



Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force November 5, 2021 - Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mayor Dan Carter, Chair Tito-Dante Marimpietri, Debbie McKee Demczyk, Ivano Labricciosa, Jason King, Jeff Robinson, Kyle Douglas, Lucy Stocco, Roger Bouma, Sali Fitzpatrick, Stacey Hawkins

Staff: Economic Development Branch Staff, Warren Munro

Guests: Stephanie Miner, Ian Johncox

Regrets: Daniel Stober, Dustin Kellow, Glen Posteraro, Ihor Lysyk, Paul Ralph, Peter Saturno, Peter Stoett, Scott Henderson

Meeting Location: Cisco Webex Meeting

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

1. Welcome

Mayor Dan Carter

Welcomed the taskforce and thanked the group for taking the time to join in the last few months amidst the busy time with the reopening of businesses. Invited the group to start thinking about where objectives are, leading to in 2022. There has been continued interest in the City, bringing more jobs to the area. Taskforce members were encouraged to share what their concerns are leading into the New Year and how this group can maximize collective skillsets to address economic concerns.

2. Review of Minutes

The minutes from October 1, 2021 were reviewed, and no changes were made.

3. Workplace Vaccination Policies

Stephanie Miner, Mason Bennett Johncox

Covered what employers need to know when considering vaccination policies in the workplace. This process is new and rapidly evolving, and in time will need updating as the law becomes clearer. Employer obligations stem from safety legislation, being the Occupational Health & Safety Act in Ontario. This shows that employers are required to

take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers. Businesses are also often asking if an employer can require mandatory vaccination, which is within their ability to do so under the Occupational Health & Safety Act. The contents of a policy will change depending on organizational needs, but should include consideration of context, scope, definitions and other thoughtful areas to make the policy very clear to employees. Exemptions can be made considering the Ontario Human Rights Code on the basis of medical and religious reasons, which may require accompanying documentation. In instances of non-compliance, it is important to first understand the employee's objection. If there is not a substantiated exemption, the employee is required to comply. Privacy consideration is another topic that has been very important to explore the importance of what information is requested, how it is stored, and who it is disclosed to and for what purpose. These privacy considerations should be addressed in the policy. Policies for patrons will look different than employees and depending on the business and the government requirements for certain sectors. The Ontario Ministry of Health Proof of Vaccination Guidance document has the necessary information to reference following the September 22, 2021 date that vaccine proof is required for many businesses.

4. Department Updates

Andrew Poray, Economic Development Officer

Presented the four key overarching goals for the Workforce Strategy to accomplish and initial action items to support in achieving these goals. These goals included developing innovative initiatives to connect talent to local employment opportunities, promoting ongoing support for Workforce Development, developing initiatives to help employers tap into non-traditional groups in the labour groups, and supporting post-secondary graduates find employment within Oshawa.

Debbie McKee Demczyk, Durham College

Expressed willingness to work together to entice grads to consider local employment. Brought forth the idea of considering an advocacy campaign with the federal government to invest in programs similar to the program that was funded by the National Research Council.

Brett Murphy, Manager of Marketing and Investment Attraction

Shared that the #OshawaLovesLocal campaign will have some revisions to prepare for the upcoming holiday season. There will be changes to the branding and revisions to the holiday guide that includes about 100 businesses surrounding nine different categories to encourage the community to consider local as they make purchases this holiday season. There will be rink board ads and print ads to support with this campaign in addition to social media promotion. Planning around a video is underway to celebrate the holiday season through recreational activities and highlighting other local opportunities.

Ivano Labricciosa, Oshawa Power

Noted that last year over the holiday season there was free parking downtown. Flagged that there could be an opportunity to consider this once again to pair with the campaign. Raised that there is a component of “support local” in addition to the “buy local” message that is very important to build community through events and other community initiatives.

5. Roundtable – Members’ Updates

Stacey Hawkins, Durham Home Builders Association

Shared that the residential construction industry is still seeing issues around supply chain shortages and skilled trade shortages. Industry is focused on affordability and working with municipalities and the region to reduce build times and put policies in place.

Roger Bouma, Durham Region Association of Realtors

Shared substantial prices compared to this time last year overall. Shared level of activity in discussions with municipalities and the province, showing need for looking at things in a different way including expediting planning processes and intensification.

Lucy Stocco, Tribute Communities

Noted that there needs to be more supply. Concerned for the forecasted percentage of population living in apartments and suggested that this does not match the need of the area. This risks planning being done for the wrong lot type and would cause the supply of ground oriented units to be worse than today.

Sali Fitzpatrick, BDC

Noted that there are many grants available to businesses, three currently available that relate closely to what has been discussed today. These include the Tourism Fund, the Canada Digital Adoption Program, and the Canadian Automotive Adoption Program.

6. Other Business

Mayor Dan Carter

Asked the group what causes they are seeing that have influenced labour shortages. Urged consideration of this question further within the taskforce.

7. Action Items

- Hailey to set next meeting in January to discuss primarily 2022 goals and planning

- Sali will send grant information over email for Hailey to circulate within the branch for amplification of this message
- Consideration to bring in local workforce authority to speak to labour shortage and solutions
- Hailey to lead exploration of root causes of labour shortages within branch work

8. Next Meeting

January 2022