



Task Force Report

Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT)

Meeting Date: March 17, 2021
Meeting Time: 11:00 a.m.
Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers
32 Mill Street, Thornbury, ON

Agricultural Advisory Committee Recommendations

NOTE: The following are recommendations from the Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force to be considered for adoption by Council

▪ **Receive Minutes (March 17, 2021)**

Recommended (Move, second)

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives the Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force Minutes dated March 17, 2021 as attached, for information purposes.

C Matters for Discussion

NOTE: Recommendation at Item C.1 was considered through report FAF.21.051 at the March 23, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting

C.5 Action Item Tracking

Recommended (Move, second)

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains supports the Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force's request to holding a Statutory Public Meeting through a Special Meeting of Council on May 5, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. with 21-day notice to the public for the purpose of discussing the following:

- Task Force Purpose and Mandate
- Work Undertaken to Date
- The Blue Mountains Internet Speed Test Challenge
- The Blue Mountains Rural Internet Needs



Minutes

Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force

Meeting Date: March 17, 2021
Meeting Time: 11:00 a.m.
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Prepared by Sarah Merrifield, Executive Assistant Committees of Council

A. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Rob Potter called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. with Councillor Rob Sampson and Mayor Alar Soever present.

Town staff present were Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt and Director of Operations Shawn Carey.

- **Task Force Member Attendance**

- **Additions to the Agenda**

E.1.1 Request from Grey Highlands Internet Infrastructure Task Force

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

NOTE: In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the Town Procedural By-law 2019-56, Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force members must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

None

- **Review of Minutes (March 3, 8, 9, 2021)**

Minutes were reviewed and deemed sufficient.

B. Deputations

B.1 Deputations, if any

None

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1 Request for Additional Funds to Support the RABIT Task Force, FAF.21.051

- Funding request included in report FAF.21.051 based on cost estimate for the Internet Speed Challenge
- Report also references increased administrative support costs
- Task Force members agreed that the opportunities created by the Task Force highlight the productive work that Task Forces can achieve

Moved by: Councillor Sampson

Seconded by: Mayor Soever

THAT The Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force receives staff report FAF.21.051 for information and supports the recommendations outlined in the report, Carried.

C.2 “Thank You” Messaging to Internet Service Providers

- Reviewed draft “Thank You” messaging and suggested minor revisions
- Requested that the “Thank You” messaging be finalized and circulated as soon as possible

C.3 Bruce Street Technologies Swiss Meadows Proposal Update

- Operations staff have been advised that Bruce Street Technologies is seeking utility locates currently, with plans to initiate fibre installation in April 2021
- Will not require a Variation Agreement for installation
- Report going to Council April 20, 2021 outlining the Variation Agreement Process for Council consideration

C.4 Eh!Tel and GBTEL Inc. Universal Broadband Fund Proposals Update

- Letters of support provided within the requested deadline of March 15, 2021

C.5 Action Item Tracking

- Follow-up to Internet Service Providers who attended February 16, 2021 PIC
 - Circulate “Thank You” messaging and follow-up with letter to SWIFT requesting a meeting time
- Request for Information, if deemed the right path forward
 - On hold indefinitely
- Meeting with CENG representative
 - Meeting set up March 31, 2021 – please send in questions for CENG in advance
 - Question: What is the relationship between CENG and SWIFT? Does CENG see interest in this area? Although The Blue Mountains is within SWIFT territory, they have not been undertaking projects in this area at this time. Is CENG interested in projects in The Blue Mountains?
- One-on-one meetings with Internet Service Providers
 - On hold indefinitely

- Internet Speed Test Challenge
 - Report going to Committee of the Whole March 23, 2021
 - Outlines request for funding
- Installation guidelines for conduit in The Blue Mountains Road Allowance
 - Shawn Carey to follow-up with staff report to Council
 - Will bring report to Task Force prior to providing to Council
- Public RABIT Task Force meeting
 - May 5, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
 - Purpose is to discuss potential tower locations, importance and mandate of rural internet
 - Not advertised as a statutory public meeting with 21-day notice, but will be publicly advertised
 - Feedback received at the meeting will be provided to Travis Sandberg to incorporate into the draft Telecommunications Protocol

D. Correspondence

None

E. New and Unfinished Business

E.1 Additions to the Agenda

E.1.1 Request from Grey Highlands Internet Infrastructure Task Force

- Grey Highlands Internet Infrastructure Task Force has requested a mutual sharing of Task Force minutes
- The RABIT Task Force agreed to share minutes

E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at Next Meeting

- **Draft Agenda for May 5, 2021 Public RABIT Task Force meeting**
- **Variation Agreement report, when ready**
- **Follow-up from staff report FAF.21.051**
- **CENGN Discussion**

F. Upcoming Meeting Dates

March 31, 2021

G. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.