Minutes
Community Recovery Task Force

Meeting Date: April 24, 2020
Meeting Time: 9:30 a.m.
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Prepared by: Sarah Merrifield Executive Assistant Committees of Council

A. Call to Order

Mayor Soever called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. with Councillor Bordignon and Councillor Sampson present.

Non-voting advisory participants present were Gillian Fairley, Shawn McKinlay, Carolyn Letourneau, Andrew Siegwart, Derek Hammond, Reverend Dr. Grayhame Bowcott, Paul Pinchbeck, Mark Woodburn, Melissa Twist, Rob Cederberg, Melissa Goldmintz-Shah, Sarah Filion, George Matamoros, Tim Newton, and Diane Anderson.

Library Chief Executive Officer Dr. Sabrina Saunders joined the meeting following the call to order.

Regrets were sent by advisory participants Steve Simon, Tom Kennedy, and Lisa Burechails.

▪ Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Peter Bordignon Seconded by: Rob Sampson

THAT the Agenda of April 24, 2020 be approved as circulated, including any additions to the Agenda, 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 2019-56, Community Recovery Task Force members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

It was noted only voting members of the Task Force would be declaring pecuniary interests.

None.
B. Staff Reports and Deputations

B.1 Deputations, if any
None

B.3 Staff Reports, if any
None

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1 Presentation: Community Recovery Task Force – Mayor Soever

Mayor Soever reviewed the Community Recovery Task Force presentation, highlighting the purpose of the Task Force, the meeting and participant structure, and the activities of the Task Force to date. It was noted the Task Force is split between the Small Task Force (voting members, members of Town staff), and the Large Task Force (voting members, members of Town staff, non-voting advisory participants). The Small Task Force will meet to implement initiatives, with input as needed, from the Large Task Force.

Manager of Communications and Economic Development Tim Hendry provided an overview of the exploreblue.ca platform, video content, and the website/e-commerce support program that has been implemented.

C.2 Advisory Member Introductions

Advisory participants were asked to briefly introduce themselves and share their top 1-2 community issues and/or opportunities.

Carolyn Letourneau, Executive Director, Beaver Valley Outreach

- Beaver Valley Outreach providing support and programs to families by providing access to food and food gift cards, and delivering meals to Maple Villa and Lemon Court residents in coordination with the County of Grey
- Encouraged Task Force members to contact Beaver Valley Outreach if aware of any residents/families in need

Tim Newton, Manager, South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre

- Provided an overview of various programs including: Starter Company Plus Program, Summer Company Program and Digital Main Street Initiative
- Noted if any members of the Task Force could use the support of the Small Business Enterprise Centre, to please get in touch
Gillian Fairley, General Manager, Centre for Business and Economic Development

- Noted the deferral of loan payment interest for clients and work with RT07 to produce video content and tutorials
- Awaiting information on potential tenant rent relief program and other Federal program announcements

Shawn McKinlay, President, Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 281

- Legion is focused on continual care and supporting the well-being of veterans, with much of the membership being within the group most vulnerable to COVID-19
- Legion is willing to assist in any community programs

Andrew Siegwart, President, Blue Mountain Village Association

- Emphasized that a priority is addressing the associations’ acute cashflow needs in the next quarter, and balancing workforce needs and rent payments
- Focusing on recovery, there will be an emphasis on promoting the area in the tourism market once the restrictions are lifted, and on operational changes to address safety concerns
- Noted hope that the Town will restrict the illegal Short Term Accommodation properties in operation, hold off on implementing tourism user fees, maintain and encourage infrastructure spending (attainable housing, transit), and work on a regional health care strategy
- Launched a Rapid Grant Program

Sarah Filion, President, Clarksburg Village Association

- Noted many Clarksburg Village Association membership would not qualify for the $40,000 loan program introduced by the Federal Government
- Emphasized the need to consider the recovery rollout plan; what does “Open for Business” in The Blue Mountains post-COVID-19 look like?

George Matamoros, Chair, Thornbury Business Improvement Area

- Noted frustration on being unable to meet as a Board due to requirement for open meeting
- Mayor Soever confirmed Town staff will be in touch regarding scheduling a virtual Business Improvement Area Board meeting

Diane Anderson, Thornbury/Clarksburg Rotary

- Rotary has received grant monies for disbursement to Beaver Valley Outreach for programs, and to purchase gift cards from Foodland
- Questioned if a plan has been created for Canada Day Celebrations, virtual or otherwise as Rotary is considering an online “Stay at Home” Gala Initiative
Derek Hammond, Retail Hospitality Manager, Thornbury Village Cidery and Brewhouse

- Noted retail store open for contactless delivery or pick up, and production is still underway, but the bar area is closed
- Prioritizing putting money back into local restaurants that are open for take out
- Noted desire to help community as much as possible through this time
- Consideration for reorganization of the tap room to allow for proper physical distancing when restrictions are lifted

Reverend Dr. Grayhame Bowcott, Rector, St. George’s Anglican Church

- Emphasizing phone call outreach to seniors who are isolated/vulnerable at this time
- Group of Churchgoers making robes for Meaford Hospital, young people doing grocery store delivery to vulnerable sector
- Meal supply and delivery, with monetary donations coming in to support the initiative
- Churches in The Blue Mountains offering virtual services and outreach ministries

Paul Pinchbeck, Resident

- Resident who can lend a national tourism perspective as the President and CEO of the Canadian Ski Council
- Foremost concerns are doing business in a post-COVID-19 reality and convincing Canadians to stay healthy and active both during and post-COVID-19

Mark Woodburn, General Manager, Scenic Caves Nature Adventure

- Preparing Scenic Caves for re-opening, and noted the importance of managing high guest volumes in a safe manner

Melissa Twist, Director of Regional Tourism, South Georgian Bay Tourism

- South Georgian Bay Tourism has dedicated webpage for a business directory, and highlighting good news stories
- South Georgian Bay Tourism committed to a weekly group call with its members
- Working on a video campaign “Explore South Georgian Bay”

Rob Cederberg, Managing Director, Owner, Scandinave Spa

- Currently reviewing what the Scandinave Spa reopening model will look like to ensure physical distancing requirements and continued comfort of guests
- Noted Scandinave Spa is part of a franchise with locations also in British Columbia and Quebec – Rob to share best practices with the Task Force
- Confirmed the business has continued to see visitors re-booking massages rather than cancelling, and purchase of gift cards for later use
Melissa Goldmintz-Shah, Owner, The Lemonade Collective

- Hoping to represent new businesses, and noted The Lemonade Collective is currently closed
- Looking forward to assist the Task Force in its initiatives

Dr. Sabrina Saunders, Chief Executive Officer, The Blue Mountains Public Library

- Library has pivoted to online services with the branch closed to the public
- Biggest concern is how to re-arrange structures and services for post-COVID-19 activities, how to support the vulnerable sector who visit the branch for the social component, and how to ensure adequate supply of sanitizer, gloves, disinfectant for safe reopening

D. Correspondence

The Task Force reviewed Correspondence Items D.1 and D.2 with Mayor Soever noting these are the kinds of requests the Task Force will consider moving forward. Some initiatives will need ultimate approval by Council.

D.1 Andrew Siegwart, President, Blue Mountain Village Association
Re: COVID-19 Recovery
For information

D.2 Stu Frith, President, Blue Mountain Short Term Accommodation
Re: Short Term Accommodations, the COVID-19 Impact, and Municipal Response
For information

E. New and Unfinished Business

E.1 Additions to the Agenda

E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at the Next Meeting

F. Notice of Meeting Dates

To be determined

G. Adjournment

Moved by: Rob Sampson Seconded by: Alar Soever

THAT the Community Recovery Task Force does now adjourn at 11:22 a.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair, Carried.