



Minutes

Business Leader Pre-Consultation - Community Recovery Task Force

Meeting Date: March 31, 2020
Meeting Time: 11:00 a.m.
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Prepared by Sarah Merrifield, Executive Assistant Committees of Council

Note: This is an informal meeting of industry and business professionals with several members of Town staff and Council and does not constitute a meeting of the Coronavirus Recovery Task Force. The final composition of the Coronavirus Recovery Task Force will be determined upon approval of the Terms of Reference by Council.

A. Call to Order

Alar Soever called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. with the following business leaders, Council members, and Town staff in attendance:

- Tony Poole, Thornbury Business Improvement Area
- George Matamoros, Thornbury Business Improvement Area
- Steve Simon, The Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce
- Sarah Fillion, Clarksburg Village Association
- Andrew Siegwart, Blue Mountain Village Association
- Councillor Rob Sampson
- Councillor Peter Bordignon
- Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer
- Tim Hendry, Manager of Communications and Economic Development

Tim Newton, Small Business Enterprise Centre, was unable to join the meeting.

B. New and Unfinished Business

Mayor Soever noted his thanks to business leaders for attending the Microsoft Teams meeting. Mayor Soever commented that at the March 30, 2020 Council meeting, Council passed a motion to establish a Coronavirus Recovery Task Force. The goal of the Task Force will be to identify the business community's needs and how they can be best addressed at a municipal level, while also ensuring efforts are coordinated with Federal and Provincial programs.

Mayor Soever requested feedback from attendees regarding the needs of the business community, and insight into what the Town can do. The feedback received is noted below:

1. Develop a Communications Plan with key messaging being delivered to the business community including, but not limited to:
 - a. Demonstration of “Tourism pride” – “we look forward to seeing and receiving visitors when it is safe for you to come back”
 - b. Clearly demonstrate infrastructure spending as a key priority (capital projects, attainable housing, etc.)
 - c. Identify Provincial and Federal initiatives and programs that the business community could leverage during this time
 - d. Identify initiatives within the Town’s jurisdiction that can assist business owners during this time
 - i. Consider if certain capital project spending can be reallocated to assist business owners
 - e. Provide messaging about the establishment of the Coronavirus Recovery Task Force and its Mandate
 - i. Also add this information to the existing Town COVID-19 webpage (heading “Information for Businesses”)
2. Consider deferral of property taxes to Commercial property owners to September 2020
3. Consider deferral of BIA levy and association fees, using funding from Apple Pie Trail budget, or similar
4. Explore “virtual tourism” opportunities, including what retail opportunities may exist
 - a. Virtual Apple Pie Trail tour, retail opportunities in downtown Thornbury/Clarksburg, etc
5. Understand the needs of community groups and not-for-profit organizations

C. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.