

STAFF REPORT: Office of The Chief Administrative Officer

REPORT TO: Council

MEETING DATE: November 23, 2009

REPORT NO.: CAO.09.13

SUBJECT: Regional Post-Secondary Committee

PREPARED BY: Paul Graham,
Chief Administrative Officer

A. Recommendation

WHEREAS municipalities with post-secondary institutions benefit from an increased local knowledge base, from regional employment and research partners;

AND WHEREAS a regional approach to attracting a post-secondary partnership would be in the best interest of our area servicing Wasaga Beach, The Blue Mountains, Collingwood and Clearview;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains supports establishing a Regional Post-Secondary Committee with a mandate to work together as one entity, to attract a permanent post-secondary (University and/or College) facility to the area as part of a Regional Economic Stimulus Plan and to help build a local knowledge-based workforce;

AND THAT the Regional Committee be comprised of the Town of Wasaga Beach, Town of The Blue Mountains, Town of Collingwood and Township of Clearview as represented by the Mayors, Deputy-Mayors, Chief Administrative Officers and Economic Development Officers or their designates, and private sector representation when deemed appropriate by the Regional Committee;

AND FURTHER THAT Council accepts Mr. Patrick Coulter as Chair of this Regional Committee.

B. Background

This past summer, representatives at the Town of Collingwood invited representatives of The Blue Mountains, Clearview and Wasaga Beach to join them at an inaugural meeting to discuss a co-operative partnership to work to attract a post-secondary facility in our Region.

That inaugural meeting was held on August 11, 2009 and was chaired by Mr. Patrick Coulter. Mr. Coulter is a member of the Collingwood Economic Development Municipal Services Board and he was appointed to chair Collingwood's Sub Committee for Post-Secondary Opportunities.

Representatives of the four municipalities met again on October 2. This meeting was again chaired by Mr. Coulter. Those present at the meeting agreed that it was now appropriate to ask the respective Councils to endorse the creation of this working group. Thus, I make the above recommendation to Council.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

One of The Blue Mountain's Strategic Goals is managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the Community. As Council is aware, we are currently in the mid-stages of developing an Economic Development Strategy. Attracting a post-secondary institution to this Region will benefit all the municipalities engaged in this process, no matter where the institution is located.

D. Environmental Impact

None

E. Budget Impact

The cost of participating in this Regional Working Group is unclear at the present time. In our Three-Year Operating Budget, we are setting aside money for various undefined economic development activities. Each time that there is a requirement for funding related to this Regional Group's work, we will bring forward a report to Council with recommendations that identify funding sources.

Respectfully submitted,

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