

Media Release

DRRSB Approves 2025 Budget

Fort Frances, Ontario – 2025/01/16 – The District of Rainy River Services Board (DRRSB) approved the 2025 Annual Budget of ~\$34 million at the regular board meeting held Thursday, January 16, 2025. The overall budget reflects an increase of \$1.54 M or 4.74% which is funded primarily by the province through the four major programs, Ontario Works, Children’s Services, Community Housing and Paramedic Services.

The municipal share, which funds a share of each of the four programs, will see an increase of ~\$243,235 or ~4.35%, attributed to anticipated salary increases in addition to inflationary factors for utilities, fuel, building materials, maintenance contracts, and equipment.

The 2025 Approved Budget is reflected below:

• Ontario Works	\$ 3.25M
• Children’s Services	\$ 10.15M
• Paramedic Services	\$ 9.96M
• Community Housing	\$ 7.99M
• Central Administration	\$ <u>2.72M</u>
Total Budget	\$34.07M

Notable changes in specific program budgets include a ~\$307,000 increase in Ontario Works (OW), reflecting the ongoing transformation of Employment Services. This includes an increase in the municipal share of OW Administration funding this year, which had previously remained unchanged since 2018.

Municipal funding for Children’s Services also remained unchanged. However, the program experienced a significant increase of ~\$1,000,000 in government funding, driven by the Ministry of Education’s continued development of a new Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) funding approach.

Paramedic Services saw a ~\$300,000 increase due to inflationary adjustments, while Community Housing expenditures remained static, with no anticipated increases in provincially funded programs. However, the loss of federal funding for public housing and non-profits has required the use of reserves to mitigate the resulting increased costs to municipalities.

“As a Board, we are committed to balancing fiscal responsibility with meeting the needs of our communities. The 2025 budget reflects a careful evaluation of new initiatives against our Strategic Plan, ensuring that we prioritize sustainability and service quality while addressing economic conditions and community needs. This increase demonstrates our dedication to long-term growth and the well-being of the people we serve,” said Board chair, Debbie Ewald.

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