

Minutes Special Meeting of Council



MEETING DATE: April 30, 2012
LOCATION: Town Hall, Council Chamber
PREPARED BY: Corrina Giles, Town Clerk

A. Call to Order

- Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order with all members in attendance.

Also in attendance were CAO Troy Speck, Director of Engineering & Public Works Reg Russwurm, Director of Planning & Building Services David Finbow, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator Lisa Kidd, Director of Finance & IT Services Robert Cummings, Manager of Water & Wastewater Services John Caswell, Manager of Human Resources Tracey McKenna, Fire Chief Ron Doherty, Coordinator and Youth Services Jenn Perks

- Council then paused for a moment of Personal Prayer or Reflection.

- Approval of Agenda:

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded by: R.J. Gamble

THAT the Agenda of April 30, 2012 be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda, Carried.

- No member declared a pecuniary interest with any matter as listed on the Agenda.

B. Workshop

B.1 Scott Ferguson, Progress Consulting

Workshop facilitated by Scott Ferguson to review existing strategic planning documents with a view to identifying strategic priorities

Mayor Anderson welcomed Scott Ferguson.

Scott then spoke noting Council will be identifying its priorities and reviewed the process for this evening's meeting. Scott confirmed Progress Consulting has no financial interest in this community and noted he is happy to be working with the Town of The Blue Mountains.

Scott then referenced the plans developed over time by The Blue Mountains and noted the work done to date will be pulled together with a first draft of the priorities to move forward. Scott noted the priorities will be items that are not legislated or mandated to be performed.

Scott reviewed the potential categories of ideas including Community Vibrancy, Economic Prosperity, Environmental & Ecological Integrity, Responsible and Responsive Delivery of Core Services, and Others

Deputy Mayor McKinlay spoke noting it is difficult to set priorities when much of what Council would like to do is outside of the Town's core services, and referenced the master servicing document adopted by Council twenty years ago. CAO Troy Speck spoke noting master servicing is included in Responsive and Responsible Delivery of Core Services.

Scott then spoke regarding the potential criteria for prioritizing ideas, Councillor Halos noting many ideas could be included in more than one section. Duncan questioned if "collaborative efforts could be included in the list of potential criteria for prioritizing ideas.

Scott then spoke regarding the Sustainable Path document and questioned if Council would like to add to the list of 25 priorities included in the Sustainable Path.

Joe then spoke noting his priorities, as referenced in the Leisure Activities Plan, facilities for youth and public transportation, Duncan replying that Grey County is looking into transportation in the future.

Mayor Anderson spoke noting as referenced in the Strategic Plan, development of a municipal energy management plan is a priority for her.

Councillor Gamble spoke noting as referenced in the Sustainable Path, developing a dark sky action plan is a priority for him.

Councillor Ardiel spoke noting as referenced in the Community Improvement Plan, the lack of parking at the Village is a priority for her, Duncan replying the Council adopted a comprehensive parking standards document that should be reviewed.

Ellen noted as referenced in Red Hot & Blue, ensuring a sustainable population is a priority for her.

Duncan noted as referenced in Red Hot & Blue, conducting business retention and expansion and investigating funding and working with neighbouring municipalities is a priority for him.

Gail noted as referenced in the Community Improvement Plan, the avoidance of future conflicts between agriculture and adjacent uses is a priority, Duncan concurring with Councillor Ardiel noting there should be regard for this.

Bob then noted as referenced in the Sustainable Path, public private partnership with athletic programming for all ages is a priority, and supporting a community moving towards a zero waste society is also a priority of his.

Gail spoke noting as referenced in Red Hot & Blue, showcasing and promoting cultural heritage and archaeology and archaeology areas is a priority.

Michael spoke noting divesting non-core assets is a priority.

Councillor McKean spoke noting a number of the documents and plans date back to 2006, further noting it would be interesting to know if the parties that put the plans together would include the same ideas today given the current economy. John then noted he is hopeful that the community will be involved with setting priorities.

Duncan then noted he would like road maintenance to be a priority and continuing efforts to reduce the infrastructure deficit should also be a priority. Michael spoke in response noting the specific infrastructure should be identified, further referencing the core services of the municipality.

This document can be made available in other accessible formats as soon as practicable and upon request

Duncan then spoke noting continuing to focus on acquiring lands for parkland and trail development through development as referenced in the Leisure Activities Plan is a priority to him.

Gail spoke noting as referenced in the Community Improvement Plan, core area design plan is a priority.

Duncan noted creating a framework for collaboration and partnerships as referenced in the Leisure Activities Plan is a priority.

Michael noted repealing outdated policies, by-laws and procedures should be a priority.

Duncan noted the Leisure Activities Plan should be reviewed by 2015.

Duncan then noted the feasibility study as referenced in the Leisure Activities Plan should not proceed.

Joe spoke noting his priorities include the design guidelines as referenced in the Community Improvement Plan.

Duncan noted signage and wayfinding as referenced in the Community Improvement Plan and Leisure Activities Plan is a priority.

Gail spoke noting the provision of a BMX park from the Leisure Activities Plan is a priority.

Bob noted increasing traffic to enhance visitors through the area is a priority as referenced in Red Hot & Blue and creating a hub of entertainment.

Gail spoke noting cycling, walking, carpooling and more bike lanes is a priority, Duncan replying that the County is preparing a Grey County Transportation initiative, further noting the Town should participate in this initiative.

Duncan noted being a part of attainable housing should be a priority.

Ellen noted as referenced in the Sustainable Path and Red Hot & Blue recruit knowledge based economy.

Duncan spoke noting defining the Town and distinguish branding is a priority.

Ellen noting as referenced in the Red Hot & Blue, promote a united identity.

Scott then questioned if there has been work done that would identify what the Town will look like in the future. Michael noted the official plan will identify what the community wants to be. Duncan noting the new official plan may assist Council as to its identity.

Director of Planning and Building David Finbow spoke noting the draft official plan will be released in September 2012. Scott then questioned if this session should continue at this time pending release of the draft Official Plan, Troy replying the official plan is for land use planning, further noting there are other areas that must be defined.

Duncan then noted, as referenced in the Sustainable Path, fostering a safe environment for all members of the community is a priority.

Scott spoke regarding the 2005 Strategic Plan and questioned what actions have been completed and if there are items that should be added to the priority list.

Michael then spoke referencing 1.4 of the Strategic Plan “Prepare and start implementation for an economic development strategy” has not been completed, further noting Red Hot & Blue is just an overview.

Ellen spoke referencing 3.3 of the Strategic Plan “Provide appropriate policies and zoning to protect existing architecture and natural heritage features”, further noting this should be added to the list of priorities.

Duncan then referenced 2.4 of the Strategic Plan “Develop a storm water management plan for each watershed”, further noting this should be added to the list of priorities.

Ellen referenced 6.6 of the Strategic Plan “Implement processes for continuous improvement” and noted this should be included to the list of priorities.

Troy then questioned if there is anything in the Strategic Plan that is no longer important or a priority to Council.

Michael spoke in response to Troy noting that 1.1 of the Strategic Plan “Prepare and implement an annual staging plan for development” is no longer a priority.

Michael noted 3.4 of the Strategic Plan “Develop information and educational initiatives to promote cultural heritage” is not a municipal function.

John then questioned if the Town is proceeding with 1.4 of the Strategic Plan “Prepare and implementation for an economic development strategy”, further noting there is an overlap in service that should be discussed further.

Scott spoke in response to John noting that all documents have an overlap and that Council should focus on a few items from all documents that Council will then prioritize.

Scott then read the added priorities as identified by Council this evening.

John then questioned if the public could participate in the priority setting, Troy replying there will be an opportunity for public input at a later date.

Scott then requested each Council member identify their top three priorities. Scott then read the top priorities as identified by Council, including 1. Cultural Heritage, Parks, Sense of Place, 2. Adopt Design Guidelines, 3. Reduce/Prioritize Infrastructure Deficit, 4. Sustainably manage waste in the community as locally as possible, 5. Develop a framework for collaboration and partnerships including leisure 6. Cohesive Economic Development.

Scott then requested that each Council member describe the short listed priorities.

John then spoke noting the Town’s core services have been identified as a priority, but Council is trying to develop the area while keeping the area the same.

Gail then spoke noting Council should protect archaeological sites, County collaboration and partnerships and a cohesive economic development plan with Grey and Simcoe are priorities.

Michael spoke noting the priorities were identified from the plans developed by the Town, further noting the top three priorities relate to the sense of place, further noting short term accommodation is a priority though it was not discussed.

Bob then spoke noting Council determines the Town's priorities, further noting sense of place, infrastructure deficit and waste management are strong priorities.

Duncan spoke noting over fifty priorities were identified, the most common being infrastructure deficit, enhancing the sense of place, and design guidelines.

Joe then spoke noting this has been a good exercise where Council individually, but collaboratively, identified the top three priorities, including infrastructure deficit, sense of place and economic development. Joe noted that many other priorities were identified.

Scott noted that questions of interpretation will now be addressed to Council.

Troy then requested clarification of cohesive economic development, Duncan replying that the Town should work with other groups to determine our place in economic development and work on that piece. John concurring with Duncan, and further noting the Town needs a mechanism so that economic development does not overlap or duplicate. Duncan then spoke noting the County has hired a new employee to work on economic development and further noted he is hopeful that this work will trickle down to the municipal level and BIA levels.

Troy then noted that OMAFRA will appear as deputation before Council to speak regarding economic development and who does what, further noting the Agricultural Advisory Committee will be involved.

Troy then spoke referencing Council's priority to sustainably manage waste in the community as locally as possible and questioned why Council opted not to proceed with organics during the budget process earlier this year if waste management is a priority. Bob spoke in response to Troy and noted he has concern with the organic waste collection that the amount of organic matter that would be generated could be costly, further noting he supports sorting building material in the landfill, not organics. John then spoke in response to Troy and noted the organic study should have included the rural areas to receive an accurate feedback on the study.

Troy then questioned Council's priority regarding a sense of place, John replying that to him it is maintaining the rural areas as rural areas, further noting there are no towers, and this really is a beautiful area. Michael then spoke concurring with John that there is a difference between the rural and urban areas and that he would like to see the areas maintained as a small urban area.

Duncan then spoke further to John's comments and noted there are natural assets in the urban and rural areas, open spaces, and a beautiful valley.

Troy then questioned Council's reference to an economic development strategic plan, Joe replying that economic development is many things, including rezoning employment lands as the Town is lacking in this area, transportation to and from Blue Mountain, further noting he would like to see specifics in economic development.

Duncan then spoke noting in the next year he would like to receive a staff report that identifies all economic development in The Blue Mountains in the last year, including tangible tasks.

Michael then spoke noting economic development in the current municipal environment is a waste of time and money, further noting the Town needs to be bold in its efforts.

John then spoke noting the Town needs lead-in time to assist with economic development and to go through a public consultation.

