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ASSUMPTION OF FUNDING FOR SMALL WATER WORKS IN CHILD CARE CENTRES

The Community and Health Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated September 20, 2012, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council authorize additional gross expenditures of up to \$23,463 in 2012 for costs related to Small Water Works systems for licensed child care centres, offset by 100% provincial funding, with no tax levy impact.

2. PURPOSE

This report requests that Council approve an annual \$23,463 budget increase for regular ongoing costs for water testing and maintenance of small water systems for child care operators who use these systems, offset by 100% provincial funding, with no tax levy impact.

3. BACKGROUND

Small Water Works, previously funded under the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, assists licensed child care operators with regular ongoing specific costs related to testing and maintenance of small water systems.

Until spring 2012, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) provided licensed child care operators with funding to manage costs related to water testing and maintenance of small water systems. Eligible expenditures are limited to the regular ongoing water testing and maintenance costs. In York Region, MCYS Central East Regional Office managed both the funding approvals as well as the annual distribution of funding to approved licensed child care operators.

In April 2012, Small Water Works funding was transferred to the Ministry of Education and now Consolidated Municipal Service Managers must distribute these funds.

As part of the ongoing provincial contract management re-alignment, effective April 1, 2012, funding to support costs related to Small Water Works (SWW) was transferred to the Ministry of Education from MCYS. The Ministry of Education is now responsible for managing funding approvals for the licensed child care operators that have been historically approved by MCYS to receive SWW funding. In late June 2012, all Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) were advised by the Ministry of Education that they would now be responsible for managing the distribution of SWW funding to Ministry-approved licensed child care operators.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Small Water Works funding for 2012 will be limited to centre-based licensed child care operators who have historically received this funding from the Province.

Small Water Works funding for 2012 will be limited to centre-based licensed child care operators who have historically received this funding from the Province. Table 1 identifies the 2012 Ministry of Education-approved allocations by location. Community and Health Services Social Services Branch, as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for the Child Care system in York Region, will be responsible for managing the distribution of SWW funding. This role will include the flow through and distribution of Ministry of Education-approved funding allocations by licensed child care centre location, collection of receipts from these locations and reporting of expenditures to the Ministry. Community and Health Services Public Health Branch was consulted to determine if there was a possible conflict of interest as Public Health tests small water works. No concerns were identified with the Social Services Branch distributing this funding. Liabilities and funding approvals of the SWW program continue to remain a provincial responsibility.

Table 1
2012 Approved Allocations by Location

Child Care Operator Name	Centre Funding	Centre Address
Deer Park Child Care	\$4,100	12637 10th Line, Stouffville ON, L4A 7X3
Gormley Daycare Centre	\$2,000	11 Union Street, P.O. Box 566, Gormley ON L0H 1G0
Kettleby Co-Op Nursery School Inc.	\$1,350	3150 Aurora Sideroad, Kettleby, ON L0G 1J0

Child Care Operator Name	Centre Funding	Centre Address
North Markham Nursery School Missionary Church Canada East	\$1,430	5438 Major Mackenzie Dr., Markham, ON L3P 3J3
Mind Tech Montessori North Campus	\$9,900	1 Dickson Hill Road, Markham, ON L3P 3J3
Rocking Horse Country Child Care	\$2,550	21 Guardsman Road, Thornhill, ON L3T 6L2

York Region received an increase of \$23,463 of 100% provincial funding, retroactive to April 1, 2012, for SWW expenditures.

On July 11, 2012, York Region received \$23,463 of 100% provincial funding retroactive to April 1, 2012 to assist licensed child care operators with regular ongoing costs related to water testing and maintenance of small water systems. Eligible expenditures under this program are specific to costs including laboratory testing, chemicals, supplies/filters, courier costs, maintenance of water treatment equipment including replacement UV bulbs and training. Eligible expenditures also include administrative costs assumed by York Region in its role of managing this funding distribution.

The Ministry of Education stated that the ongoing and future needs for SWW funding across the Province will be assessed and they will work directly with municipalities to support an equitable distribution of any surplus funds. CMSMs do not have the authority to change funding amounts or provide funding approvals. Any requests for additional funding follow a defined process by the Ministry of Education and CMSMs are the mechanism by which these requests are forwarded to the Ministry.

Link to key Council-approved plans

The recommendation to approve the increase in gross expenditures offset by 100% provincial funding from the Ministry of Education supports the Regional Official Plan and Vision 2051 through the provision of human services that strengthen communities and increase access to affordable child care for families to help them reach their social and economic potential. This funding supports child care operators to provide quality child care programs that provide a healthy, safe environment for children.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The assumption of the Small Water Works program has no tax levy impact

Effective April 1, 2012, York Region received an additional \$23,463 in provincial funding for the Small Water Works program. This 100% provincial funding allocation includes \$21,330 for distribution to licensed child care operators and \$2,133 that can be

allocated for administration costs associated with the management of this program. The program will be managed within the provincial funding allocation with no tax levy impact.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Assumption and oversight of Small Water Works funding by York Region will not in itself have a direct impact on local municipalities. It is however another step in increasing York Region's scope of managing the child care system to allow parents to better access licensed, quality child care programs so they can pursue employment and/or education opportunities. This, in turn, supports local industry, promotes economic development, strengthens local communities and supports families in moving towards independence.

7. CONCLUSION

As part of its strategy to modernize child care and implement full day kindergarten, the Province continues to streamline funding and provide municipalities with more scope to manage local child care needs and realities. This re-engineering of responsibilities and funding priorities under the Ministry of Education recognizes the role the municipalities play in supporting and managing the child care system as a whole. Assumption of Small Water Works funding is another step toward increasing York Region's scope of service management.

Future impacts will be monitored and reported back to Committee and Council as appropriate.

For more information on this report, please contact Cordelia Abankwa, General Manager, Social Services at Extension 2150.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.