

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, Sept. 21.

- **Staffing Support For Child Care and Early Years Transformation:** To support a major service transformation in the child care and early years system, council has approved the hiring of an early years specialist for a two-year contract beginning Jan. 1. It also approved continuing to fund data analysis services through an agreement with its current sponsoring agency effective Jan. 1 until a full analysis can be completed regarding the best option for the services. At the community services committee meeting earlier this month, Social Services Director Nancy Green provided an overview of the transformation, which results from the provincial Ministry of Education's "Achieving Excellence" strategic framework and builds upon the Ontario Early Years Policy Framework and the Child Care Modernization Strategy. The transformation aims to provide a more integrated, accessible way of delivering service and enhance early years' programs and services. Since Lanark County is a service manager, it will have expanded roles and responsibilities and increased accountability for the services it administers, delivers and monitors. The transformation involves supporting the implementation of the new Child Care and Early Years Act and regulations, management of local Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres as part of local, integrated service planning, taking on Data Analysis Services and Early Years Specialist services, and managing Early Years Community Planning Funds. Ms. Green explained that with the most recently announced initiatives there is significant impact to the county as the service manager and additional staffing resources are needed to meet the new requirements, and maintaining the current arrangement for the provision of data analysis services helps to ensure decisions about local early years programs reflect community needs and priorities. "Over the next two years as we transition to the additional responsibilities as part of the Early Years transformation, we will need time to assess the continuing resource requirements as we move forward," she said. There is no additional cost to the county since it will be absorbed within the current provincial funding allocations. A new provincial funding model will be announced early in 2017. For more information, contact Nancy Green, Director of Social Services, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2101.
  
- **Update on Emergency Services Activities:** Council received a report by Acting Emergency Services Coordinator Garry Welsh, which was presented at the corporate services committee meeting earlier this month. Mr. Welsh has been in the position since February and fulfills requirements of both emergency management and occupational health and safety. He outlined activities in 2016, including an emergency management training day with seven different presenters and more than 100 participants from municipalities across the county, as well as other emergency management-related training. He highlighted the Emergency Preparedness Week campaign and public awareness activities, as well as chairing the Community Emergency Management Coordinators of Lanark County, the rural addressing program and the rescue services program. Other activities include work on upgrades to the fire dispatch tactical channel and amateur digital radio, overseeing surplus ambulance sales and the public access defibrillator program, and conferences and networking site visits. Ongoing emergency management work includes updating emergency response plans, the emergency management program, hazard identification and risk assessment, emergency exercises, ensuring compliance with the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management, and involvement with the low water response team for both Mississippi and Rideau Valley conservation authorities. There are also numerous health and safety and employee outreach activities. For more information, contact Garry Welsh, Emergency Services Coordinator, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1503.

- **Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Oct. 12, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, Oct. 12 (following County Council); Corporate Services, Oct. 12 (following Community Services). **County Council, Wednesday, Oct. 26, 5 p.m.;** Economic Development, Oct. 26 (following County Council); Public Works, Oct. 26 (following Economic Development). For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!

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