

## West Nipissing Town Council does the right thing

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*Unanimous vote validates CUPE's position against privatization of ambulance service*

North Bay, Ont. – West Nipissing Town Council did the right thing last night by unanimously voting to ensure local ambulance remains within the community, says the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the union representing West Nipissing paramedics.

"We are pleased that West Nipissing Town Council has unanimously voted in support of our position to keep ambulance service in the community," said Denis Allard, Vice-President of CUPE 1101, which represents West Nipissing paramedics. "Handing ambulance service over to for-profit companies with no connection or loyalty to our community is the wrong way to go, and Council's vote affirms our position."

It was standing room only at Council Chambers last night as an unprecedented number of residents came out to show their support for CUPE's campaign to keep emergency medical services public and locally controlled. And Council listened.

Council's unanimous resolution ensures that the community will continue to receive 20 hours of ambulance coverage per day and ensures ambulances remain based in West Nipissing. The resolution also asks the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (NDSSAB), which runs the service, to continue employing the present paramedics from within the community.

"We are very pleased with this vote," Allard said. "Council's vote addresses our concerns about privatization and shows solid support for keeping the service local and accountable."

Allard says the campaign to keep ambulance service publicly delivered will continue.

"Our next step is to take the issue to the NDSSAB directly, who launched the process to privatize in the first place," Allard said. "We hope the NDSSAB listens to the community as well."

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