



Mayor's Economic Recovery Task Force September 10, 2021 - Meeting Minutes

- Attendees:** Chair Tito-Dante Marimpietri, Stacey Hawkins, Ivano Labricciosa, Debbie McKee-Demczyk, Dustin Kellow, Jason King, Scott Henderson, Jeff Robinson, Roger Bouma, Lucy Stocco, Dr. Peter Stoett, Sali Fitzpatrick for Keith Cowley, Daniel Stober
- Staff:** Warren Munro, Hailey Wright, Brett Murphy, Katie Cassin, Andrew Poray, Mary Cousineau
- Regrets:** Mayor Dan Carter, Nancy Shaw, Kyle Douglas, Keith Cowley, Glen Posteraro, Peter Saturno, Ihor Lysyk, Paul Ralph

Meeting Location: Cisco Webex Meeting

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

1. Welcome

Warren Munro, Commissioner, Development Services

- Tracking positively in building permits this year. Pleased with the volume of work and opportunities within the City amidst the pandemic.

Hailey Wright, Director, Economic Development Services

- Welcomed Jason King to the group as the new CEO of the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce.

Jason King, Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce

- Excited to be joining as new CEO of Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce this week. Looking forward to connecting with taskforce members virtually and in person in the future.

2. Review of Minutes

The minutes from August 6, 2021 were reviewed, and no changes were made.

3. Review of the September 10, 2021 Agenda

Hailey Wright overviewed the September 10, 2021 agenda.

4. Labour shortage

Dustin Kellow, Durham Recruiting

- There are two hiring seasons in a typical year. Spring and fall. With COVID-19 there was the expectation that things would ramp up in September, which ended up coming earlier in August.
 - Surge of companies that reached out for support in a short period of time.
 - Two dynamics companies are looking to hire for; front line and senior level.
- Hiring surge happened all at once and very quickly. The worry is that this will not be a blip and is expected to last over the next 18 months.
- Companies are heading into perfect storm with the concern that if they can't fill positions, industries might go elsewhere. If the area cannot produce, this will hurt our partners.
- There are more demands for job seekers, given the shift with COVID-19. 1/3 of the population are non-negotiable regarding the topic of working remotely. There has been a huge realization that people do not want to commute. People are amazed at how many jobs there are in the Durham Region at a higher level and competitive salaries.
- CERB is expected to end shortly and that will be a challenging factor for front-line positions. The average hourly rate has gone up \$2.19. Companies are paying extra to have coverage and this is not sustainable for them.
- The issue that we face moving forward is how to support and get people back to work.
- The Issue after GM closure is that there was a shift of skilled trade workers leaving the area.
- Graduation rates of skilled trades look like they have gone down. Issue of supply not regenerating.
- There are lots of ways to build this outreach for free. LinkedIn awareness amongst our own networks within this taskforce is a powerful tool.
- The narrative that we want to drive should welcome workers to be a part of the growth.

Hailey Wright, Director, Economic Development Services

- Thanked Dustin for this update.
- Shared update with the group to know that the branch is working on initiatives that bridges gaps and seek to educate through the Durham Region Economic Development Partnership with public awareness of opportunities available and a TeachingCity class with a challenge question that addresses the municipal role in promoting talent locally.
- Expressed that there is a focus on networking within the branch. There is also a piece in the paper by Mayor Dan Carter as a high-level public awareness piece

that will hopefully drive some great conversations. Open to new connections and areas to tap into.

- Welcomed Andrew Poray to the group who will be the individual in the branch that will take the lead on the conversation surrounding talent.
- Called out to other sectors present at this meeting to share how this has impacted their industries.

Ivano Labricciosa, Oshawa Power

- Liked the convention centre approach, to promote industry-specific opportunities.
- The issue becomes people either join for the wrong reason or jump to a new sector to hollow out the original sector they are coming from.
- The message should emphasize the importance of finding the right fit for individuals so that it sticks.

Jeff Robinson, J.J. McGuire General Contractors

- The construction industry is experiencing a serious issue with manpower.
- People get more money staying at home with the support of CERB and that is the issue that is currently being faced. There has to be another solution here to mend this.
- Many new Canadians are filling positions.

Debbie McKee Demczyk, Durham College

- Will verify graduation rates for trades programs. A significant drop seems concerning.
- As a hiring manager, there has been great concern for the applicant pool for open positions.
- Suggested opportunity to work with career centres at each educational institution to better utilize job boards for new graduates.
- Suggested creating joint institution job fairs that are sector specific.
- Employees are looking for flexibility. To the extent of it being feasible, it is worth incentivizing.
- Highlighted that there are instances where specific companies can be connected to specific schools, programs, and students to create personal connections. This hands-on tactical approach is possible, but is often underutilized.

Peter Stoett, Ontario Tech University

- There is a large cohort of students graduating that have adapted to online and it is important for employers to recognize this and be flexible as they recruit.

Scott Henderson, Trent University

- Agreed with colleagues that it has been difficult to fill positions, in particular part-time teaching. Some faculty are nervous about returning in person.
- Emphasized the importance of employers recognizing the skills that students graduate with that benefit the workplace. When students are placed, both students and employers realize their skill potential and abilities.

Sali Fitzpatrick, B.D.C.

- Raised responses from DWA report that highlighted issues with funding for hiring and training, transit, better internet systems and other challenges.

5. Department Updates

Hailey Wright, Director, Economic Development Services

- Two main initiatives in the branch that involve the downtown for the group to know of:
 - Door-to-door campaign to business and property owners downtown. Street cleaning to help repair challenges that business owners have been seeing. Let them know we are continuing to be here to support them. The department, mayor, social services and others have come together to hear these concerns directly from businesses.
 - Moving forward with Plan 20Thirty, the new downtown revitalization plan. All applications have come in and will be going to committee and council. The plan is to meet first in October. The plan will be delivered to council by the end of term. There will be plenty of opportunities for the community to be engaged in this discussion.

6. Roundtable – Members' Updates

Daniel Stober, TD

- Q&A on economic recovery being sent out after the meeting that provides context for future outlook.
- Concern with rising inflation, caused by gas prices and supply shortages.

Debbie McKee Demczyk, Durham College

- Domestic and international enrolment landed where expected and needed to be.
- Some issues with international students getting to Canada with certain flight bans. International students for the most part are able to find a way here.
- On campus activity is returning and feeling more normal for students and staff.
- Anyone coming to campus must have their vaccine.
- Hosting the Economic Development team to have a tour to learn about applied research on campus and experiential work.

Chair Councillor Marimpietri

- Encouraged by discussion within the group and moving forward.
- Celebrates Jason's new role with the Oshawa Chamber and excitement for entrepreneurial spirit brought to Oshawa.
- Continued engagement with post-secondary institutions and growth of the City is valued.
- On behalf of the Mayor, many thanks for dedicated work of the taskforce.
- Brought forward the recommendation to speak about how many jobs seem to be a risk to industrial development.

Dustin Kellow, Durham Recruiting

- Thanked the group for the important conversation earlier.

Roger Bouma, Durham Region Association of Realtors

- Colleagues often discuss that small land parcels around GM are not being utilized.
- Residential real estate is on an even keel. Inventories were down in July and August, showing a quieter market than has been seen over the past few years.

Ivano Labricciosa, Oshawa Power

- Collections have stepped up.
- Need for higher broadband across the City, which is great for Oshawa.

Jason King, CEO, Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce

- Automated appointment booking system for testing kits. Kit appointments starting Tuesday. Individuals do not have to be a chamber member to participate in the program.

Sali Fitzpatrick, B.D.C.

- Seeing many industrial requests come in.
- Hospitality slowly picking back up.

Scott Henderson, Trent University

- Vaccine mandate is in place on campus.
- 104 students moved into residence out of the 140 rooms available.
- Students Love Local campaign is growing, helping students connect with downtown.
- Scavenger hunt will happen later in the term to access Oshawa businesses.

Jeff Robinson, J.J. McGuire General Contractors

- Material shortages causing big impact on a lot of projects.

- In 2022, six union sectors will be in negotiation and will impact construction.
- Majority of employees are now vaccinated.

Peter Stoett, Ontario Tech University

- Campus is doing well for enrolment and number of residence students.
- Campus Ice Centre staying open as a vaccination location longer than expected.
- Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority awarded grant for Sustainability Studies minor.
- Work with all education institutions to make the public know that Oshawa is a great place to be.

Stacey Hawkins, Durham Home Builders Association

- Labour shortages and supply chain issues with residential construction. The hope is that it would pick up soon.

7. Other Business

No other business was brought forward.

8. Action Items

- Economic Development staff to meet to discuss recruiting outreach message.
- Hailey to distribute DWA report to the taskforce.
- Daniel to distribute Q&A document to the taskforce.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Friday October 1, 2021. A meeting invitation will be circulated shortly.