funds from the federal government, they just haven't got an announcement yet.

Anderson says he knows this is temporary, but there will be more fulsome information from the Health and Housing Symposium in a future report that will likely offer some more direction.

Recommendation:

That the Joint Social Services Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council and Guelph City Council to approve the report, 2024-25 Winter Response Plan for People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness.

The recommendation is approved.

Correspondence from the Township of Centre Wellington from July 17, 2024 – A motion was passed at Centre Wellington Council asking for some help getting childcare built in Belwood and to hold off on any outdoor rec needs until the Parks and Recreation Plan is complete.

City of Guelph Council Resolutions Adopted July 16, 2024 – These were the motions that council approved back in July about the plan to create a temporary structured encampment with the Guelph Tiny Home Coalition, including some specific requests of the committee.

Both correspondences received by committee.

That's a wrap for this meeting!



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