

May 29, 2017

Report To: Mayor and Council

From: Doug Brown, CAO

**SUBJECT: Strategic Plan – Initiative No. 17- Future of Health Care Services**

The Strategic Plan Initiative No. 17 – Future of Health Care Services is worded as follows:

***“The Town will work towards forming a committee with Riverside Health Care, the Fort Frances Community Clinic and the Physician Recruitment Committee to examine the challenges and opportunities regarding the delivery of health care in Fort Frances.”***

A decision will need to be made to determine if it is necessary to form a new health care services committee of Council.

The May 23, 2017 presentation by Jessica Logozzo of the North West LHIN clearly identified that the North West LHIN organization is provincially mandated to set health care service priorities, consult with health care stakeholders, implement cost effective health care services and fund health care services in our community and within the North West LHIN region.

At present, our Council has been very supportive and extremely involved in the advancement of the delivery of health care services in our community by serving on the following health care organizations:

**Physician Recruitment and Retention (P R & R) Committee** – Councillors Wendy Brunetta and Doug Kitowski. In addition, the Town’s CAO is welcome to attend committee meetings. The Recruiter is available 24/7 and is willing to present/update Council at their request.

**Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board** – Councillor Ken Perry has recently been appointed as Chairman for this board.

**Northwestern Health Unit Board** - Councillor Paul Ryan has recently been appointed as Chairman for this board. Councillor Ryan and Councillor Albanese have both served previously as board members.

**Fort Frances Community Clinic Board** - At present, Councillor John Albanese serves on this board, and several Councillors on previous terms of Council have participated. Marlis Bruyere, FFCC Exec Director is also on the PR&R Committee.

Through the previously mentioned organizations, Council has full access to providing feedback and to participate in affecting recommendations for delivery of health care services in our community. These organizations communicate with the North West LHIN on local health care issues on a regular basis. Riverside Health Care President and CEO Mr. Ted Scholten is on the PR&R Committee, and he meets regularly with the NWLHIN.

Over the years, Council has been very focused on guaranteeing that there is always an adequate number of Physicians available to service our community. Without an adequate number of Physicians, it is difficult to provide a sustainable health care system. In addition, Physicians in our community recruit and attract other new Physicians. Interested doctors do not look favorably at communities where there is a shortage of and/or overworked Physicians. Council provides both in-kind services and financial incentives to attract and welcome new physicians to our community. This commitment is a key consideration which should not to be taken for granted or discounted. In discussions with Todd Hamilton, Physician recruiter, the new Physicians appreciate these incentives, which assists them to maintain a work/quality-of-life balance that otherwise might be difficult to attain in a small Northwestern Ontario community. The incentives provided in Fort Frances are available from most or all NW Ontario and Northern Ontario communities.

Council has also been very involved in the process of ensuring an appropriate clinic facility is in place for the physicians to practice. Additionally, Council is currently involved in the planning process to enrich this facility in the future.

The Town has played an essential role in ensuring that quality of life and essential services are in place in our community. These services include the operation and maintenance of the airport, essential municipal infrastructure, provision of sport facilities, parks, cultural and artistic venues, on-going residential expansion and the ability to ensure that good quality and quantity of safe drinking water is readily available. The way Council manages the affairs of the community plays a fundamental role in attracting new physicians to our community. Council's dedication to effective management of the community should not be understated. Todd Hamilton, Physician Recruiter, reports visiting physicians are always impressed with our Town services, infrastructure, schools and overall care and maintenance. Physicians are especially impressed with available building lots, the new technology center and the state of the art hospital facilities.

It has been suggested that the Town remain focused on physician recruitment and retention and that Council should consider receiving semi-annual up-dates from Todd Hamilton, Physician Recruiter, in person to report to council. Therefore, establishing a new health care services committee of Council is unwarranted at this time, as Council has been very active and continues to be proactive in ensuring the delivery of health care services is continuously improving in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Brown". The script is cursive and fluid.

Doug Brown, CAO

**Council approval of this report will** ensure the following:

- 1) That the need to establish a new health care services committee is unwarranted.
- 2) That Todd Hamilton, Physician Recruiter, provide semi-annual updates on recruitment activities to Council through open council meetings.
- 3) Strategic Plan Initiative No. 17 – “Future of Health Care Services” has been addressed and is considered to be completed at this time.

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