



Committee Minutes

Grey County – The Blue Mountains Task Force

Meeting Date: October 24, 2019
Meeting Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: Heritage Room – Grey County Administration Building
595 9th Avenue East Owen Sound, ON
Prepared by Krista Royal, Deputy Clerk

A. Call to Order

Grey County Warden Selwyn Hicks, Grey County Councillors Paul McQueen and Shirley Keaveney, The Blue Mountains Mayor Alar Soever, Deputy Mayor Odette Bartnicki, and Councillor Rob Sampson

Regrets: Councillor Ian Boddy

Staff Present: Kim Wingrove, Grey County Chief Administrative Officer, Shawn Everitt, The Blue Mountains Chief Administrative Officer; Ruth Prince, The Blue Mountains Director of Finance and IT Services; Kevin Wepler, Grey County Director of Finance and Heather Morrison, Grey County Clerk.

Mayor Alar Soever called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

- **Approval of Agenda**

Moved by: Odette Bartnicki

Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

THAT the Agenda of October 24, 2019, be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda, Carried.

- **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof**

None

- **Minutes**

Moved by: Odette Bartnicki

Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

THAT the Grey County – The Blue Mountains Task Force minutes of September 19, 2019 be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

B. Agenda Topics

B.1 MTAG Report – Re-Assessment Impacts and Tax Burden Shifts

- 1) Re-Assessment Impacts and Tax Burden Shifts, FAF.19.182
- 2) MTAG Presentation

The Blue Mountains Director of Finance & IT Services Ruth Prince reviewed staff report FAF.19.182 Re-assessment Impacts and Tax Burden Shifts as it relates to Tax Class and Tax Burden Shifts within The Blue Mountains and surrounding municipalities. Ruth advised the Committee members that The Blue Mountains hired MTAG Paralegal Professional Corporation with respect to the impacts of assessment and tax policy tools. Committee discussed the need for a solution and agreed that Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) sets the rules and there is a need to go back to the Province to change the rules. Councillor Rob Sampson suggested that Grey County needs to coordinate together with The Blue Mountains to address the concerns with the assessment collaboratively at the Provincial level to have tax policy/tools in place to offset the tax burden to residents.

B.2 Current Tax Situation – Now and in 4 Years – The Blue Mountains and Neighbouring Communities

Committee discussed the affordability of taxation, the increase in assessment versus the household incomes and the future of affordability for residents over the next four years. Grey County CAO Kim Wingrove questioned what statistics were used to define income as outlined in the staff report with Mayor Soever replying that the 2016 Census data was the indicator used.

B.3 Potential for a Co-ordinated Effort for Tax Deferral or Other Mitigation for People on Fixed Incomes and Seniors (Verbal)

Committee addressed tax deferral and the need to assist residents who are seniors or residents on fixed income. CAO Kim Wingrove advised that the County of Grey's deferral by-law needs to be updated and this matter should be addressed at the County level, noting a report will be provided to County Council in the near future.

B.4 County Revenues and Expenditures Report – Action Plan

Committee addressed the concerns with The Blue Mountains residents still inquiring about the 26% taxation charge provided to the County of Grey's budget and the lack of understanding regarding what the 26% of taxation dollars is spent on and what benefits are in turn provided back to The Blue Mountains taxpayers.

Councillor Rob Sampson suggested the County be more engaged with the citizens of The Blue Mountains by perhaps preparing a one page insert to be included in tax bills mailed out to taxpayers which itemize what is covered by the 26% of taxation.

CAO Kim Wingrove suggested that Grey County Staff be present at The Blue Mountains Budget Public Information Centre to answer any questions from the taxpayers as well as preparing an insert to be included in the tax bills that are mailed out. Committee concurred that this would be most helpful to the residents to have an insert in their tax bills and to also include contact names and numbers of County Staff should any resident of The Blue Mountains have inquiries that can be answered directly from County Staff.

B.5 County Service Delivery and Effectiveness (Verbal)

a) Transit Project

CAO Kim Wingrove updated the Committee advising that the transit project is still being worked on and are hoping to have a transit solution in the near future to meet the transportation needs of Grey County residents. Mayor Alar Soever suggested the project should consider transit on weekends which will allow staff and students working weekends at Blue Mountain Village to be given an opportunity to utilize transit during those times.

b) Planning

Mayor Alar Soever questioned the status of the County's Tree By-law. CAO Kim Wingrove confirmed that staff will be bringing a report forward at the November 14, 2019 County Council meeting.

c) Attainable Housing and Community Improvement Plan

Committee addressed the ongoing need for attainable housing in The Blue Mountains and the need to have the tools within the redevelopment of Grey County's Community Improvement Plan.

Deputy Mayor Odette Bartnicki advised that she will provide a Notice of Motion at the next Grey County Council meeting regarding prioritization of attainable housing and a request for a staff report to look at the impacts of allowing each municipality to keep its supplementary assessment in the year that it is raised given that it is outside of the levy.

C. New Business

None

D. Notice of Meeting Dates

November meeting date – to be determined

County Clerk Heather Morrison will advise the members of the date for the November meeting.

Moved by: Paul McQueen

Seconded by: Selwyn Hicks

THAT this Committee does now adjourn at 3:35 p.m., Carried.