



## **The Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee (BDAPAC) Meeting**

Virtual Meeting – E-invite  
Thursday, May 21, 2020; 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor Hewitt (Chair), Councillor Rob Shirton (Vice-Chair), Kellie Stephan, Mike Lessard, Phil Hauser, Tauri Caputo, John Vanderzanden, John Edelman, Trudy Parsons, Art Bluhm and Chris Hibbs.

**Staff:** Mike Evers, General Manager of Community & Development Services, Lidy Romanuk, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, and Deb Hunter, Administrative Coordinator of Community & Development Services.

**Regrets:** Garrett Eggink and Adam Peet

### **1.0 Welcome and Introduction**

Meeting is called to order by Manager of Economic Development and Tourism at 10:02 a.m.

### **2.0 Update from Mayor Hewitt**

Mayor Hewitt provided an update from Council, key highlights included:

- March 24<sup>th</sup> – Declared State of Emergency Strict measures are in place and continue to be updated frequently driven by Federal, Provincial, Health Unit Officials and Municipal direction.
- Haldimand has an Emergency Operations Centre ready and strong process in place. Staff and Health Care professionals are prepared.
- Financial Impact as of April 21<sup>st</sup> includes a 40% commitment from the County, approximately \$842,000 to date. Loss of Revenue – includes Property Taxes, programs, signage, personal protection equipment (PPE), and the cost related to the Emergency Care Centre (ECC).

Mayor Hewitt then discussed current Council priorities:

- County wide broadband internet
- Growth Plan – 1 public meeting complete, 2 more required; intend to move forward to a virtual platform if necessary to keep things moving
- Work with local economy
- Capital Projects continue to move forward
- Construction/building (ties in with 2 priorities above)
- Federal and Provincial support
- COVID-19 public information session

### **3.0 Committee Roundtable Discussion on Supporting Local Business Re-opening**

The committee expressed concern on COVID-19 restrictions, and the impact this will have on the local economy. Social media and technology will have a huge impact on how business is done moving forward, and businesses will need support transitioning to adapt to this new landscape. The committee offered the following recommendations.

- P. Hauser recommended Haldimand County promote where residents can purchase PPE (personal protective equipment) locally, and the committee echoed the need to support local businesses during these uncertain times.
- T. Parsons suggested the initiative of business to business forums to share strategies and successful experiences through newsletters, social media etc.
- M. Lessard shared information on “Contagion Safe” certification options for local businesses.

A discussion then ensued.

Mayor Hewitt asked the committee to brainstorm ideas, themes, initiatives and opportunities that would help support the re-opening of local businesses. The committee offered the following recommendations:

- C. Hibbs shared that there is a lack of awareness for programs available for local business owners. Information on funding initiatives, local PPE and e-commerce should be distributed in a way for businesses to easily absorb and utilize.  
  
L. Romanuk added that this information could be distributed from the county through the Haldimand Business Network, which includes all local BIAS and chambers.
- J. Edelman commented that advertising support is crucial for local businesses, and the County should implement any programs to help the onset cost of local advertising and get people back into the shops.
- The committee then discussed the re-opening of Haldimand County’s Farmers’ Markets and innovative ways the county and vendors could offer services and products amid the pandemic.  
  
L. Romanuk suggested that Haldimand County could potentially look into a marketplace like or similar to the Shopify multi vendor marketplace that Downtown Belleville is utilizing.

A discussion then ensued.

The Committee then was asked to prioritize initiatives and identify 3-5 action items that should be undertaken immediately. The committee offered the following recommendations:

- Marketing committee-establish a marketing committee that is small in size ( 5 members maximum) with members who bring tactical marketing experience with them.
- . Mayor Hewitt suggested we take information and establish parameters behind 2-3 sub committees, and to create a terms of reference.

A discussion then ensued.

L. Romanuk will review notes, and after discussion with the Economic and Development Division will take on six priorities and report back to the committee.

#### **4.0 Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:02 pm

Next Meeting Date: September 21, 2020. Location to be determined.