



Minutes

Rural Access to Broadband Internet Technology (RABIT) Task Force

Meeting Date: July 5, 2021
Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Prepared by Kyra Dunlop, Administrative Assistant Committees of Council

A. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Potter called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with Mayor Soever and Councillor Sampson present.

- **Task Force Member Attendance**

Town staff present were Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt and Executive Assistant Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield. Manager of Communications and Economic Development Tim Hendry and Director of Operations Shawn Carey sent their regrets.

- **Additions to the Agenda**

None

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 (June 25, 2021)**

Minutes reviewed and deemed sufficient.

B. Staff Reports and Deputations

None

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1 Internet Speed Test Challenge Update

- **# of Tests completed**
- **Quotation from CIRA for detailed Data Analysis**

Manager of Communications and Economic Development provided an update to the Task Force by way of e-mail, as read by Executive Assistant Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield, which noted that Tim had met with Grant regarding his presentation of the CIRA quotation, and that the presentation was forthcoming. The number of speed tests did not change and the total number of tests completed were 1,850, not including the existing tests completed prior to the start of the Internet Speed Test Challenge.

C.2 Task Force Report to Council Update, if any -Deputy Mayor Potter

Deputy Mayor Potter advised that the Task Force Report should be a quick update to Council and to request that Council extend the Task Force for another term. Mayor Soever noted that the extension should be for one year, and that the Report should include what the Task Force wants to accomplish in the year. Deputy Mayor Potter advised he would prepare the Report and circulate to Task Force members. Mayor Soever noted that the Report should go to Council after the BAI deputation to Council.

C.3 BAI Communications Deputation Scheduling Update, if any

Executive Assistant Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield advised the Task Force that a request had been sent to the Town Clerk for potential deputation dates for BAI Communications. Sarah noted that the Task Force Report could go to the August 10, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting to sync with the BAI Communications Deputation to Council.

C.4 Meeting Frequency Review

Mayor Soever noted that the Task Force should meet once more before the Task Force Report was considered by Council. Deputy Mayor Potter noted that he could circulate the Task Force Report to the members to review and noted that a special meeting could be held the following week. Chief Administrative Officer Shawn Everitt noted that Task Force members could review the Task Force Report without a special meeting. Shawn noted whether there was value in the Task Force Report being considered by Council prior to August 24. Shawn asked whether the Task Force would like the BAI Communications deputation to be considered at the August 10, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting so that Council would have the benefit of the Task Force perspective prior to the deputation. Deputy Mayor Potter noted that the Task Force Report being considered by Council should occur by August 24 at the latest.

Shawn noted that the Task Force would likely need to maintain meeting dates of twice a month. Task Force members agreed that this would be beneficial. Deputy Mayor Potter asked how the Task Force meetings would look over the summer break. Shawn advised that meeting the week of July 26, 2021 would be good timing.

C.5 Action Item Tracking

- Request for Information, if deemed the right path forward
 - On hold indefinitely
- One-on-one meetings with Internet Service Providers
 - On hold indefinitely
- Internet Speed Test Challenge
 - June/July 2021
 - Tim Hendry to seek quotation for detailed data analysis from CIRA
 - Additional outreach being provided via press release
- Installation guidelines for conduit in The Blue Mountains Road Allowance (“Variation Agreement”)
 - Shawn Carey will bring draft staff report to Task Force prior to inclusion on Council agenda
 - Councillor Sampson follow-up with province regarding utility locate duration
- Eh!Tel and GBTel Inc. Universal Broadband Fund Proposals
 - Shawn noted he had reached out to West Grey Highlands and Grey County regarding the installation of fibre being placed on Grey Road 4 and the type of agreement that was in place for EhTel.
 - Deputy Mayor Potter asked if staff had received information from Caledon. Shawn noted that he would reach out to Director of Operations Shawn Carey for an update.
- Installation guidelines for conduit in The Blue Mountains Road Allowance (“Variation Agreement”)
 - Shawn Carey will bring draft staff report to Task Force prior to inclusion on Council agenda
- R2B2 and The Town of The Blue Mountains
 - Consideration of hiring a student intern from the University of Guelph R2B2 program in Fall 2021 to assist in data mapping
 - CAO Shawn Everitt to follow-up with Professor Helen Hambly-Odame regarding MITACS funding for Task Force consideration.
 - https://www.mitacs.ca/en?gclid=CjwKCAjwiLGGBhAqEiwAgq3q_kTztDK6hh2nKH_aye5X6mrGhct_vsjGKehu8Yhmnjh32Ap7sjCgpRoCc7cQAvD_BwE
 - Deputy Mayor Potter advised he was waiting to receive information from Stuart Halliday of Grey Bruce regarding another University presentation being provided in the fall.
- Telecommunications Infrastructure Plan, updates if any
 - Staff are preparing a public engagement plan to determine areas of need and potential strategic sites for new telecommunications tower facilities in the Town

D. Correspondence

None

E. New and Unfinished Business

E.1 Additions to the Agenda

None

E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at Next Meeting

- Internet Speed Test Challenge July Update and CIRA Quotation
- Task Force Report Update – Deputy Mayor Potter
- BAI Deputation Update – Executive Assistant Committees of Council Sarah Merrifield

F. Upcoming Meeting Dates

Task Force members noted that the next meeting should be scheduled for the week of July 26, 2021, and bi-weekly thereafter to the end of the year.

G. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.