

## **Message from Chair Iain Angus**

*On behalf of the Board and staff of The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB), it is my pleasure and responsibility to present the organization's Annual Report for 2010. From an organizational perspective TBDSSAB continued to grow and mature in 2010. Having become the direct employer of all former municipal staff in 2009, we made the additional and important decision to formally integrate the staff of the Thunder Bay District Housing Corporation (TBDHC) into the TBDSSAB family in 2010. With this change we have taken a small but essential step towards our goal of more fully integrated services for our clients.*

*We will take a much larger step towards this goal upon completion of a new TBDSSAB building in Thunder Bay's Fort William neighbourhood. Consolidating our services in one location will not only improve access for our clients but foster improved integration between our services, and offer significant long-term savings to property tax payers throughout the District of Thunder Bay. I am pleased to report that as of Spring 2011 we are on track and on budget with occupancy targeted for early 2012.*

*This year also saw some significant changes to our organization's leadership. After over 30 years of dedicated service to the City and District, CAO Mary Lucas made the difficult decision to retire. Since the creation of DSSAB's in 1999 Mary has shepherded our operations through the growing pains every new organization experiences with characteristic fortitude and compassion. As we ended 2010 we were well into the process of selecting Mary's successor. (Note: After an exhaustive search process the Board is thrilled to have found Melissa Harrison to lead our organization into the future with the vision and energy she brings.)*

*As an election year for municipal councils 2010 also brought turnover among our Board membership. Departing the Board after years of representing their communities with vigour were James Foulds (Nipigon), Donna Jaunzarins (Manitouwadge), Mike King (Terrace Bay), Elaine Mannisto (Greenstone), Lynn Peterson (Thunder Bay), and Maureen Schmidt (Neebing). Bringing new perspectives and energy to the Board are Armand Giguere (Greenstone), Kevin Holland (Conmee), Don McArthur (Schreiber), Sara Park (Red Rock), Paul Pugh (Thunder Bay), and Kelly Tsubouchi (Marathon). Returning for an additional 4 year term are Andrew Foulds (Thunder Bay), Larry Hebert (Thunder Bay), Bob Katajamaki (Territory Without Municipal Organization), Aldo Ruberto (Thunder Bay), and Joe Viridiramo (Thunder Bay). As Chair I wish to express my appreciation for the many accomplishments of our previous Board and look forward to continuing our important work with my new and returning colleagues.*

*While 2010 proved the resiliency of our District during challenging economic times, the administration of social services continues to face significant hurdles in meeting the needs of our most vulnerable. The Ontario Works caseload increased 6.5 % over 2009 despite an overall decrease in applications, with emergency shelter utilization also increasing. Rental affordability in Thunder Bay has decreased faster than almost anywhere else in the country, and as of December 31, 2010 over 1,200 applicants were waiting for social housing, even though we continue to have vacancies in our senior's units in the District. There continues to be a critical mass of people whose basic needs are not being met by our economy and who need our help.*

*In response to this need, TBDSSAB continues to focus our efforts on planning and delivering social services that are both responsive to changing circumstances and sustainable over the long-term. This past year saw significant progress on our Housing Strategy which focuses on improving the supply, access, and delivery of social and affordable housing in the District. Developed through broad and rigorous public consultations, our Board will be approving the strategy in 2011 with a detailed implementation plan currently in development. As well, our Children's Services Division has worked closely with school boards and child care operators as the first year of full-day kindergarten was implemented. We continue to plan for the impact this initiative may have on the shape of the child care system over the long-term.*

*The planning of municipal social services is intimately dependent on collaboration with all orders of government. Your Board continues to be an active voice for the Northwest at the provincial and federal levels, through both direct advocacy with governments and via collective efforts with groups such as the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) and the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), among others.*

*On behalf of the TBDSSAB Board of Directors I would like to thank our front-line staff who give so much of themselves in supporting our clients, and our administrative staff who ensure our operations are effective, efficient, and sustainable. We look forward to working with our many community partners on meeting the challenges that lie ahead in improving the quality of life of our most vulnerable citizens.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Iain. F. Angus  
Chair*