

BRIEFING NOTE

For information For Decision For Approval

HS08-20

Date: April 22, 2020

Purpose: Procurement in Emergencies- Emergency Shelter Support

Prepared by: Stacey Cyopeck, Housing Programs Manager
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Reviewed by: Catherine Matheson, CAO

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board accepts this report in accordance with the Board's Purchasing Policy #CORP-01, under the authority of the DNSSAB Procedural Bylaw 2020-01 and formally authorizes the purchase of services with NMHHSS for the provision of a COVID Responsive Emergency Shelter in the City of North Bay.

BACKGROUND:

Due to the unprecedented impact of COVID-19, the North Bay shelter system has experienced reductions in capacity and temporary shelter closures. These reductions and closures have a real and immediate impact on the life, health and safety of the homeless population in our community. The DNSSAB acknowledged this emergency situation and quickly acted to secure services to support the homeless population.

Although the DNSSAB has a clear process for procurement, if an emergency exists requiring the immediate procurement of goods, services or construction, the CAO/CEO or a Director has the authority to requisition the required goods, services or construction by the most expedient and economical means available, notwithstanding any other provision of the Purchasing Policy.

CURRENT STATUS:

- DNSSAB, working with key community partners examined two distinct options for providing an emergency shelter given the COVID-19 pandemic, one provided by the Crisis Centre North Bay, and one provided by Nipissing Mental Health Housing and Support Services (NMHHSS)

- Although the costs were roughly the same, upon review of the two options, the option selected, included a 24 hour staffing model while the other option did not. At the time, the selected location was at the YMCA.
- Given the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and its impact on the homeless community, it was felt having 24 hour supports was necessary to ensure the health and safety of those using the shelter and the staff involved.
- Staff identified \$37,000 in surplus CHPI funding, which will be made available to support the program in the short term.
- The Province of Ontario has provided the DNSSAB with a funding allocation under the Social Services Relief Fund of \$589,200, to be provided under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative program.
- The Federal Government has provided the DNSSAB with a funding allocation of \$292,252 as top-up funding under the Reaching Home initiative.
- Cost to run the shelter will be no more than \$170,000 per month inclusive of space, staffing, security, cleaning, utilities, and supplies. The shelter will remain open until there is no longer a need or the funding is exhausted, as determined by the DNSSAB.
- The shelter officially opened on Wednesday, April 1st. The shelter very quickly reached capacity, and effective Thursday, April 16th, it was moved to the Pete Palangio Arena. The twin pads offer two distinct and larger spaces. One ice pad will provide shelter for over 50 individual, while the other will allow for isolation as required.

NEXT STEPS:

- Ongoing and continuing communication with Nipissing Mental Health Housing Support Services, and monitoring of the shelter operations;
- Continually monitor the community need, and adapt the model as required;
- Work collaboratively with Shelter Providers, Community Partners and Health Care Services to plan for those homeless individuals who are symptomatic and/or have confirmed cases of COVID-19.