



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner of Community Services

Meeting Date: December 1, 2020

Subject: Report CSSS20-023
Award of RFP-20-20 Meal Program and Drop-in Centre Services

Purpose

A report to award Request for Proposal (RFP) 20-20 for the delivery of Meal Program and Drop-in Centre Services.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSSS20-023, dated December 1, 2020, of the Commissioner of Community Services, as follows:

- a) That the RFP be awarded to St. John's Anglican Church, 99 Brock Street, Peterborough, Ontario, for a 1 year contract in the amount of \$208,000 with the option for two, 2-year extensions, for the delivery of a Community Meal and Drop-in Services for the period of January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021; and
- b) That payments of \$400 per day be made as part of this contract for the delivery of warming and cooling service when heat and cold alerts occur.

Budget and Financial Implications

The cost of the Meal Program and Drop-in Centre Services is a 100% municipal cost through the Homelessness budget. It would be part of the cost sharing agreement for Homelessness services with the County. The draft 2021 budget has allocated \$208,000 for this service and an additional \$15,000 for the cost of extending drop-in hours during heat and cold alerts.

A 2% cost of living increase will be added to the optional contract extensions. If both contract extensions occur, the total cost of the program over 5 years, including funding for extended hours, will be \$1,157,440.

St. John's Anglican Church currently receives an additional \$500 per week through the existing Social Services budget to cover staffing costs related to the COVID-19 emergency. This will be continued for 2021.

Background

On July 22, 2019, Council approved Report CSSS19-007 - Contract Extension for Daily Meal Program and Update on Local Food Security Programs that extended the service contract with St. John's, to operate the One Roof Community Centre (One Roof) for 2020. Council also passed a motion instructing staff to issue an RFP for the service after the extension expired on December 31, 2020.

An RFP was issued on September 24, 2020 and closed on October 29, 2020. The scope of work outlined in the RFP included:

- A free daily lunch meal;
- A drop-in centre available 4 hours per day;
- An environment for social inclusion and interaction;
- Engagement with a variety of local service providers and referrals to local agencies; and
- A facility that becomes a cooling and warming centre during extreme weather alerts.

Proponents were also asked to detail service level modifications during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Current Services

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, One Roof was open from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. serving a lunch and supper meal 5 days per week and a lunch service on Saturdays and Sundays. On average, One Roof would deliver 115 lunches per day, 135 suppers per day, and extend hours for roughly 30 days per year due to extreme weather.

Over the past 4 years, One Roof's annual budget consistently surpassed \$400,000 with \$208,000 being provided by the City in 2020. Service at One Roof exceeded the contractual requirements of the City as noted above. One Roof undertook additional hours, services, and the associated costs to better serve the marginalized community that accesses their Centre.

The onset of COVID-19 resulted in several program changes at One Roof. The drop-in service was canceled, and the meal program was changed from a sit-down meal to a take-away lunch. The supper meal, along with the Culinary Training Program were also cancelled. Any assistance and referrals provided by staff was conducted outside with no public access to St. John's.

On July 25, 2020, One Roof reopened the 4-hour drop-in service at the request of the City. This coincided with the move of Brock Mission from the Peterborough Sport and Wellness Centre to St. Paul's Church and Murray Street Baptist Church for shelter and overflow services. Reopening the drop-in services at One Roof gave people in the shelter system an additional daytime place to access, particularly those staying in the overflow shelter that is only open overnight.

Since opening the drop-in service, One Roof has enforced COVID-19 protocols, such as physical distancing, contact tracing and additional cleaning to protect the health and safety of clients, staff and volunteers. Volunteers are being used on a limited basis at One Roof during the pandemic. This has resulted in higher staffing costs. The City is using the Social Services Administrative Budget to provide an additional \$500 per week to assist with these costs during the COVID-19 emergency.

Currently, One Roof is averaging 135 lunches per day and have opened for extended hours 27 days in 2020 for extreme weather. Average lunch service has steadily increased since May when they averaged 66 lunches per day. The modified drop-in service has not been used extensively, however, One Roof staff conduct many service and referral discussions with clients outside the main entrance of the Centre before and after the meal service.

RFP Evaluation and Negotiations

The evaluation team included the Social Services Division Manager, the Homelessness and Addictions Program Manager, and the Community Development Program Manager. St. John's was the only proponent to submit a proposal.

The St. John's proposal successfully met the service criteria set out in the RFP noted at the beginning of this report, however, their pricing of \$450,000 annually was \$242,000 over the \$208,000 budget limit specified by the City.

Negotiations with St. John's commenced on November 3, 2020. The reasons provided for the significant increase in pricing include:

- a) Reduced capacity to undertake fundraising and grant-writing activities;
- b) Lack of volunteer support to assist with all aspects of service as a result of COVID-19 and the need to limit operations to paid staff to protect the health and safety of clients, volunteers and staff;
- c) Uncertainty of the future availability of volunteer resources long-term;
- d) Increase in staff wages to support staff and limit turnover; and

- e) Addressing staffing challenges to open for extended hours during extreme weather.

Further negotiations resulted in St. John's lowering their price to \$374,000 annually by reducing services, eliminating a staff position and reducing other staff hours. The new price was still \$166,000 over the City's budget of \$208,000.

Continued negotiations led to the mutual understanding that a 1-year contract, not a 3-year contract as outlined in the RFP, that maintained current funding levels and reduced service levels due to COVID-19, would be manageable. While 4 hours of drop-in service is being maintained, reduced service levels include:

- Limit of 15 people in the Centre;
- Only chairs available for sitting that are spaced 2 metres apart;
- No food or meals provided in the Centre; and
- No activities organized by One Roof.

Conditions that may permit One Roof to further reduce their financial requirements and consider a contract extension into 2022 include:

- Elimination of COVID-19 restrictions following the end of the pandemic; and
- Significant influx of volunteers, particularly in the areas of meal preparation, drop-in centre help and volunteer recruitment and management.

During 2021, One Roof will be able to gauge if they can garner the necessary volunteers and resources to deliver services within budget allocated by the City. City staff will continue to monitor and work collaboratively with St. John's with the goal of being able to enter a contract extension which meets the City's budgetary requirements starting January 1, 2022. If agreement on a contract extension is not achieved before August 31, 2021 a new RFP process will be started to find a service provider starting January 1, 2022.

Summary

COVID-19 has impacted the operational capacity of the One Roof Community Centre to the point where they cannot commit to a 3-year contract within the City's budget allocation to deliver a Meal Program and Drop-in Centre Services as specified in Request for Proposals 20-20. As a result of negotiations and the uncertainty related to the duration of COVID-19 restrictions, it is recommended that the City enter into a one-year contract with St. John's Anglican Church under approved funding levels and reduced service levels. Staff will work with St. John's to determine the parameters of a contract extension in 2022.

Submitted by,

Sheldon Laidman
Commissioner of Community Services

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