



BOARD REPORT

REPORT No.: 2022-54

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2022

SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES RELIEF FUND UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

For information only.

REPORT SUMMARY

To provide The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB or the Board) with an update regarding the TBDSSAB's investments under the Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF).

BACKGROUND

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ontario announced a new \$200 million SSRF to assist Service Managers to address community needs and pressures. At the April 16, 2020 Board meeting, Administration presented information on TBDSSAB's allocation of \$1,168,300 under this fund (Report No.: 2020-19).

At the September 17, 2020 Board meeting, Administration presented information on the SSRF Phase 2 funding, which extended efforts to mitigate the ongoing risk for vulnerable people impacted by COVID and established a new capital funding initiative to encourage long-term housing-based solutions to homelessness post-COVID-19 (Report No.: 2020-35). Under SSRF Phase 2, TBDSSAB was allocated \$1,840,459 of which \$1,155,000 was used for capital projects with the remaining \$630,245 used for services, supplies and an administration allowance.

At the January 14, 2021 Board meeting, Administration presented a report confirming a further SSRF Phase 2 funding allocation of \$1,836,300 that was made available to support additional capital project investment (Report No.: 2021-02). A total of \$1,781,300 was allocated to capital projects, with the remaining amount allocated as an administration allowance.

At the March 18, 2021 Board meeting, Administration presented a report outlining new, one-time mental health and addictions funding to be allocated to select Service

Managers and Indigenous Program Administrators under existing program agreements (Report No.: 2021-10). An allocation of \$1,040,046 was provided to TBDSSAB to support a range of mental health and addictions-related supports and services. This flexible funding was aimed at addressing the pandemic needs of vulnerable people living with mental health and/or addictions issues and was used for eligible operating activities within our service area.

Also, at the March 18, 2021 Board meeting, Administration provided initial information on the SSRF Phase 3, and at the April 15, 2021 meeting the Board received a report confirming the allocation to TBDSSAB of \$2,422,782 and the eligibility of projects and initiatives for these funds (Report No. 2021-17).

At the November 17, 2021 Board meeting, Administration provided information on the SSRF Phase 4 funding (Report No.: 2021CS-10). A total of \$2,722,400 was allocated to TBDSSAB, with both operating services and capital projects eligible under this funding. SSRF Phase 4 funding was fully allocated as of March 31, 2022.

On April 7, 2022, the Board Chair received a letter from the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, announcing a fifth phase of the province's SSRF funding. This information was then presented to the Board at the April 21, 2022 meeting (Report No.: 2022CS-06). Under SSRF Phase 5, funding may be used to support operating services and capital expenses to mitigate the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the homelessness sector. Funding is to be used for eligible expenses between April 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022. TBDSSAB received \$1,201,600 for this period.

COMMENTS

Under SSRF Phase 5, TBDSSAB will continue to provide support to community groups through the Emergency Pandemic Fund, an application-based initiative that looks to address pressures in all communities through supporting organizations in directly meeting the needs of the most vulnerable. Eligible expenses through the Emergency Pandemic Fund include shelter, community outreach and support, food, transportation, PPE, cleaning supplies and health and safety costs. From April 1 through August 30, 2022, 4 applications totalling \$140,859 has been approved under SSRF Phase 5.

Rent supports to assist those impacted by the pandemic, where rent and utility arrears may result in homelessness, is another area of priority under SSRF Phase 5. This support has been broadly shared with community partners, to assist in identifying those in need. As of August 30, a total of \$185,551 has been provided to assist with arrears.

TBDSSAB continues to address the safety and support of tenants in TBDSSAB owned properties as well as those in non-profit owned properties supported through the community housing system. This includes the provision of cleaning services and supplies, additional security for screening and the provision of PPE. From April 1

through August 30, 2022, a total of \$93,353 has been expended in these funding categories.

From the beginning of the pandemic, additional stressors have been placed on the emergency shelter system. Reduced capacity to meet public health guidelines and the need to restrict access under static bed lists have resulted in TBDSSAB providing funding to overflow emergency shelters - temporary spaces provided to facilitate overnight shelter when access to emergency shelters is limited. Overflow emergency shelters utilize approved space offered and operated by community support organizations, as well as motel spaces as required. From April 1 through August 30, 2022, a total of \$13,512 has been expended in this category. Administration will continue to monitor the pressures in this area and work with emergency shelter providers and community support organizations to ensure opportunities for support are addressed.

The following chart outlines all the SSRF Phases 1 through 5 and Mental Health and Addictions funding expended by TBDSSAB through August 30, 2022:

	Mental Health & Addictions	SSRF Phases 1-4	SSRF Phase 5	Total
Capital	-	5,839,438	214,600	6,054,038
Community Support Applications	727,709	920,762	140,859	1,789,330
Isolation Shelter	15,536	1,151,576	-	1,167,112
Overflow Shelter	-	396,072	13,512	409,584
Supports to Housing Providers	-	26,873	-	26,873
Rent & Other Supports	50,419	1,303,701	185,551	1,539,671
Communications & Technology	215,364	42,978	-	258,342
Security	-	593,528	93,094	686,622
Additional Cleaning & PPE	-	198,742	259	199,001
Administration	31,018	298,026	20,037	349,081
Expenditure Subtotal	\$ 1,040,046	\$ 10,771,696	\$ 667,912	\$12,479,654
Recoveries				
2021 Program Levy Operating Surplus	-	(409,272)	-	(409,272)
Anishnawbe Mushkiki	-	(55,000)	-	(55,000)
Reaching Home	-	(24,319)	-	(24,319)
CHPI*	-	(272,864)	-	(272,864)
Total	\$ 1,040,046	\$ 10,010,241	\$ 667,912	\$11,718,199

* Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative

As the needs and pressures related to COVID continue to develop and change, the amounts identified in the Phase 5 Investment Plan may be adjusted. The objective is to utilize the available funds in the most impactful manner, within the allowable funding period.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT

Although the SSRF was not identified in the Strategic Plan, it does meet the strategic directions of Investment, Partnerships and Advocacy. The investments have provided supports and protection to the citizens within the District of Thunder Bay in addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are also long-term positive impacts realized through the investment in capital projects, resulting in additional transitional housing and emergency shelter spaces.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The SSRF is a 100% provincially funded program although recoveries from other sources were realized during Phase 2 and Phase 4. The one-time Mental Health and Addictions funding was a 100% provincially funded initiative.



TBDSSAB is eligible to use up to 3% of each approved funding allocation for administrative costs

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that this report provides the Board with updated information on the SSRF and Mental Health and Addictions expenditures, funded primarily by the province of Ontario.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

None

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