Township of Cramahe Council Information Package

Date: Thursday, July 30, 2020, 2:00 p.m.
Location: For Information Only

Council Information Package

1. Correspondence

1.a Northumberland County
   Economic Recovery Task Force

1.b The Corporation of The Township of Cobourg
   Memo Re Bill 197 - Electronic Participation - Council Meetings - Amendment to Procedural By-law No.009-2019
Northumberland Economic Recovery

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS • FINAL REPORT
COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Northumberland businesses. The Northumberland Economic Recovery Task Force launched in May 2020 as an industry-led initiative to support the community through this crisis.

As local business owners and leaders, Task Force members are invested in Northumberland’s economic recovery. In collaboration with local government and industry stakeholders, Task Force members developed focused recommendations to help local businesses rebuild.

Recommendations are being addressed by industry, as well as shared with municipal councils, federal and provincial officials, and the Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee consultations to inform local, provincial and federal planning and action.

Priorities

The work of the Task Force was structured around the following three priorities:

- Collect data about business owner financial and operational challenges and needs arising from COVID-19
- Identify and support implementation of actions, programs and services in response to local conditions to support businesses facing the impacts of the pandemic
- Advocate with all levels of government to support effective recovery measures

Messages from Our Co-Chairs

“With employee and community health and safety being of foremost importance, our local businesses continue to do their part to follow government and health authority direction during COVID-19. As we move in the direction of restarting our economic engines, this grass-roots collaboration has established recommendations that reflect the direct impacts of the pandemic on the Northumberland business community. By generating locally-developed actions that respond to local conditions the Task Force has provided vital insight for local, provincial and federal economic recovery plans that drive meaningful outcomes.”

“This Task Force brought a wealth of expertise and perspective to bear on the unprecedented operational and financial challenges currently facing local businesses. By leveraging valuable insight from stakeholders about the definitive economic impacts of the pandemic, the Task Force has developed an action plan of tools and advocacy to support our local businesses as they navigate the current environment. Northumberland County is pleased to have supported this important effort. We will continue to collaborate with local businesses and stakeholders, neighbouring communities and government to advance a shared vision for economic stabilization and sustainability. Our community is resilient. We will move together in the direction of recovery and renewal.”

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45% of Canadians are worried about losing their job. This perception is higher in Ontario with 50% of Ontarians being worried about losing their job.

80% of Canadians are continuing to buy local, and show preference to Made in Canada products.

Small firms have recorded almost double the rate of job losses as mid-sized and larger firms. Small firms in five sectors are most vulnerable:

- Accommodation & Food Services
- Arts & Entertainment
- Non-essential Retail
- Mining / Oil & Gas Services
- Commercial Real Estate Leasing

New economy trends:

**How We Travel**
- More local, more modest, more active
- 63% prefer to drive than fly, and
- 62% prefer to stay in Canada.

**How We Share**
- More bandwidth, more data, more hacks
- Data creation will grow to 175 zettabytes by 2025
- 10X the amount of data produced in 2017.

**How We Shop**
- More shipping, more local, more expensive
- Nearly 3 in 10 Canadians are now shopping online for things they normally would have bought in a store.
Northumberland Survey Results

Financial Impact of COVID-19
(As of June 1)

- Decrease in sales up to 50%: 20% of respondents
- Decrease in sales approx. 50-70%: 30% of respondents
- Decrease in sales approx. 75%: 20% of respondents
- Decrease in sales by 100%: 17.5% of respondents
- Increase in sales by any %: 7.5% of respondents
- No change: 5% of respondents

Status of Business
(As of June 1)

- Business has re-opened: 67.5%
- Business is still closed: 27.5%
- Business will/has not survived/forced to permanently close: 5%

Top Priority for Businesses
(As of April 28)

- Moving business to online sales platform: 31.8%
- Accessing government resources/assistance: 23.8%
- Accessing webinars to stay current: 15.9%
- Connecting virtually with other businesses: 12.6%

Consumer Feedback

- What is important to local consumers to begin shopping in a curbside store in Northumberland County?
  - 54% plan to reduce the amount of shopping in curbside stores.
  - 61% plan to support local businesses by shopping online (28% already do).
  - 52% said designated shopping hours for seniors/ those with disabilities/health conditions are important. Respondents said they shop then.
  - 74% said physical distancing requirements being posted, clearly marked and enforced in customer service settings is very important.
Recommendations

1. **Tackle broadband deficits**
   - High-speed internet connectivity is a linchpin to local economic recovery. Unfortunately, there are significant gaps in high-speed availability and capacity throughout Northumberland.
   - **Action Underway**
     - Northumberland County is leading an initiative to evaluate local high-speed internet capacity and connectivity levels and define a recommended approach to—and roadmap for—maximizing access in underserved and unserved areas.
     - A Request for Proposal was awarded on July 9, 2020 to Nordicity to conduct a feasibility study and develop a Broadband Strategic Plan in order to move this initiative forward.
     - Determining existing capacity will form the basis for strategic investments in technology to meet local needs.
   - **Support Required**
     - This roadmap will be completed by September 2020, with the next step being application for funds for implementation.
     - The Task Force recommends partnership with the federal and provincial governments as an urgent priority, in alignment with the goals of programs such as the ‘Improving Connectivity in Ontario’ program and the ‘Connect to Innovate’ program as well as Federal infrastructure funding.

2. **Power the transition to online**
   - Where there is adequate internet access in areas of high connectivity, support is required to help businesses transition to the online environment. Local surveys indicate that consumers wish to support local businesses but feel the safest way to do so in the current environment is by buying online.
   - **Action Underway**
     - The Business & Entrepreneurship Centre Northumberland (BECN) in partnership with participating municipalities (4), chambers of commerce (4) and BIAs (3) are launching a county-wide “Digital Northumberland” initiative to assist small businesses in developing their digital presence.
     - Building on successful initiatives started in 2019, the program will support the community’s existing small businesses by helping to establish or improve their web or social media presence, or e-commerce capabilities. In addition, further opportunities are being developed in collaboration with Northumberland CFDC to leverage existing resources.
   - **Support Required**
     - The Task Force recommends partnership with the provincial government to facilitate business adoption of necessary tools and technology and to support capacity-building activities as well as striking collaborative relationships with existing organizations to leverage financial opportunities.
1. **Fuel consumer confidence**

Standardizing a requirement for personal protective equipment for consumers will enhance public safety and increase consumer confidence in visiting bricks and mortar establishments.

**Action Underway**

Businesses across Northumberland continue to monitor and respond to public health direction and ensure measures are in place to enhance the safety of customers visiting their establishments. In its release of initial recommendations on June 4, the Task Force recommended that a county-wide standard be established for the wearing of masks in all customer-facing environments, to ensure consistency in this practice by businesses and the public alike. The Task Force strongly endorses the July 7 order issued by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDU) Medical Officer of Health requiring non-medical masks or face coverings in commercial establishments in Northumberland.

**Support Required**

The Task Force recommends ongoing education by the public and private sectors about the use of non-medical masks/face coverings in public spaces, especially when physical distancing may be a challenge. Face masks or coverings minimize the spread of infection when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

2. **Enhance the PPE supply chain**

Business innovation and public-private collaboration have reinforced Ontario supply chains for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) however gaps in access and acquisition remain, putting an additional strain on local businesses.

**Action Underway**

With many local businesses expressing the need for a reliable and consistent source of PPE to ensure safety measures are in place for staff and clients, the Task Force has reviewed models for strengthening local PPE supply chains.

**Support Required**

The Task Force recommends a partnership of local businesses and stakeholders based on a model from the Municipality of Clarington, whereby a lead organization would manage the procurement and distribution of PPE on behalf of member partners, who would benefit from bulk purchasing and an internal distribution network. A working group will be convened to confirm best practices and formalize implementation.

3. **Fuel consumer confidence**

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Invest in workforce mental health
The instability created by the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the mental health of our local workforce. There continues to be worry, anxiety and uncertainty about the future, impacting both workforce availability and productivity. A focus on mental health resilience and wellness is vital for the effective reopening of our economy.

Action Underway
In addition to existing community mental health services, innovative virtual mental health support initiatives launched by local agencies and at the provincial level in response to COVID-19 are available to Northumberland residents.

Support Required
The Task Force recommends ongoing and increased public-sector investments in mental health resources to ensure workforce psychological health in addition to the measures being put in place to ensure workforce physical health as the economy reopens. In addition, the Task Force recommends public-private sector collaboration facilitated by Northumberland County to increase awareness of the availability of existing resources.

Develop targeted economic recovery actions
We have repeatedly heard about the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women, youth and older workers.

Action Underway
Just prior to COVID-19, the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy was in the process of launching in Northumberland through the Business & Entrepreneurship Centre Northumberland (BECN). The program – running as a regional pilot administered by the BECN – will support the launch of 225 women entrepreneurs. In addition, local community partners have been in ongoing discussions with post-secondary institutions to advance internship (experiential learning) opportunities for youth. Successful youth-focused support programs such as Starter and Summer Company continue to be a priority. Research and summary information has been collected from Northumberland’s Community Employment Resource Partnership to assess local employment/re-training opportunities.

Support Required
The Task Force recommends continued and focused support for programming which targets economic stabilization and growth across demographics that have been disproportionately disadvantaged by COVID-19.
Economic Recovery Task Force Structure

The Northumberland Economic Recovery Task Force was an industry-led initiative, with local business owners and leaders coming together to identify actions that will promote local economic recovery. Informing the Task Force were six Working Groups focused on targeted sectors including micro and small business, manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, professional, and development/ construction.

The Task Force was convened with support from Northumberland County’s Economic Development team and the four local chambers of commerce, together with area municipal partners, industry associations and agencies, and representatives from the education sector.

Thank you to the following Task Force and Working Group participants.

Business Representatives

- Allen Insurance Group
- Baker Tilly
- Behan Construction
- Beldan Canada Inc.
- Brighton Barn Theatre
- Burnham Family Farm Market
- Cameco
- Cellar Door Wine
- Centre and Main Chocolate
- Cobourg Kia
- Codrington Market
- Colborne Guest House
- Cricklwood Farm
- Brendan Cumseen, financial services
- Fidelity Engineering & Construction/Landscaping
- Fieldstone Spa
- Ganaraska Grain
- Haute Goat
- Holton Flowers
- Kinch Eddle Litigation
- LeBlanc Enterprises
- David Lindsay, higher education
- Kim MacNeil, community representative
- Millard Towers
- Mrs. B’s Chocolate
- New Amherst Homes
- Part Time CFO Services
- Queenies Bake Shop
- Racine Financial
- Re/Max Hallmark First Group Realty
- Sabic Innovative Plastics
- Schmidt Law Legal Services

Community Stakeholders

- Brighton Cramahe Chamber of Commerce
- Brighton Downtown Business Improvement Area
- BDC (ex-officio)
- Cobourg Downtown Business Improvement Area
- Community Futures Development Corporation
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (ex-officio)
- Municipality of Brighton
- Municipality of Port Hope
- Municipality of Trent Hills
- Northumberland Central Chamber of Commerce
- Northumberland County & Warden of County Council
- Northumberland Federation of Agriculture
- Northumberland Manufacturers’ Association
- Port Hope & District Chamber of Commerce
- Port Hope Heritage Business Improvement Area
- Regional Tourism Organization 8
- Town of Cobourg
- Trent Hills Chamber of Commerce
- Workforce Development Board

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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG

STAFF REPORT

Special/Emergency
Council Meeting

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Brent Larmer
TITLE: Municipal Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services

DATE OF MEETING: Monday July 27, 2020

TITLE / SUBJECT: Amendment to Procedural By-law No.009-2019 – Electronic Participation of Council Meetings

REPORT DATE: Monday July, 27, 2020

1.0 STRATEGIC PLAN
Not Applicable

2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
Council’s final resolution and Procedural By-law Amendment will be communicated to the Public immediately following its passing.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION
THAT Council receive the report from the Municipal Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize the preparation of a by-law to be endorsed and presented to Council at a Regular Council meeting to allow for the Electronic participation of Council Meetings to continue; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct the Municipal Clerk to review the Procedural By-law and bring back the necessary changes and recommendations to Council in order to reflect the continued use of Electronic participation at future Council meetings and a review of the additional changes to the Municipal Act, including the use of Proxy voting at Council Meetings.

4.0 ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION
The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Steve Clark introduced Bill 197 – *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020* in the Legislature on July 8, 2020 proposing an amendment to the *Municipal Act* to remove the stipulation that a declared emergency must exist in order for a municipal council, pursuant to its procedure bylaw, to hold a virtual meeting where all members participating electronically count towards quorum, may vote and, take part in both open and closed sessions.

5.0 **BACKGROUND**
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Ontario declared an emergency under s 7.0.1(1) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* and Bill 187, an Act to amend the *Municipal Act, 2001* received Royal Assent on March 19, 2020 amending the electronic participation section of the *Municipal Act* to allow the counting of members participating electronically towards quorum, and including those members in a meeting that is closed to the public. These changes apply in the event of an emergency being declared by the Premier, Cabinet or the municipal Head of Council under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. Once the emergency has ended, regular meeting rules apply.

Subsequent to this declaration, revisions to Council’s rules of procedure to address the ability of Council to participate electronically in open and closed meetings electronically and be counted towards quorum when an emergency has been declared by either the Province or the municipality itself under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* was approved by Council, March 23, 2020.

The Provincial emergency declaration was recently extended from July 22nd to July 24th, 2020. Bill 195, *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Approach to COVID-19) Act, 2020* ("Bill 195") terminated the declared emergency upon receiving Royal Assent. However, regardless of any possible termination of the emergency, precautions associated with preventing the spread of COVID-19, most notably, social distancing, will still need to be in place beyond that period.

6.0 **ANALYSIS**
The recent amendment to the *Municipal Act, 2001* provisions regarding electronic participation took effect on July 21, 2020 and if Council approves the corresponding amendment to its Procedure By-law, Council will be able to continue to allow electronic participation at meetings as deemed appropriate.

This report is being brought forward at this time as well as a proposed By-law amendment to ensure that electronic participation can continue to take place now that the Provincial emergency is lifted and the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020* Bill 197 has come into effect.
By-law No. 021-202 was passed by Council on March 23, 2020 enacting the necessary amendments to the Procedure By-law to allow for electronic participation in meetings. The proposed draft by-law attached to this report maintains this language but removes the stipulation that a declared emergency must exist. This can apply whether the entire meeting is to be held electronically or only if individual Members are participating electronically. In addition to the new pieces of legislation, the Municipal Clerk will review the Procedural By-law in its entirety to account for provisions that may need clarity based on electronic participation, including Advisory Committees and Delegations to Council.

The COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020 also includes provisions permitting councils to amend their procedure by-laws to permit proxy voting for absent members. As this is a new matter requiring further analysis, staff will investigate further and report back to Council with further information at a later date.

It was unknown by Staff when Bill 197 the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020 would come into effect, similarly, it was unknown when Bill 195 would come into effect, but both pieces of legislation came into effect the same day on July 21, 2020, a day after the recent Committee of the Whole meeting. As a result of this ever changing legislative environment the effect of the changes in legislation were not fully recognized regarding Council electronic participation until after the legislation was passed, thus resulting in the call of the Special Emergency Council meeting to introduce changes to become complaint with Ontario Statute.

As both pieces came into effect prior to the July 27, 2020 Council meeting, the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020 allows the provision for Council to hold a Special Meeting by electronic means for the purpose of amending its procedural by-law in this manner. However, amendments to the procedural by-law wold be required prior to Council proceeding with the balance of the agenda for this Special Meeting, thus it was necessary to call an emergency meeting of Council in order to deal with the Procedural By-law amendment.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/STAFFING/BUDGET IMPACT
There are no financial or budget implications as a result of this staff report.

8.0 CONCLUSION
THAT Council receive the report from the Municipal Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize the preparation of a by-law to be endorsed and presented to Council at a Regular Council meeting to allow for the Electronic participation of Council Meetings to continue; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct the Municipal Clerk to review the Procedural By-law and bring back the necessary changes and recommendations to Council in
order to reflect the continued use of Electronic participation at future Council meetings and a review of the additional changes to the Municipal Act, including the use of Proxy voting at Council Meetings.

9.0 AUTHORIZATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT (SENIOR MANAGEMENT/CAO)

Brent Larmer
Municipal Clerk
Manager of Legislative Services