



## **Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force January 14, 2022 - Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Mayor Dan Carter, Chair Tito-Dante Marimpietri, Margaret Spiegelman, Glen Posteraro, Ivano Labricciosa, Jeff Robinson, Kyle Douglas, Lucy Stocco, Sali Fitzpatrick, Scott Henderson, Stacey Hawkins, Debbie McKee Demczyk

**Staff:** Economic Development branch staff, Warren Munro

**Regrets:** Dustin Kellow, Ihor Lysyk, Jason King, Peter Saturno, Peter Stoett, Roger Bouma

**Meeting Location:** Cisco Webex Meeting

**Time:** 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

### **1. Welcome**

#### **Chair Tito-Dante Marimpietri**

Business owners have been challenged more than ever amidst the omicron variant. Expressed hope that 2022 will be a more positive year. Issues within supply chain are prevalent and discussions around this topic are welcomed in and beyond this meeting.

#### **Hailey Wright, Director of Economic Development**

Welcomed Margaret Spiegelman as a new member of the taskforce.

### **2. Review of Minutes**

November 5, 2021 minutes were approved.

### **3. Roundtable**

#### **Lucy Stocco**

Immediate restriction has been supply chain with respect to materials, as well as the trades and labour pool. There was a fairly strong sales year in this past year. Wherever possible, virtual salesrooms have benefited buyers.

**Scott Henderson**

Return to in-person classes will happen January 31, although campus remains open. Enrolment growth has doubled for January, which presents an issue with space for offices and classroom space for the university.

**Ivano Labricciosa**

10% of the workforce is impacted by the new variant. The challenge presented for 2022 will be bringing people downtown, promoting safety and local business. The Oshawa Library has used their resources to help the public and businesses to get help over the past few months and has provided a great concierge service. More business-to-business connection is needed to continue to build community. A business support hub could provide supports that help businesses in the big return to an active downtown and in Oshawa as a whole. A strong communication plan to highlight offered supports is needed. Bringing students in for experiential learning opportunities to support a business hub could benefit businesses and provide valuable career experience for students.

**Kyle Douglas**

10-15% positivity rate and feeling the impact on staffing. The Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce rapid test program has been a great support and has stopped many potential outbreaks. Is waiting on response from application for WSIB support for employee subsidy.

**Sali Fitzpatrick**

Has heard recent requests for information on grants available for business supports. The Canada Summer Jobs program is a great choice for smaller businesses and non-profits hiring for the summer months. The Canada Job Grant is available to support employee training. The Canadian Digital Adoption Program is not currently open, but could be looking to open in February 2022.

**Mayor Dan Carter**

Working with partners in business to see what can be offered to best serve businesses is an important issue the City is looking to address. Knowing what the City can advocate for is a crucial piece that partners are invited to continue and engage in conversations around their priorities. Communication of offered supports and grants will be an essential focus that we will work to find methods to engage with.

**Margaret Spiegelman**

Leveraging both virtual and face to face client interactions at this point in time. Business is active and busy, lots of activity in equipment financing and commercial real estate market.

**Stacey Hawkins**

Supply chain issues and skilled trade shortages are becoming more apparent.

**Jeff Robinson**

Construction has been strong and job availability is substantial. Absences are growing with the new variant. Inflation could impact unions and construction in the upcoming year.

**Debbie McKee Demczyk**

Durham College continues to monitor domestic enrolment, while international applications remain strong. Many programs temporarily moved online as of early January as a result of concerns regarding spread of the Omicron variant. The cyber security research lab is closer to breaking ground and will be a great benefit to local businesses. The Start Market (<https://startmarketdc.ca/>) is open, which is an online retail platform to showcase products and services available from student entrepreneurs.

**Glen Posteraro**

Most of the real estate sector has been very healthy. Residential market is in high-demand and the office space market is dwindling.

**4. Action Items**

- Hailey to consider the possibility of business hub supports and how collaboration can facilitate a joint initiative with other partners in business to support local businesses in a flexible capacity

**5. Next Meeting**

Friday, February 11, 2022