



Minutes

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: June 10, 2019
Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: Council Chambers
Prepared by: Sarah Merrifield, Executive Assistant Committees of Council

A. Call to Order

Councillor Bordignon called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Also in attendance were Janet Findlay, Sarah Filion, Andrew Siegart, Tony Poole, Tim Newton, John Ardiel, Mylisa Henderson, Steve Simon, Interim Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt, and Communications and Economic Development Coordinator Tim Hendry.

Regrets were sent by Deputy Mayor Bartnicki and Krystin Rennie.

▪ Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Tony Poole

Seconded by: Andrew Siegart

THAT the Agenda of June 10, 2019 be approved as circulated, including any additions to the Agenda, being Item C.7 Digital Main Street Update, Carried.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

NOTE: In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the Town Procedural By-law 2018-20, Economic Development Advisory Committee Members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

None

▪ Previous Minutes (May 13, 2019)

Moved by: Sarah Filion

Seconded by: Andrew Siegart

THAT the Minutes of May 13, 2019 be approved as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

B. Staff Reports, Deputations / Presentations, Correspondence

B.1 Deputations, if any

None

B.2 Presentation:

None

B.3 Staff Reports

None

B.4 Correspondence, if any

None

C. New & Unfinished Business

C.1 Key Economic Development Priorities Discussion, Councillor Bordignon and Communications & Economic Development Coordinator Tim Hendry

Councillor Bordignon noted the Economic Development Advisory Committee (“Committee”) must establish its pillars and priorities, which will constitute the framework for the Committee’s activities. Communications and Economic Development Coordinator Tim Hendry noted there is a need to establish traction and move towards initiation of the Economic Development Strategy, which could be initiated by a sub-committee.

Moved by: Sarah Filion

Seconded by: Tim Newton

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee establish a sub-committee consisting of Peter Bordignon, Andrew Siegwart, Sarah Filion, and Tony Poole, in co-ordination with the Communications and Economic Development Coordinator, to work with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs on development of the Economic Development Strategy and directs the sub-committee to bring its work back to the Committee for consideration and information, Carried.

The group discussed what its priorities for economic development look like. Steve Simon noted the urgency to work on the Economic Development Strategy as his priority. Mylisa Henderson noted the good work done on the Business Retention and Expansion Study, and recommended the Committee consider how to continue implementation of the programs and recommendations contained therein. Tony Poole advised he hopes to prioritize a sustainable long-term plan related to development, and how future build out impacts tourism, retail, and economic drivers in the Town. Tim Newton noted the need for a balanced approach, and advised consideration should be given for greater representation from the manufacturing sector.

Andrew Siegwart noted the first priority should be on creating a solid Economic Development Strategy, and further on labour supply and talent management. Andrew also commented on the need to improve community communication, ensuring idea sharing and public consultation is always considered. Sarah Filion noted the business associations have lost some businesses recently, and referenced the need to explore this reality, and determine mitigation measures. Janet Findlay noted her personal opinion is that transit needs should be explored. She requested the Committee short-list some priorities and advised she can provide the same to the Attainable Housing Corporation for comment. John Ardiel commented on the need to explore the different economic sectors that make up the community in order to understand each sector's unique needs, challenges, and opportunities.

C.2 Staff Position Update, Interim Chief Administrative Officer and Communications & Economic Development Coordinator Tim Hendry

Tim noted interviews for the Communications and Economic Development Project Specialist are occurring the week of June 10 and noted that the position was increased to a twelve-month position. Tim noted the strong applicants being considered and advised the position should be filled by early July 2019. Shawn commented on the synergies being created between communications and economic development with the filling of this position and reminded the Committee that this individual, once hired, will assist in keeping momentum through the summer as the Economic Development Strategy and the Communications Strategy are developed.

C.3 Town-wide Community Event Discussion, Councillor Bordignon

Councillor Bordignon requested the group's input regarding whether the Committee feels a community-wide event is worth exploring. Ideally, this type of event would have a centralized location with satellite events happening throughout the municipality. Andrew noted the work done on Apple Harvest Festival and Peak to Shore which are community and regional events and recommended the Committee conduct an audit of the events already occurring prior to suggesting a new event. Sarah pointed out the Thornbury Business Improvement Area and the Clarksburg Village Association worked together recently on the existing Glamapalooza event. The group discussed supporting the existing events or considering how an event might tap into existing cultural and civic pride; it was agreed that economic development would be only a peripheral benefit of the events.

Tim Hendry advised that Clearview Township initiated the Small Halls Festival which was aimed at enhancing community pride. John noted the Committee should consider how it can offer support to existing service groups in Town to supplement their ability to host events. Andrew noted this idea of supporting existing events or groups can be considered through the Economic Development Strategy to which Shawn agreed. Andrew noted that during the Pride events at Blue Mountain Village, and the Rose all Day fundraiser, business owners in Collingwood did some of their own marketing and came up with initiatives to support those existing events.

John Ardiel commented that between Staynor and Meaford there are now 8 cideries. CiderFest is an event that has spread across Ontario through synergies between cideries, cafes, and restaurants. Tony noted the Thornbury Business Improvement Area has been involved in various community events and would be open to a broader event that emphasizes something unique in the area.

C.4 Clarification of the Motion for Single-Use Plastics

Peter allowed an opportunity for Committee members to review the single-use plastics motion from June 3, 2019 Council meeting. Peter noted that there are two main parts to the motion:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT COUNCIL adopt, support and encourage an interim voluntary ban on the use of single-use plastic shopping bags, plastic straws and stir sticks effective July 1st, 2019, and that Council direct staff to:

1. Promote a voluntary ban on single-use plastic bags, straws, stir sticks by publishing messaging in the upcoming tax bill mailing, on the Town's website home page and through all of the Town's commonly-used media beginning no later than June 15th 2019 that states that includes the following position:

“Council supports the protection of the environment of the Town of The Blue Mountains through the reduction and future elimination of single-use plastic bags, straws, stir sticks and water bottles, and encourages all businesses, community members and visitors to avoid the use of these products whenever possible. Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of all stakeholders towards measures that support the sustainability of the natural environment in the Town of The Blue Mountains.”

AND THAT Council refer the following items to the Sustainability Committee for consideration and recommendation to Council by August 26, 2019 to:

2. Phase out the sale of bottled water and the use of single-use plastic cups, straws and stir sticks at all Town-owned facilities and events by December 2019 in order to model good environmental practices;
3. Develop a three-year plan to increase the number of water bottle re-filling stations on Town-owned properties, to be included in the 2020, 2021 and 2022 budget cycles;
4. Develop recognition/reward signage (i.e. “We’ve gone green for a Blue future” or similar) for business operators who model good environmental practices by not supplying single-use shopping bags, water bottles, straws and stir sticks;
5. Investigate the development and costs of a Town of Blue Mountains reusable bag-for-life or fabric bag options with appropriate logo for

possible purchase by retailers at cost, and to be used for various promotional events; by the Town;

AND THAT COUNCIL direct staff to work with the Sustainability Committee and all stakeholders through a public consultation process, to develop a plan for inclusion in the 2020 Budget to reduce and/or eliminate single use plastics effective July 1st, 2020.

Deputy Mayor Bartnicki requested a recorded vote:

Bartnicki, Odette	Yay
Bordignon, Peter	Yay
Matrosovs, Andrea	Yay
Potter, Rob	Yay
Sampson, Rob	Yay
Uram, Jim	Yay
Soever, Alar	Yay

The motion is **CARRIED**.

Peter commented on the need to talk process for implementation and noted a portion of the recommendation has been forwarded to the Sustainability Committee for further review and suggestion.

C.5 Discussion regarding economic impact of Single-Use Plastics on the Business Community

The group noted there is support for eco-friendly and waste-reducing initiatives, but further noted that additional work needs to be done on how to effectively implement a ban on single-use plastics. Further, the research that went into the recommendation needs to be shared. Tony noted the need for advanced community engagement, including engagement with business owners, Committees of Council, business associations, and other stakeholders. Tony noted if advanced community input had been sought, the motion could have been more substantive with more ability for implementation.

Andrew noted the business community was taken by surprise and it was a mistake not to have broader consultation. Andrew noted there are no Community Sustainability Goals in place to measure initiatives against. Andrew noted the multiple and competing priorities related to climate change including: greenhouse gas reduction, clean energy, watershed, migration to cleaner agricultural practices, transportation and transit initiatives. Without a Sustainability Plan it is difficult to effectively prioritize and implement any one specific strategy. Councillor Bordignon noted the motion states “[...] encourages all businesses, community members and visitors to avoid the use of these products whenever possible”; he reminds Committee members to read in complete detail, the wording of the final motion to ensure no confusion.

Andrew noted the direction to staff is to include wording in the tax bill mailout; this encourages consumers to purchase in a certain way. Andrew emphasized there is no objection to enhancing green measures, but the community and stakeholders should always have input prior to this type of decision being made.

Moved by: Andrew Siegart

Seconded by: Sarah Filion

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee requests Council to consider inclusion of an Economic Development Advisory Committee representative to the Sustainability Committee, Carried.

Councillor Bordignon confirmed he will bring this request forward for Council's consideration.

C.6 Town Policies & Legislation Acknowledgement

Executive Assistant Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield confirmed that information on a Committee of Council training session will be circulated very shortly. She requested that the acknowledgement form be signed by all members, which simply acknowledges receipt of the legislation and policies package.

C.7 Digital Main Street Update

Tim Newton confirmed the Small Business Enterprise Centre received a \$65,000 grant from OMAGFRA to help businesses in designated downtown areas enhance their digital footprints. Tim confirmed his group is currently working to onboard businesses, and the Committee's assistance in spreading the news about the grant opportunity would be appreciated. Tim confirmed if a business is interested in increasing its digital footprint, but does not operate in a qualifying downtown area, there is a 12-hour online tutorial that can be used to assist business owners. Tim Hendry advised the Town will begin its communications to provide information on the Digital Main Street initiative. As part of the onboarding of businesses, Tim Newton confirmed the service squad helps businesses set up "Google my Business" accounts which includes a 360* image of the store; this assists potential consumers with interacting via online and mobile platforms.

D. Public Comment Period

D.1 Public Comment Period (each speaker is allotted three minutes)

NOTE: In accordance with the Town Procedural By-law 2018-20 fifteen minutes is allotted at the Meeting to receive public comments regarding Economic Development Advisory Committee matters. The speaker shall provide their name and address, and shall address their comments to the Chair. Comments shall not refer to personnel, litigation or potential litigation matters that are a follow-up to a Public Meeting.

D.1.1 Jim Uram, Resident

Jim Uram, resident, spoke regarding the June 3, 2019 Council motion on single-use plastics. Mr. Uram commented that the Provincial Government put out information regarding reducing or banning single-use plastics and more recently, the Federal Government has indicated intention of the same. Mr. Uram noted there is ample time for input on the Provincial initiative due to the Provincial government's recess. Mr. Uram noted that many fast food restaurants have been moving increasingly towards recyclables other than plastics. Mr. Uram commented that the Town's motion of June 3, 2019 provides considerable opportunity regarding how to implement the suggested single-use plastics ban.

D.1.2 Sharon Wagle, 159 Lake Drive

Sharon Wagle, resident, spoke regarding the June 3, 2019 Council motion on single-use plastics. Ms. Wagle noted the Committee has commented on the difficulty it is having forming policies and how it was spinning its wheels. Ms. Wagle commended the elected official who brought forward the motion regarding single-use plastics and noted the need for elected officials to speak on behalf of the body that elected them. Ms. Wagle noted the Town is adjacent to a large body of water that must be protected, and further noted during a recent spring clean-up initiative along the shoreline that plastics and Styrofoam were abundant. Ms. Wagle noted the Town should be a community leading waste-reduction initiative in Ontario.

Andrew Siegwart thanked residents for sharing, and commended Ms. Wagle for her community volunteering. He pointed out that the Federal and Provincial Governments announced an intention to consider the ban of single-use plastics with public input. John Ardiel noted the need to avoid a "knee jerk" reaction to waste reduction to ensure careful consideration of associated implications. Steve Simon noted the single-use plastics motion lost an additive image with the manner it was presented. Andrew commented the Committee has taken a few meetings to get going, but this will be to the benefit of the Economic Development Strategy. Councillor Bordignon noted he appreciates the Committee's indulgence to conform to the Procedural requirements of the meeting; the meeting structure ultimately works in the favour of the Committee.

E. Upcoming Meeting Dates

The next meeting date will take place July 8, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers at Town Hall.

F. Adjournment

Moved by: John Ardiel

Seconded by: Sarah Filion

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee does now adjourn at 10:42 a.m. to meet again July 8, 2019 or at the call of the Chair, Carried.