



Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force June 4, 2021 - Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mayor Dan Carter, Chair Tito-Dante Marimpietri, Scott Henderson, Ivano Labricciosa, Jeff Robinson, Roger Bouma, Stacey Hawkins, Daniel Stober, Lucy Stocco, Dr. Peter Stoett, Debbie McKee-Demczyk, Dustin Kellow, Keith Cowley, Glen Posteraro

Staff: Paul Ralph, Warren Munro, Brett Murphy, Mary Cousineau

Regrets: Peter Saturno, Ihor Lysyk

Meeting Location: Cisco Webex Meeting

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

1. Welcome

Chair Marimpietri

- Welcomed and thanked all Task Force members for joining.

Mayor Carter

- Welcomed and thanked all Task Force members for joining.
- Updated Members on building permit stats indicating that Industrial Permits have increased and have outpaced the last six years of issued permits.
- The City goal, from May 1 to next October, is to have 10,000 local, full-time positions in Oshawa, based on current obligations and future announcements, and believe that number will be met.
- Announced new Director, Economic Development and Downtown Business Development Manager.
- We need to understand what is needed and available to assist local businesses.
- Conversations with Metrolinx continue.
- Encouraged Task Force members to converse with their front-line staff about their daily stressors at work and at home.

2. Review of Minutes

The minutes from May 7, 2021 were reviewed and no changes were made.

3. Review of the Agenda

The Agenda for today's meeting was reviewed.

4. Deputations

Guy Pylypiw, Carpet One Oshawa

- Thanked the Mayor, Chair Marimpietri and Task Force members for the invite to speak.
- Family-owned business has been in local community for 43 years; purchased the business 8 years ago.
- The last year has been challenging, have had support through the local business community.
- The biggest issue at the beginning of COVID was not knowing what to do, there were Provincial announcements of funding assistance but funding didn't come quick enough.
- Small business owners came together to support each other both financially and mentally.
- A big concern in the first two lock-downs was that small businesses had to close but big-box stores were allowed to remain open.
- Carpet One is part of a Co-operative which allowed resources to us and we were able to compete and make it through COVID, we also did work for the University, College and the Durham Catholic School Board which allowed us to be part of the essential service supply chain.
- Support that the Federal Government put in place to financially assist individuals at the beginning of the Pandemic, is hindering businesses in finding staff now.
- Asking for an action plan to be put together to get people out of government funded programs.
- There is a shortage of skilled trades people and changes in WSIB laws have hurt the flooring industry.
- Outlined ways the City could assist local small businesses such as: a small break in the sign by-law, a free City run business directory; change the bidding mandate for City tenders and add incentives for local developers to use local businesses.
- Business owners are having a more difficult time, mentally, now at the end of the Pandemic, and is seeking assistance from the Chamber and the City for mental health resources to be made easily available for the business community.

Chair Marimpietri

- Thanked Mr. Pylypiw for his deputation and for his support to other local businesses during the Pandemic.

Jeff Robinson, J.J. McGuire General Contractors

- More consideration should be given to local contractors by the City when projects go out for tender.
- Mental health is an important issue for business owners.

Stacey Hawkins, Durham Home Builders Association

- The Durham Home Builders Association (“DHBA”) can assist members with the pairing of skilled trades with local employers.
- DHBA advocates on behalf of their Members with the Municipality and the Region.

Debbie McKee-Demczyk, Durham College

- The Durham College Whitby Campus is undergoing renovations to expand their skilled trade courses with hopes to contribute a greater supply of skilled trades people.
- There is a job board at the college where businesses can post jobs, free of charge, visible to Durham College students.

Warren Munro, Commissioner, Development Services

- Council has placed conditions on approvals of certain grants to developers for the use local trades and suppliers.

Sarah Chiapparro, Berry Hill Food Co.

- Shared struggles the restaurant has faced during COVID, no catering orders and daily business orders are down between 65% to 90%.
- At the busiest, the restaurant employs up to 20 people.
- People in the downtown area was a big part of business, with no people in office buildings, there is no traffic coming in.
- There are lots of local businesses who don't have large marketing budgets therefore they are not as accessible on-line.
- Local businesses purchased gift certificates to local restaurants for their staff for Christmas which was helpful.
- The construction industry has been very supportive to small businesses.
- Social Media is important and is the only way we can connect with customers right now but owners are marketing fatigued.
- Suggested ways the City could assist small businesses, including highlighting small businesses stories on social media platforms.
- Concerned about where information is coming from as there is no BIA.

Chair Marimpietri

- Thanked Mrs. Chipparro for her deputation and acknowledged the issues the restaurant faces.
- Is actively investigating how the City can assist small businesses by way of grants.
- Anticipate that Economic Development will be more aggressive than in the past.

Mayor Carter

- Thanked Mrs. Chipparro for her deputation and indicated that there is a report going to Development Services Committee then to Council regarding the terms of reference for the Downtown Action for 2030.

- The Mayor's Task Force on Community Safety, Security and Well-Being has made major strides and investments in the downtown area.
- Is working with the Midtown Mall owners to address issues at the Mall.

5. #OshawaLoves Local Campaign Update

This item was moved to the next meeting July, 9, 2021.

6. Roundtable Discussion

Mayor Carter

- The City is very much engaged in the competitive process of the next health care investment and will be reaching out to local business leaders about the process and to ensure all voices are heard.
- Inquired post-secondary education partners if students will be back on campus and will international students be back in September.

Debbie McKee-Demczyk, Durham College

- Hopes to see students back on campus, in line with public health guidelines.
- 60% of the College's programs do have some in-person learning.

Dr. Peter Stoett, Ontario Tech University

- The University expects 60% of students back on campus in September.

Scott Henderson, Trent University Durham GTA

- The University plans on a Fall in-person term.
- International students are going to be tricky to get back so the University is trying to restructure popular programs with international students to a remote learning structure.

Nancy Shaw, Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce

- Advocating to get restaurant patios open and hairdresser salons to reopen to allow more revenue the local businesses in Step 1.
- The Chamber has applied for rapid COVID tests to be distributed to small/medium businesses for use by employees only.

Roger Bouma, RE/MAX Jazz Inc., Brokerage

- The average price for a detached home in the Durham Region just crossed the \$1M mark.
- Prices are flattening out compared to earlier this year and supply is up over 80% from last year.
- Newly introduced stress test will have a marginal bearing on the market.

Jeff Robinson, J.J. McGuire General Contractors

- There is an increase in wood and steel prices but hopeful that the wood prices will level out by late summer.

- Skilled labourers are impossible to find, we promote careers in construction to high school, college and university students.

Glen Posteraro, Glen Posteraro Real Estate Investment Brokerage Inc

- Updated members about commercial real estate in the City.

7. Other Business

Mayor Carter

- Reminded Task Force members to review the document that was distributed and provide their feedback for discussion at the next meeting.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on July 9, 2021.