

Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee

October 17, 2019 – 8:30 AM

The Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee met on the above date at the County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

Present: Chair Brian Davenport, Steacy Den Haan, Sharif Rahman, Lynda Bumstead, Lisa Taylor, Councillors Shirley Keaveney, Ian Boddy, John Woodbury, Sue Carleton, Odette Bartnicki, and Tom Hutchinson; and Warden Selwyn Hicks

Regrets: Ashley Chapman

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Savanna Myers, Manager of Economic Development; Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer; Courtney Miller, Business Enterprise Manager; Jennifer Christie, Program Development Manager; Stephanie Stewart, Manager of Community Transportation and Tara Warder, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Reports

CAOR-ED-17-19 Economic Development Priorities 2020

Savanna Myers presented the above noted report regarding priorities for 2020 to the Committee. It was noted that the implementation and marketing of the Community Improvement Plan incentives will continue into 2020.

Ms. Myers spoke to the staff realignment completed last year and noted the benefits. That structure will remain for 2020. Further information was provided on the attraction and retention campaign. Staff are hoping to build a database so that the municipalities and other groups can partner and create campaigns together.

Ms. Myers provided an overview of the Workforce WindsorEssex website, which utilizes census data and mapping to generate reports. Further information was provided on jobsinbruce.ca, which utilizes the WindsorEssex platform to pull job postings from multiple sources. It is very current and up to date. Grey County plans to launch a similar site in the first quarter of 2020 with budget approval. Because of individual reporting requirements, it made the most sense for Grey and Bruce Counties to have separate sites, however they will link to each other.

The Committee requested Savanna present at the other coalitions and task forces to show the benefits of this software.

Stephanie Stewart then provided the Committee with an update on the Community Transportation Plan and the current grant status. Plans for fixed routes as well as an “uber style” service are in the works.

Ms. Stewart noted that the goal is to keep the service and plan sustainable. The importance of data collection was noted.

Courtney Miller then provided an update on the Business Enterprise Centre (BEC). The hope with the development of the Sydenham Campus is that more services will be contained under one roof and staff can follow the relationship to ensure that people are getting what they need after they leave her office. The BEC might not be able to help with all needs, but can point people in the right direction.

Jennifer Christie gave an overview of her role as Program Development Manager of the Grey Bruce Business Generator. The role of the generator was outlined and it will operate out of the Sydenham Campus. Ms. Christie will be developing the business accelerator program with Innovation Guelph.

It was noted that a Public Private Partnership has been developed with the Business Enterprise Centre, the Grey Bruce Generator and the Bluewater Angel Investors Group.

ED06-19 Moved by: Councillor Bartnicki Seconded by: Councillor Keaveney

That Report CAOR-ED-17-19 Economic Development Priorities 2020 be received and the 2020 operational priorities be adopted as presented.

Carried

CAOR-CW-15-19 Sydenham Campus Update

Savanna provided an update on the Sydenham Campus. There has been an expansion of classrooms prepared and the roof is expected to be complete by the end of the month. Carpet will be completed shortly as well.

A press release is coming out today advising the new staffing and that the official opening of the campus will be occurring soon.

It was noted that the RFPs and RFQs that have been issued for the building renovations have come in under budget.

Staff are planning to arrange for a meeting to be held at the campus in the new year.

Climate Change Action Plan Update

Randy Scherzer provided the Committee with an update on the climate change action plan (CCAP). An RFP was released to hire a consultant to complete the plan and following a review of the submissions the County has awarded this project to ICLEI Canada. A workplan is being developed and the CCAP will build on the project completed by University of Guelph students earlier this year.

Staff will bring back further information to the group on where things are headed with the CCAP.

There will be a need to constantly communicate with other municipalities because it is such an important topic and coordination is essential.

It was noted that a communication plan is a key first step in the developing the CCAP.

PDR-CW-41-19 Comments on Draft Provincial Policy Statement

A report went forward to the Committee of the Whole last week outlining the County's comments on the draft Provincial Policy Statement which was endorsed. Randy Scherzer outlined the comments on the draft provincial policy statement which will be forwarded to the Province. A copy of the staff report will be sent to the Province and local municipalities.

Upcoming Events

Savanna Myers noted that the next Young Professional Networking event will be at Grey Roots on November 21st, 2019.

Ag 4.0 will be in Hanover on November 1st.

Grey County has been invited to attend the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Grey County will be part of the “Spotlight on Local” feature sponsored by Metro Grocers. This feature invites local regions to showcase local products and producers.

Randy Scherzer noted that there is an upcoming workshop on November 1, 2019 called “Homeward - Developing the Missing Middle” focused on Missing Middle housing and strategies for creating this type of housing. The event will be held in Wasaga Beach at the RecPlex.

The Innovative Rural Community Building event will be hosted at the Sydenham Campus on November 15th, 2019. The Town of Innisfil will discuss the Town’s private/public transit partnership with Uber, and Savanna Myers will be speaking about the development of the Sydenham Campus.

Roundtable

Warden Hicks asked the Committee to provide feedback on the current structure of the Committee and wondered if there are any groups missing that could be represented at the table.

Lynda Bumstead noted that it is important to have the opportunity to have conversations and look at Economic Development through a health lens and linking these to other partnerships.

The Municipality of West Grey and Grey Highlands provided development and building updates from their respective municipalities.

There was a recent presentation at the Healthy Communities Partnership which spoke to agriculture and mental health. The next upcoming event will examine safe and attainable housing for all.

The Town of the Blue Mountains is working on the attainable housing project. A Request For Information has been issued. Ms. Bartnicki spoke to the Transportation Pilot update and is looking forward to the launch of the pilot.

The Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) conference is coming up at Blue Mountain Village October 29th and 30th.

Philly Markowitz noted that Grey Agricultural Services thanked Grey County for the ongoing support.

Councillor Carleton noted that plans to transfer the servicing of the sewage treatment plant at Cobble Beach to the Township are in the works. There are no more hangars available at the airport and space in the terminal building is full.

Councillor Keaveney noted that the new school in Meaford is under construction and two provincial ministers visited the Municipality recently. The Economic Development Strategy is ongoing. There is a new winery and cidery proposed in the Town as well. Further, there is a hydroelectric pumped storage project being proposed at the Meaford Base. The importance of sharing information with the local municipalities was cited.

Randy Scherzer noted that a web page and video series is being created around developing housing for all. The series will highlight tools that are available to achieve this and highlights what is being done to address the attainable housing shortage.

Lisa Taylor, Executive Director for the Owen Sound campus updated the Committee on what is happening at Georgian College. The focus is on the areas where there is a labour market shortage, such as the health care and skilled trades sector. “New to Georgian” apprenticeship programs are currently being rolled out. Ms. Taylor also spoke to the South West Local Health Integration Network Bursary for students who would like to work in the in-home and in-community care sectors as Personal Support Workers.

Ms. Taylor noted that affordable housing and transportation are both barriers and they impact all students. Georgian College is attempting to increase its international student enrollment and hopes to double its international student population. Ms. Taylor spoke to disconnect between skilled trade job advertisements and the apparent demand for skilled tradespeople. Georgian would like to encourage employers to post online if that’s where people are going to look.

The Fall Open House for Georgian College is on November 16th and will be occurring at all campuses.

Savanna Myers indicated that the next edition of Made in Grey will be released the first week of December.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair

On a motion of and Councillor Bartnicki, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Brian Davenport, Chair