

Chair's Report

April 2011

City Board Liaison Committee

The first meeting of this committee was held for this new term on April 4th. This meeting reviewed the terms of reference, looked at the Memorandum of Agreement and the staff report for the work accomplished in the last term. Trustee Jessica Brennan will be the co-chair with Mayor Bob Bratina and the committee is hoping to meet again in June.

We share many areas of common interest in areas such as community use of schools, safety concerns, and student health and well-being. The manner in which school boards and cities are funded and planning issues all have impacts.

Over the years there have been many partnerships with the City. The City leases from HWDSB for a dollar a year the property on which stands the Beasley Community Centre, Westmount Recreation Centre, Ancaster Recreation Centre, Riverdale Community Recreation Centre, Pinky Lewis Recreation Centre and McNab Recreation Centre.

Our co-operation together extends into other areas: HWDSB has 6 pieces of land without school buildings which abut to city owned parks, so extending the City owned park. City owned creative play structures or partly funded play structures and city maintained ball park diamonds, tennis courts, soccer fields exist on HWDSB land. Altogether HWDSB owns 16 pieces of land which house City owned structures. HWDSB fields were included in the City's Outdoor Recreation study of June 2010. The City rents out HWDSB playing fields at no cost to the City and in 2010 received funds from these rents of approximately \$21,000. The Report of City/Board Liaison Committee, October 2010, looks to future planning where there can be "pooling of resources to allow for more equitable and improved access to fields for community use".

We look forward to a productive term of further work together with the City.

Immigration Issues

We are pleased that Settlement workers are again working in our schools, although there are only 10 where there were once 15.

Special Education Funding

The recently announced budget has not brought any change to the funding of special education. Instead the government will be examining why there is such a range, from 5% to 24.4%, amongst boards of support to special education students. It will be remembered that HWDSB provides 18.86% of its students with services, in the top 11% of all boards in the province, although the funding it receives places it in the bottom 26%.

