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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

SPECIAL REGIONAL COUNCIL

Wednesday, October 9, 2019

The Council of The Regional Municipality of Durham met in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 9:01 AM

Regional Chair Henry assumed the Chair.

Prior to roll call, Regional Chair Henry read the following land acknowledgement:

We are currently located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange among the Mississaugas Peoples and is the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. We honour, recognize and respect this nation and Indigenous Peoples as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

1. Roll Call

All members of Council were present with the exception of Councillors Collier, Crawford, Kerr, Leahy, McLean, John Neal, Joe Neal and Yamada

Councillor Collier attended the meeting at 9:30 AM and left at 11:06 AM on municipal business

Councillor Crawford attended the meeting at 9:11 AM

Councillor Kerr attended the meeting at 9:12 AM

Councillor Leahy attended the meeting at 9:14 AM

Councillor Yamada attended the meeting at 9:14 AM and left at 11:35 AM on personal business

Councillor Brenner attended on behalf of Councillor McLean as the alternate for the City of Pickering

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Regional Chair Henry and Councillor Wotten provided opening remarks.

3. Session Structure, Purpose and Key Objectives

K. Wiancki provided a brief overview of the session structure, purpose and key objectives. She advised that S. Hardman and S. Austin will provide an update on the progress of the development of the Strategic Plan since the March 21, 2019 Special Meeting of Regional Council.

4. Context and Strategic Planning Process Overview

4.1 Process Recap Since March

S. Hardman and S. Austin provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the New Strategic Plan for Durham Region, of which electronic and hard copies were provided to Members of Council.

S. Austin advised that she will be sharing what was heard from the community during the public engagement phase and reviewed the following points of the Presentation:

- Context & Process Overview
 - Strategic Planning Context and Process Overview
 - Process Recap and Key Activities
 - Community Engagement Summary
 - 13 Ideas Shared on “Your Voice Durham”
 - Sources of Citizen and Stakeholder Input
 - Survey Respondents – A Snapshot
 - Our Strengths – Based on Qualitative Input
 - Some Key Messages
 - Community Survey Respondents
 - Community Stakeholders
 - Regional Staff Focus Groups
 - Commonalities – Qualitative Comments from All Sources

4.2 Key Messages from Community Engagement

S. Hardman reviewed the responses received in the qualitative feedback from town hall meetings, stakeholder engagement sessions, etc. and reviewed the following points of the Presentation:

- March 21st Special Meeting of Council
- Early List of Priorities/Areas of Focus Discussed on March 21st
- Top 5 Overall Themes as Prioritized by 458 Survey Respondents
- Age Comparison of Top 5 Themes by Survey Respondents
- Municipal Comparison of Top 5 Themes by Survey Respondents
- Top Themes from All Qualitative Sources of Feedback
- Economic Prosperity and Job Creation
- Vibrant, Inclusive and Caring Communities
- Environmental Sustainability
- Good Governance and Service Excellence
- Growth and Infrastructure
- Connected Communities

Moved by Councillor Marimpietri, Seconded by Councillor Lee,
(301) That Council recess for 10 minutes.

CARRIED

Council recessed at 9:43 AM and reconvened at 9:53 AM.

4.3 Bringing Council and Community Thoughts Together

This item was dealt with in conjunction with Item 4.4.

4.4 Facilitated Dialogue with Karen Wianecki, Planning Solutions Inc.

K. Wianecki stated that the Strategic Plan has been structured around the following 6 proposed goal areas:

1. Customer Service – Good Governance & Service Excellence
2. Jobs – Economic Prosperity & Job Creation
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Community – Vibrant, Inclusive & Caring Communities
5. Connected Communities
6. Growth & Infrastructure

With regards to the 6 Goals, K. Wianecki provided the following details:

- Goal 1: Goal Governance & Service Excellence
 - Commitment Statement: Durham Region is...responsive and open, service-oriented and results-driven
 - Suggested Strategic Objectives:
 - Respect for the Taxpayer
 - Open & Responsive Government
 - Solid Financial Positioning
 - Committed to Continuous Improvement
- Goal 2: Economic Prosperity & Job Creation
 - Commitment Statement: Durham Region...Opportunity & Economic Advantage Live Here
 - Suggested Strategic Objectives
 - Retain & Attract Good Quality Jobs
 - Build a Diverse, Innovation Economy
 - Leverage Existing Assets
 - Marketing the Durham Advantage
- Goal 3: Environmental Sustainability
 - Commitment Statement: Durham Region...a Healthy, Resilient Natural Environment & Agricultural System
 - Suggested Strategic Objectives:
 - Encourage Environmental Responsibility

- Preserve Green Spaces
- Support & Promote Environmental Resilience
- Goal 4: Vibrant, Inclusive & Caring Communities
 - Commitment Statement: Durham Region...Livable, Inclusive, Welcoming & Safe
 - Suggested Strategic Objectives:
 - Increase the Range of Available and Attainable Housing
 - Support and Protect Public Health, Safety and Well-being
 - Make Communities More Welcoming and Inclusive
 - Strengthen the Network of Human Services to Support Durham Residents
- Goal 5: Connected Communities
 - Commitment Statement: Durham Region...Well-Connected and Engaged
 - Suggested Strategic Objectives:
 - Address Congestion
 - Build Better Networks that Connect People to Jobs, Goods and Services
 - Encourage Active Living
- Goal 6: Connected Communities
 - Commitment Statement: Durham Region...is Future-Focused and Opportunity Ready
 - Suggested Strategic Objectives
 - Be Anticipatory, Future-Focused & Opportunity Ready
 - Manage Growth Strategically

Council members provided the following comments with regards to the proposed 6 Priority Goals:

- Focus on value for tax dollars spent
- Set specific goals with regards to the environment
- Examine ways to increase capacity on the provincial roads system
- Look at ways to keep downtowns vibrant and support small business owners and those already invested in Durham Region
- Post Secondary and Health Care Economies have to be considered
- Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority Development and all related aspects
- Focus on complete communities, healthy cities
- Focus on new developments and developments that encourage high walkability and active transportation
- Strengthen and support traditional communities of Durham
- Have a broad range of economic interests
- Recognize community diversity and income diversity

5. Gap Analysis

K. Wiancki requested that members review the suggested strategic objectives listed under the 6 Priority Goals and provide specific comments with regards to each Priority Goal.

With regards to Goal #1 and the suggested strategic objectives, the following comments were provided:

- Continue to look for quality of service based upon the taxpayer's expectation
- Communicate how money is allocated and governance
- Education outreach – making sure people understand what services are provided; communication, collaboration and engagement component is important
- How to utilize reserves and invest in our community
- Look at communities that are leading edge
- Have a customer service model in everything that is done
- Communication regarding regional responsibilities as well as municipal responsibilities
- Do better than “good” when it comes to governance – change wording
- Instead of ‘open and responsive government’, use ‘engaged and responsive government’ or ‘effective governance’
- Regional councillors need to share what regional government is all about
- Distinguish what makes this strategic plan different from the last one
- What can be done differently in the action plan
- Demonstrate value for taxpayer dollars
- Realistic expectations
- Help taxpayers understand what taxes are paying for
- 5 goals may work better than 6
- Distilled, clear and concise strategic plan
- ‘good governance and service excellence’ can be changed to ‘customer service excellence’
- ‘solid financial positioning’ can be changed to ‘responsible fiscal management’

With regards to Goal #2 and the suggested strategic objectives, the following comments were provided:

- ‘economic prosperity and job creation’ can be changed to ‘fostering our local economy’
- People want to see clear understandable goals
- Service the employment lands to create jobs and make businesses come to the Region
- Change verbage for more specific goals

- Look at the possibility of adding specific targets
- Need to save the greenspace
- Stress tourism – in northern municipalities, tourism and agriculture are number one economic drivers
- Tourism – put a value on natural and existing assets
- Commitment Statements for Goals #2 and #6 look the same - maybe go down to 4 goals

With regards to Goal #3 and the suggested strategic objectives, the following comments were provided:

- Be much more aggressive and specific about GHG reductions and have a meaningful statement
- Be serious about re-use and repurposing of existing lands

With regards to Goal #4 and the suggested strategic objectives, the following comments were provided:

- Goals #4 and #5 be combined
- Use more terminology that speaks to age-friendly housing and inclusive communities
- Need targets when it comes to affordable housing
- Community policing model
- Create a model that supports individuals transitioning back into society
- Consideration to Accessibility
- Stress key success factors and key inputs to success
- Need to rely on other levels of government to put in effective strategies of their own – be realistic of the Region's role and what can accomplished
- More decisive with wording
- Increase the range of available and attainable housing
- State what needs to be done to have a healthy community
- Be more aggressive in stating goals
- We want a healthy community with appropriate health supports

With regards to Goal #5 and the suggested strategic objectives, the following comments were provided:

- Stress the need for high speed rail and connections of rail systems
- Importance in managing growth

With regards to Goal #6 and the suggested strategic objectives, the following comments were provided:

- Change 'growth and infrastructure' to 'infrastructure growth'
- Rehabilitation of existing infrastructure

- Traditional communities be protected and rehabilitated
- Look at a Brownfield Strategy

6. Recap, Wrap-up and Next Steps

K. Wianeck provided a recap of the suggestions provided with regards to the 6 Priority Goals and the suggested strategic objectives.

K. Wianecki requested that members consider the following questions:

- What are your critical strategic priorities?
- What should Regional Council be focusing on in the next year, in the next two years and in the next three years and beyond?
- What do you want to accomplish?

In addition to comments provided earlier in the meeting, Council members provided the following comments:

- Need to send a clear message that there is one Durham and that all services be equally delivered
- Need to focus and get a strong police plan in all of our communities
- Need a new hospital in Durham Region
- Focus on economic, prosperity and job creation
- By 2022, nail down Metrolinx GO Extension, Airport and 407 lands
- Focus on requirement and need to provide for transitional and affordable housing

Council members were reminded that further and additional comments may be forwarded to staff after the meeting.

7. Confirming By-law

47-2019 Being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of Regional Council at their meeting held on October 9, 2019.

Moved by Councillor Ashe, Seconded by Councillor Leahy,
(302) That By-law Number 47-2019 being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the Special Council of the Regional Municipality of Durham at their meeting held on October 9, 2019 be passed.

CARRIED

8. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Leahy, Seconded by Councillor Lee,
(303) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM

Respectfully submitted,

John Henry, Regional Chair & CEO

Ralph Walton, Regional Clerk