

Economic Development and Planning Advisory Committee

June 19, 2019 – 8:00 AM

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

Present: Chair Brian Davenport, Steacy Den Haan, Sharif Rahman, Fred Varkaris; Councillors Ian Boddy, John Woodbury, Sue Carleton, Odette Bartnicki, and Tom Hutchinson; and Warden Selwyn Hicks

Regrets: Shirley Keaveney, Ashley Chapman, and Lynda Bumstead

Staff

Present: Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Savanna Myers, Manager of Economic Development; Steve Furness and Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officers; and Jacquelyn Morrison, Deputy Clerk/ Legislative Coordinator

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

The individuals present introduced themselves.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

EmployerOne 2019 Results

Councillors Bartnicki and Boddy joined the meeting.

Savanna Myers highlighted the 2019 EmployerOne survey results. The percentage of employers who cannot find employees has increased. Fred Varkaris noted that this has been an ongoing conversation with colleagues and advised that Georgian College is seeking opportunities to help. Discussion occurred on the programs offered by Georgian College, including the boilermaker and pre-apprentice programs. Randy

Scherzer noted that having affordable and attainable housing is linked with the ability to attract new employees. Discussion occurred on the challenge of international students and new Canadians. Councillor Hutchinson noted the challenge that small businesses are facing.

Kim Wingrove noted that the EmployerOne results also show the perceived challenge relating to quality of employees.

Savanna Myers asked Committee members to encourage employers to complete the survey each January.

Local Agri-Food Brand and Roll Out Update

Philly Markowitz discussed developing a local agri-food brand, which markets agriculture products with the Made in Grey brand. She provided a sample of what has been created. She advised that local producers will be able to use the brand with their products. The brand will be rolled out in a few weeks. Ms. Markowitz has connected with ambassadors who will begin using the brand and will share stickers, bags, postcards, etc. with the public. The brand is a long-term project and strategic planning will continue over the next two years.

The Committee discussed the requirements for local businesses to be able to use the branding.

Ms. Wingrove recognized Ms. Markowitz and the area partners on their recent award for the Simcoe, Grey & Bruce Agriculture and Agri-Food Value Chain Business Retention and Expansion Study from Business Retention and Expansion International.

Regional Attraction and Retention Campaign Update

Savanna Myers discussed the marketing campaign and advised that a local firm has been hired. A five-year plan will be developed, with a focus on three specific goals: (1) to encourage Grey County high school (Grade 10-12) students and seasonal visitors to consider post-secondary education in Owen Sound through Georgian College or the Skilled Trades pathway; (2) to encourage post-secondary students who have left Grey County to come back; and (3) to retain and grow 25-44 year-old Grey County residents. A draft campaign will be presented at a future Committee meeting.

Mr. Varkaris discussed funding that Georgian College has received from the Local Health Integration Network (“LHIN”) to assist in the retention of personal support workers (“PSW”) after their education is completed at the College. Ms. Wingrove noted that most of Georgian College’s PSW students complete their placement with Grey County with the goal of future employment.

Ms. Myers discussed the application for funding that was submitted to establish a Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership. The project relates to the coordination of service providers to assist newcomers.

Councillor Boddy suggested marketing to spouses and families. Discussion occurred on word of mouth marketing. Further discussion occurred on Owen Sound's "Are You Most" campaign. Warden Hicks suggested marketing to youth to keep them connected to Grey County.

Business Enterprise Centre Update

Savanna Myers shared the year in review update for the business enterprise centre ("BEC"). The BEC's two employees handled 397 inquiries, 119 business consultations, 23 workshops, 12 starter company grants, and 6 summer company grants. The BEC projects that their 2019 figures will increase. They have expanded to Grey Highlands and are continuing to offer services in Hanover and Owen Sound.

Ms. Myers noted that a new three year agreement from the province for core, starter company, and summer company programs is forthcoming.

Economic Growth Data

Steve Furness reviewed the metrics. He shared industry sector statistics and noted the diversity in Grey's economy. He noted that the County has more health care, retail, manufacturing, construction, accommodations and food, and agriculture per capita than the provincial average.

He discussed employment growth across Grey County and the local municipalities. There may be a variety of reasons this has decreased, including not being able to fill positions, self-employment, and commuting.

Mr. Furness noted the significant population growth in Grey County. The planning department is seeing an increase in residential building permits. Steacy Den Haan noted that realtors are seeing people moving from across the province and stated that new residents are usually young people or people looking to retire. Mr. Furness highlighted that demographics have shifted and are aging rapidly and the area residents are older than the rest of the province.

Ms. Myers advised that staff would like to visit each local municipality to discuss the economic growth data to ground truth before bringing a report back to the Committee.

ED05-19 Moved by: Councillor Boddy Seconded by: Councillor Hutchinson

**That staff present the economic growth data to local municipalities
and bring a report back to the Committee.**

Carried

Reports

PDR-CW-24-19 Grey County Comments on Bill 108

Randy Scherzer highlighted Bill 108 and the changes to legislation. The Bill 108 regulations will be released later this week, which will provide more information on the potential impacts. Kim Wingrove noted that some of the changes increase the administrative burden on small communities.

Discussion occurred on the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) and impacts to the County and local municipalities.

PDR-CW-25-19 Recolour Grey - Draft Provincial Modifications

Mr. Scherzer advised that the Province has approved the County's Official Plan. The provincial modifications to the Official Plan were minor. He discussed the next steps for implementing the Official Plan.

Warden Hicks congratulated staff and noted that other municipalities are looking at the County's Official Plan as a model.

PDR-CW-30-19 Community Improvement Plan Program

Mr. Scherzer provided an update on the Community Improvement Plan ("CIP") template. The template has been received and approved by Committee of the Whole. He highlighted incentives offered through the program. He discussed next steps for municipalities to implement their CIP. County staff are happy to assist along the way.

Ms. Wingrove noted that the initiatives and priorities identified in the plan are areas where there is a gap. Monitoring the CIP will be important to determine the effectiveness of the program.

Councillor Bartnicki advised that the Town of the Blue Mountains is concerned about the investment in the CIP. Mr. Scherzer provided information on tax incentives to encourage development and using surplus land. Mr. Furness gave the example of the Owen Sound Family Health Team building, which positively impacts the public.

Upcoming Events

June 20th, 2019: Young Professional Network Event at Ground Effects Landscapes

Other Business

The Chair asked Committee members to share their key takeaways from the meeting.

Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held at the call of the chair in September.

On a motion of Warden Hicks and Councillor Boddy, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 AM.

Brian Davenport, Chair

A tour of the Sydenham Campus building occurred following the meeting.