

## **Minutes**

### **2010 Warden's Forum**

April 29, 2010, 4:30 p.m.

*Grey Bruce Regional Health Unit, Owen Sound*

**In Attendance:** Warden Arlene Wright, Mayors Francis Richardson, Ellen Anderson, Kathi Maskell, Ruth Lovell Stanners, Don Lewis, Howard Greig, Brian Mullin; Deputy Mayors Gerald Rogers, Dwight Burley, Brian Milne, Bob Pringle, David Fawcett, Dan Sullivan; Councillors Michael Martin, Robert Lennox, Carol Barfoot, Judy Gay, Sue Paterson, Peter Hambly, Bob White, Selwyn Hicks, Tom Pink, Bill Twaddle, David Adair, Jim McManaman, John Christie, Jim Frew, Dennis Evans, Cornelius Vlieland, Tom Kuglin, Terry McKay, Stewart Halliday, Paul McQueen, Lynn Silverton, Carol Lawrence, Bev Plume, John S. Black, David Mollison;

**Staff Members also present:** Lance Thurston Bryan Plumstead, Sharon Vokes, Jan McDonald, Gary Shaw, Kevin Wepler, Grant McLevy, Lynne Johnson, Barb Fedy, Rod Wyatt, Rob Armstrong, Steve Vokes, Paul Graham, Reg Russwurm, Elizabeth Thompson, Peter Tollefsen, Holly Morrison, Pam Coulter, Steve Furness, Jim Harrold, Dave Milliner, Dan Best, Steve Field and Penny Colton – Recording Secretary.

Warden Wright opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introduced special guest Dr. Hazel Lynne, Medical Officer of Health for Grey Bruce.

Dr. Lynne provided a presentation entitled Building Healthy Communities Together. The presentation covered a variety of programs run by the Health Unit and how Grey Bruce compares to the rest of the province using various public health indicators such as heavy drinking among adults, smoking, obesity, automobile mortality among youth, etc.

### **County-Wide Issues**

The Warden then provided the gathering with an update on three issues of county-wide interest:

#### **Waste Management:**

Don Lewis provided an update on Southgate's progress in regard to waste management.

Howard Greig provided an update on the Biodigester project between Georgian Bluffs and Chatsworth. The contract has been awarded to Maple Reinders. Work has begun on the project, \$2.4 million funding has been received and current costs are at \$3.1 million. This is the first biodigester in the world that will turn waste into hydro. It will be able to treat organics, septic, sludge and turn it back into fertilizer. The Warden updated on the recent resolution on record at the County, that the County not be involved in waste management. A triple majority is required in order for it to be raised again.

#### **Economic Development:**

Bryan Plumstead provided an update on the recent developments in economic development for Grey and Bruce Counties. \$20,000 funding has been received and consultants have been hired. In order for the committee to be the information centre of economic development, members are requesting business profiles from each municipality. The partnership will be contacting each municipality in the near future. The four year goal is to be considered an area of excellence.

Grey and Bruce Counties are members of the South West Economic Alliance and staff and politicians will be attending the first conference in June.

Steve Furness requested an update on the CP rail line moving back into the area. The Warden advised there is an issue in the Orangeville area therefore progress has stalled.

### **First Nation Initiatives:**

Warden Wright and Lance Thurston provided an overview of the desire to develop an aboriginal engagement protocol. The Saugeen First Nation has requested a meeting to begin the process with Grey County. Lance Thurston provided a brief summary of his experiences with the City of Kingston in such matters. He stated it is a complex issue involving treaty and cultural rights. Staff's commitment will be to keep council informed as discussions evolve with our aboriginal partners. The Warden stated the First Nation relations issue stems from the strategic thinking exercise held in 2008.

The meeting recessed for dinner at 5:35 p.m. and reconvened at 6:20 p.m.

### **Municipal Discussions:**

The Warden opened the floor to representatives from each municipality in the County to share information about opportunities and initiatives underway in each municipality and to identify issues they would like the county to consider.

#### **Chatsworth**

Howard Greig discussed the impact the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) has had on rural municipalities; agriculture has not been recognized in the funding equation which has created lost funding for many municipalities in our area.

Chatsworth's number one priority is alternative energy sources such as the partnership with Georgian Bluffs for the biodigester project. The second priority would be waste management, Chatsworth currently has capacity at its landfill sites.

#### **Georgian Bluffs**

Dwight Burley announced regrets from Mayor Barfoot. Dwight stated Georgian Bluffs is working well with neighbours and provided a brief overview of the biodigester project. Dwight reported on frustrations regarding delayed responses from MPAC on local assessments.

### Grey Highlands

Brian Mullin provided an update on the rebuild of Chapman's Ice Cream, production is expected to commence late fall. Temporary facilities in Markdale and other areas are currently producing ice cream.

Brian Mullin advised Grey Highlands Council would encourage joint discussions regarding OMPF, purchasing, specialized equipment purchases, Information Technology, road maintenance and construction. Due to upcoming retirements Brian suggested there may be opportunities for internships to mentor staff.

### Hanover

Kathi Maskell thanked Warden Wright for the opportunity this platform provides for discussions with neighbours. Hanover's current challenge is the Hanover Walkerton landfill site; work continues on the Environmental Assessment to expand the landfill by 10 acres. Studies are now at the Province and Council expects to have an answer by early summer. A meeting has been requested by First Nations to have a peer review of the studies. Hanover Council has implemented clear garbage bags on July 1<sup>st</sup>, this will require an education process for town residents.

The Town of Hanover has purchased the two adjoining properties to the Queens Hotel property in order to have one large parcel of land to resale for potential development.

The community complex expected completion is early August and a formal opening scheduled for October. Hanover will also begin projects under the stimulus funding including improvements to the water treatment plant and sewer work within the town.

### Meaford

Mr Richardson advised that Meaford staff and residents have developed an economic development strategy and implementation has begun this year. Two programs that have been completed include the Dragons' Den and Eureka Exchange.

Meaford is currently reviewing its official plan which will tie in with the County and Province.

Francis Richardson expressed there is great value in the partnerships between the County and other municipalities.

### Owen Sound

Ruth Lovell Stanners expressed affordable housing is an item that is important to the City of Owen Sound. She thanked Grey County Social Services for support of applications, but advised there are still 500 people on waiting lists for housing. Housing is essential for healthy living and support of the County is essential for this program to work.

Waste management is still a concern for the City and they are interested in discussions with other municipalities when their contract ends in 2015.

Ruth Lovell Stanners advised that court security costs are still an issue as it is unfair that Owen Sound carries the cost for the entire county.

Looking for opportunities to cost share is important. She is thankful to the County for this year's tax rate.

Ruth Lovell Stanners advised that this area is in danger of reduced service from the Grey Coach line, there needs to be a unified stand to advise the company and the Minister of Transportation the effects reduced service will have to our area.

OMPF funding needs to be reviewed again by the Province, we need to keep up the fight at Queen's Park.

### Southgate

Don Lewis advised that Grey County's number one industry is agriculture, and it is Southgate's driving force. This industry has begun to move the assessment growth.

The oldest car part manufacturer Metal Systems/Trim Trends is located in Dundalk and has just added a second shift, which indicates an upturn for the area.

Don Lewis is requesting that the rural road speed limits increase to 90 km, he suggests it will entice economic development in the area.

Don Lewis suggested a group review of OPP costs may prove beneficial to everyone.

Don announced July 2<sup>nd</sup> is the grand opening of the new library on the old county railroad property in Dundalk.

The municipality continues to struggle with the Saugeen Conservation Authority when installing municipal drains.

### The Blue Mountains

Ms. Anderson provided an update of upcoming road construction and building projects within the community this summer.

She advised that affordable housing is a huge issue for The Blue Mountains. The municipality has completed a housing needs study and it will be presented to the public on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

The municipality has passed a motion requesting the province to revisit Bill 198, which will amend the Planning Act to include attainable, sustainable housing. Ms. Anderson will forward the motion to municipalities for their consideration of support.

Ms. Anderson provided an overview of upcoming events occurring in The Blue Mountains; Wayne Gretzky tour and the hockey referees training are returning. Of special note is the Centurion Cycle Race which will be touring through a couple of local municipalities, it will occur on September 17-18, 2010.

Mr. McGee introduced the topic of a new formula for distribution of grants from the senior levels of government. He advised that in recent years grants and funding from senior levels of government have been primarily for infrastructure renewal. The introduction of the gas tax transfers has increased the permanent funding available based on permanent population. Mr. McGee advised that using households would much more closely reflect the infrastructure commitments of our communities and would be a superior foundation to allocate funds from the senior levels of government.

Mr. McGee is requesting each municipality to look at what impact this change would have on their municipality. These impacts can then be brought to the County and added to the County impact to get a clear picture of the funding deficit we face. This information can then be shared with other municipalities and then approach AMO to lobby to have the funding formal amended.

### West Grey

Dan Sullivan advised West Grey would like to see a County supported library service. There would be savings for everyone if borders were removed. They would also like support in regard to industrial wind turbines and what the economic impact will be on residential development.

Dan Sullivan concurs with other municipalities that a collective solution is required in regard to waste management and it may need to be looked at again at the County level.

Dan Sullivan requested that the Economic Development Partnership look to support some of the more inner rural areas ie. Varney speed track.

Dan Sullivan thanked Steve Furness (Economic Development) for his recent referral to West Grey, it could prove to be very beneficial.

It is becoming apparent with the recent closing of local factories that levels of education have a big impact for displaced workers.

2009 has been a tough year for West Grey residents due to the tornado, and closed factories; but the sharing of services has been of great assistance. Dan Sullivan stated that more mutual aid type work such as administration and policing should also be reviewed for benefits.

Dan advised that each business affected by the tornado in the industrial park has rebuilt bigger and better, it has been the silver lining. Also cheques have started to be delivered to residents within the community affected by the tornado.

Warden Wright recapped this evening's topics and noted the overall interest in shared services and projects between the municipalities and county.

Warden Wright thanked all councillors who have put their names forward for election to municipal council.

There was a brief discussion in regard to the benefits of mail in ballots. The Blue Mountains, Grey Highlands, Georgian Bluffs and Meaford all advised they have offered the mail in ballots within their municipalities with varying success but all will continue to offer this process again.

Meeting adjourned. 7:40 p.m.