



Town of The Blue Mountains

32 Mill Street, Box 310
THORNBURY, ON N0H 2P0
<https://www.thebluemountains.ca>

OFFICE OF: Mayor Alar Soever

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: 519-599-3131 Ext 400

Sent via E-mail

March 2, 2021

Mr. Rick Tipping

Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Tipping,

I have been tasked by Council to respond to your letter of February 2021. See attached Council resolution. In reviewing your letter, I can say that I am in total agreement with your first sentence ***"I was disappointed to see that your latest correspondence continues to reiterate the expected political rhetoric."*** Since we agree on this point, I will refrain from responding to the political rhetoric in your letter, such as the statements ***"There are indicators this Council is driven by personal agendas and political ambitions."*** and ***"Council members were elected to serve the needs and desires of the entire community and not a platform for its members to implement personal agendas and further political ambitions."*** and focus instead on the other points you raise.

You seem to have a good understanding that there are ***"many complex and co-dependent issues"*** facing our community, so I am surprised you describe us of a small Town of 7,000 people and compare us to Meaford. You go on to question our need for a lawyer on staff and ask: ***"How does this Council justify eighteen staffers being on the Sunshine List while Meaford with approximately twice our population has four?"***

We on Council have to deal with reality, and the reality is we are a Corporation with assets of over \$200 M and an operational budget of \$36.5 M. In almost all categories except census population we are much larger than Meaford. When you look at the comparison with Meaford (see table below for data) the facts are:

- While we have a 36% smaller census population than Meaford, because we have 49% seasonal dwellings, we actually must serve 41% more households than Meaford.
- The 77% to 95% higher value of the average home in the TBM and the 575% larger Commercial/Industrial tax base, result in us having a 122% larger Assessment Base
- The larger number of residential properties and the commercial/industrial taxpayers we serve result in us having an operational budget 72% higher than Meaford
- This we do with a staff which is only 56% larger than Meaford's
- Yes, our staff are more qualified and higher paid, yet in terms of a percentage of operational expenditures the cost is exactly the same as Meaford, and in fact on average each employee is responsible for 10% more expenditures than in Meaford.

More important than the statistics above are the results achieved. Since 2010 Meaford's tax rate increased by 37.6%, while increase in the tax rate in The Blue Mountains was only 8.3%. Currently the tax rate in the TBM is 54% lower than Meaford's.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS AND MEAFORD

Community Profile	The Blue Mountains	Meaford	Percent Difference
Population -2016 Census	7,025	10,991	-36%
Voters List -2018	12,066	10,309	17%
Households -2020 (MPAC)	8,210	5,840	41%
Total private dwellings	6,477	5,590	16%
Private dwellings occupied by usual residents	3,271	4,830	-32%
Private dwellings not occupied by usual residents	3,206	760	322%
Percentage Seasonal Dwellings	49%	14%	264%
Average Age	51.8	47.9	8%
Median Age	57.6	53	9%
Percent population Older than 65	33.4%	27.9%	20%
Phase-In Taxable Assessment	\$ 4,226,585,312	\$ 1,904,972,760	122%
Commercial/Industrial Assessment	\$ 433,229,397	\$ 64,220,324	575%
Value of Average Home (2016 Census)	\$ 637,047	\$ 359,734	77%
Value of Average Home not on Water (2016 MPAC)	\$ 532,746	\$ 272,810	95%
Total Tangible Capital Assets	\$ 183,265,005	\$ 77,899,749	135%
Net financial assets (net debt), end of	\$ 33,908,697	\$ 3,150,899	976%
Total Assets	\$ 217,173,702	\$ 81,050,648	168%
Total Operational Expenses	\$ 36,489,307	\$ 21,263,505	72%
Total Salaries, Wages and Employee benefits	\$ 13,212,490	\$ 7,699,556	72%
Operational Expenses (Less Salaries)	\$ 23,276,817	\$ 13,563,949	72%
Full Time Equivalent Staff (2019 FIR)	109	70	56%
Salaries as Percentage of Operational Expenses less salaries	57%	57%	0%
Operational Expenses per Employee	\$ 213,549	\$ 193,771	10%
Municipal Residential Tax Rate (2020)	0.3649%	0.7947%	-54%
Increase in Tax rate 2010 to 2019	8.3%	37.6%	-78%

The importance of having highly qualified, hard working staff was recently highlighted when the TBM was one of only 48 of 444 municipalities to apply for Phase 2 Federal-Provincial Safe Restart Agreement funding. We were awarded \$385,000 to offset COVID related costs, relieving our taxpayers of this burden.

Is the housing project political overreach?

Let me now address your suggestion that ***“the housing project is political overreach.”*** How is it “political overreach” when Attainable Housing was one of the more prominent issues during the last election? Those candidates that supported and articulated support for attainable housing were elected. In fact, every single candidate elected supported and continues to support attainable housing. We have a responsibility to those who elected us to fulfill our mandate. I attach campaign literature which describes exactly what we were elected on, and are now implementing. Unfortunately, the schedule has slipped as we deal with opposition to the project, and there have been some minor changes as we incorporate input from the public and navigate the regulatory framework, but as you can see we are delivering what we were elected on.

It is clear from your social media posts that you long for the past and you begrudge giving our hard-working young people a hand up. ***“We didn't have the support when we bought but we had a vision of what we wanted to obtain, even though salaries were low, there was no daycare that we could afford so mothers stayed home while the kids were young on top of that interest rates were 8-19%.***

We didn't expect gov. to fund our lifestyle. We lived within our means and worked hard and didn't expect others to help us. That makes people appreciate hard work!!"

As I said before, we on Council have to deal with today's reality. We aren't going back to the days when mother's stay home, even if they could afford to. I agree we all worked hard, but times were different then. My first house cost about two times my salary as a junior geologist, now a starter home in Thornbury costs about 10 times a junior geologist's salary. Most of our young people work just as hard as we did, and they too have a vision of what they want to obtain. The election showed that most of us in The Blue Mountains want us to give them the opportunity to make their dreams a reality right here in The Blue Mountains.

Rebuilding Trust

Council has made great strides on rebuilding trust. Staff have confidence in Council, and Council in Staff, and we have a great working relationship. We have a hard-working Staff and Council who are committed to making this Community a better place. Together we are tasked with making tough decisions for the future of the community. We have been open and transparent and have engaged the community in discussion and consulted with them. An example is the Bayview Ave sewer and water extension you mention. We informed residents of the proposal prior to budget discussions, we listened to them and we did not approve moving ahead with the project after hearing their concerns. Many in the community support the approach we have taken and contribute to the collaborative approach by submitting constructive input or by working on Town committees and in the case of the Gateway project the Design Task Force. There is always room to do more, and to do better, and this Council is committed to building our collaborative approach with the community.

Sadly, there are those in the community who push their own agenda by posting inaccurate and misleading information on social media, which is designed to inflame rather than inform. We have seen the effects of this in our neighbour to the south. Another strategy by some is to bombard Town Staff with an incessant string of repetitious e-mails, which seem designed to take up their time and prevent any progress on key projects. We as a community need to decide how we want to deal with these types of strategies, which are designed to stymie the will of the majority.

Defined Goals and Measures of Performance

We have made great progress in this area. Last year we approved a new corporate strategic plan with defined deliverables and timelines. We also instituted a Performance Management System that sees staff have annual performance reviews which establish defined objectives for the year. This was well received and supported by Staff. Council also carries out an annual performance assessment of its only employee, the Chief Administrative Officer, and reports on this publicly, something that is rarely done in the municipal sector. Our press release on the CAO's performance and goals is attached. The CAO also reports semi-annually on progress on deliverables in the Corporate Strategic Plan. See his last report attached.

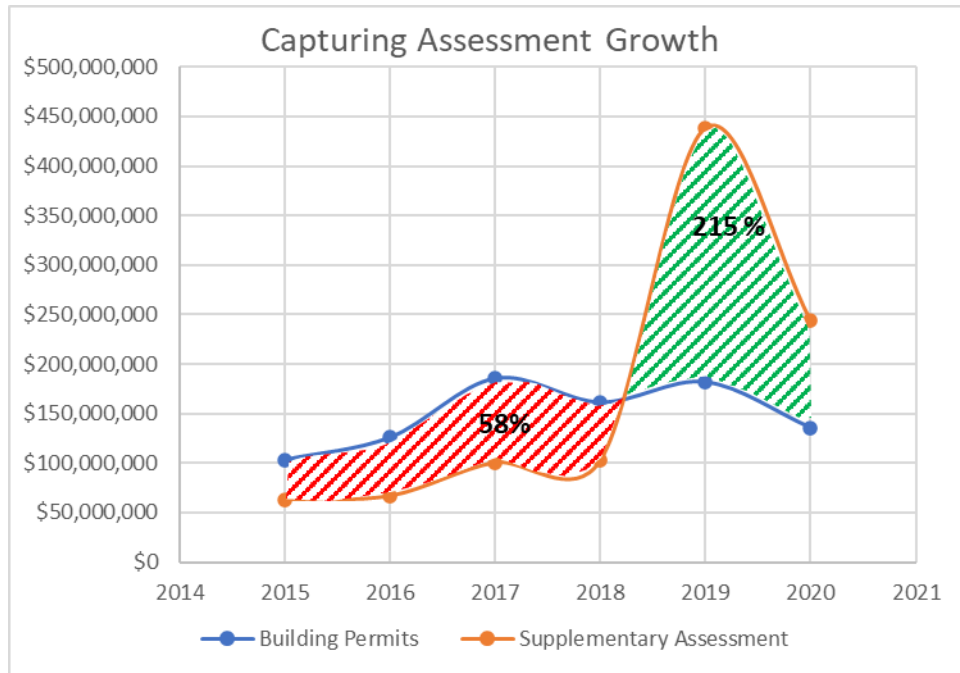
Managing our tax dollars responsibly

Both Council and Staff take great pride in managing our tax dollars responsibly. Towards this end we are constantly measuring ourselves against our neighbouring municipalities and making sure all revenue and expenditures are accounted for.

Notable achievements during this term of Council are:

- Analyzing and including comparative data for other municipalities in our budget document in order to make better decisions.

- Providing a fulsome budget document so people can understand our expenditures. I attach a copy of our 2020 budget document as well as Meaford's as posted on our respective websites so you can compare the two and draw your own conclusions.
- Finding \$682 million of supplementary assessment in the last two years. Prior to this term of Council, we were capturing about 58% of the value of our building permits. Over the last 2 years thanks to the hard work of staff and MPAC at the direction of Council we are catching up with supplementary assessment running at 215% of building permits. If we had continued at the previous rate it would have had an 11% impact on the current tax rate.



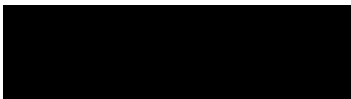
- Staff continually working to research and apply for grants from all levels of government. We are not always successful in these applications as the Town has strong financial position and assessment base compared to other municipalities in Ontario, but Council and staff continues to work with our MPP, our MP, and Ministers from other levels of government to explain our needs.
- Removing Grants and Donations funding from taxation to funds raised by the Grants and Donations committee through community fundraising efforts. This had the added advantage of building community spirit by having caring and involved members of the community come together to work on these initiatives.
- Council's concern for fiscal responsibility is shared by our Staff, who last year, in consideration of budget concerns brought on by COVID, Staff voluntarily deferred their Performance Management bonus pool.
- Lastly, we have the Attainable Housing initiative. There has been much conversation about the financial risk we are exposing our taxpayers to. We have taken this very seriously in setting up both the governance structures and in selecting the eligibility criteria for the Gateway Project. The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation, is a not-for-profit "municipal service corporation" constituted under s. 203 of the Municipal Act, which is run by an independent Board of Directors, on which the Town has two of nine votes. Its liabilities are its own. The Town is a Member of the Corporation, and exercises control through the majority vote it has as a Member under the bylaws of the Corporation.

- All dealings with the Town are governed by agreements and are as between two separate and distinct entities. This offers some level of protection to our taxpayers at the corporate liability level.
- With regards to the eligibility criteria, some have asked why we didn't lower the minimum income requirement and you make reference in your letter to the County's waiting list for Affordable Housing. This project is not targeted to those on that list but rather the missing middle: - Those who can pay enough rent to allow the project to be feasible and support itself, so as not to unduly burden our taxpayers. This is being financially responsible. Our taxpayers already support the County's Affordable Housing Programs to the tune of about \$2.4 million dollars, or almost \$300 per household, through their County taxes. We have deliberately targeted a demographic group which can afford to pay, want to live here and work in and contribute to our community, but is not well enough off to pay market rates in our Town.

Lastly, I apologize for the lengthy reply to your letter. I hope it has answered your questions and gives you a better understanding of our community. Governing a Community such as ours with ***"many complex and co-dependent issues"*** is not something that can be done with short answers, sound bites or social media posts, or without careful consideration of the consequences of pandering to political considerations. One need only to look at the breakdown of the Texas power grid to see the effect of the latter.

I believe we are extremely fortunate in the Town of The Blue Mountains to have a highly qualified and professional Staff, and a Council which works very hard and cares about our community. This shows in the results we have and continue to achieve. Thank you again for your interest and concern for our community.

Sincerely yours,



Mayor Alar Soever
Town of The Blue Mountains

Attachments: Council Resolution
Attainable Blue Ideas for Action
Notice-Chief Administrative Officer Performance Review
2020 CAO Update
[Meaford 2020-Tax Supported-Operating Budget](#)
[2020 TBM Budget](#)

CC: Council, Town of The Blue Mountains (via e-mail)
Town Clerk, Town of The Blue Mountains (via email)
Senior Management Team, Town of The Blue Mountains (via email)
Blue Mountain Attainable Housing Corporation – Director and Board Members (via email)
Department File - 2048



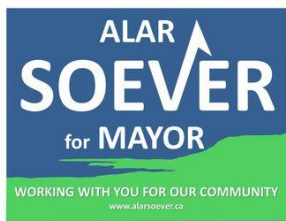
The Town of Blue Mountains, Council Meeting

Date: Monday, February 8, 2021

Moved by: Councillor Uram
Seconded by: Councillor Matrosovs

THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains receives the February, 2021 correspondence from Rick Tipping Re: Financial Accountability, and requests Mayor Soever to respond to Mr. Tipping

The motion is Carried



PRESS RELEASE



FOR RELEASE ON
September 29, 2018

MAYORAL CANDIDATE ALAR SOEVER AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE ROB SAMPSON RELEASE IDEAS FOR AN ACTION PLAN ON ATTAINABLE HOUSING FOR THE TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

BLUE MOUNTAINS, ONTARIO - Mayoral candidate Alar Soever and Council Candidate Rob Sampson have today released their ideas for a plan begin to deal with the attainable housing deficit in The Town of The Blue Mountains.

"The South Georgian Bay Tourism Labour Supply Task Force has, yet again, told us that affordable housing for Blue Mountains workers is desperately needed. Recently we have seen how this plays out in the real world with a local business restricting business hours due to labour shortages. It is time to stop talking about this and to get on with doing something! That is why Rob and I have formulated the **Attainable Blue** action plan" said Mayoral Candidate Alar Soever. If elected we look forward to working with Council and revitalizing the TBM Attainable Housing Corporation to act on these ideas to make this plan a reality."

"Elections are the time to discuss new ideas and action plans to deal with important issues like affordable housing for Blue Mountains workers, young families and even seniors. I'm happy to work with Alar on this important initiative and to take what other communities have done and customize that for our community. Further community consultation is needed, but we now have a high level plan to begin to work on when the new Council is elected" said Rob Sampson, Candidate for Councilor.

Both Soever and Sampson support a plan that builds upon the successes in other resort-based communities like Whistler. The **Attainable Blue** action plan includes revitalizing the TBM Attainable Housing Corporation and the setting of measurable and achievable targets for new housing in three critical categories of need – rental, first home owners and seniors.

Sampson and Soever are calling on all stakeholders to participate actively in implementing the plan including the Blue Mountain Resort who will be asked to provide a guarantee of rental occupancy. The TBM Attainable Housing Corporation/TBM will be asked to provide land and zoning density approvals, and local builders will be asked to come forward with suitable design and build services.

For more information regarding this media release:

Rob Sampson, Candidate for Council

Alar Soever, Candidate for Mayor

1. TBM will approve revitalizing the TBM Attainable Housing Corporation with the mandate of implementing the action plan modelled on the success of Whistler and other communities.
2. With the guidance of Council, a new Strategic Plan for the TBM Attainable Housing Corporation will be created to focus on deliverables:
 - a. For rental units:
 - i. Target for a PPP RFP by summer 2019. This would be a Restricted Design, Build, Own and operate basis
 - ii. Units would be rental, with title restrictions re: rental occupancy and property sale. The developer would be the owner and rental operator but would have to report regularly on rental occupancy, rental rates, and would be able to sell the building but only to the Attainable Housing Corporation. Rents would be fixed, and increases geared to inflation and a ceiling. The TBM Attainable Housing Corporation would obtain a rental occupancy guarantee from the Blue Mountain Resort and would assign that agreement to the developer on conditions.
 - iii. Hard targets would be set for new rental units shovel in ground by fall 2019.
 - b. For young family town houses:
 - i. Target for PPP RFP by summer 2019. This would be a Restricted Design, Build, Transfer basis.
 - ii. Units would be freehold, with a shared services condominium corporation "POTL", and title restrictive covenants re sale – ie. only sale back to TBM Attainable Housing Corporation at a fixed return price.
 - iii. Hard targets would be set for new rental units shovel in ground by fall 2019.
 - c. For seniors living:
 - i. Target for PPP RFP by summer 2020.
 - ii. Hard targets would be set for new rental units shovel in ground by fall 2020.
 - iii. Units would be life hold basis, with a shared services condominium corporation basis "POTL", and title restrictive covenants re sale – ie. only sale back to TBM Attainable Housing Corporation at a fixed return price.
3. TBM to provide the following:
 - a. Land grant to the TBM Attainable Housing Corporation. As part of the PPP, the land grant can be leased to the private sector under 50+ year lease for the purposes of the build and co-management of the units.

- b. Rezoning land noted above as special higher density attainable housing category.
 - c. Rezoning of lower development charges for special higher density attainable housing category.
 - d. Create a “one Window” application process for special higher density attainable housing category.
4. BM Resort to provide assignable rental occupancy guarantee for any of the special higher density attainable housing rental category – can be assigned to the PPP partner.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What is the labour study you are talking about and how do I get a copy of that report?

A. The South Georgian Bay Tourism Industry Workforce Housing Research and Business Case Report examined tourism workforce housing issues in South Georgian Bay with a view to defining key issues and identifying ways that the private and public sectors can collaborate across the region on innovative approaches to improve the supply of attainable housing. The report can be found at our web sites:

██████████ and ██████████

Q Is it true that you are modelling this plan after the one in place in Whistler BC?

A. Yes. We believe that we need to learn from other jurisdictions on what works and what doesn't work. Whistler had an attainable housing crisis early on in its development and implemented an action plan that has delivered over 2,000 units to help meet the local affordable housing needs.

Q Is this plan going to create a huge bureaucracy costing a lot of money?

A. No. We will model our effort on what is being done in Whistler where 2,300 beds were built in 6 years, future housing stock is self-funded by the authority, and under 10% of total expenses is spent on administration.

Q Why are you announcing your action plan now?

A. Previous Councils have talked about the shortage of housing for Town of Blue Mountains workers, families and seniors but did nothing to address the shortage. Now is time to stop the talking and act. Both Alar and Rob are hoping that their **Attainable Blue** action plan will kick start the action needed to get new affordable housing stock in the ground.

We believe that it is essential that the majority of TBM workers and their families live in the community. To achieve this objective, we need to partner with the community to provide and sustain a range of housing options both rental and home ownership for those who live and work in TBM. Creating an inventory of price-controlled units that are only available to resident employees will be the best means of reducing the impact of market forces, which for the last 20 years has driven the price of market housing out of reach for many local workers and their families.

Q What is the next step?

A. Once elected, Rob and Alar will make the implementation of the plan a top priority. Community involvement is critical and immediate community consultation will begin and will occur all along the process. The TBM Attainable Housing Corporation board will be revitalized and we will look for local community experts to take on these

positions. The Board will then work with the new Council to further define its strategic plan.

Q. What will the Town of The Blue Mountains have to contribute to the solution?

- A. We are proposing that the Town of The Blue Mountains contribute surplus land to the solution. TBM will also have to deal with changes to zoning and the Official Plan to allow for a special new category of zoning called Attainable Resident Restricted Housing. We are also proposing that the TBM create a new lower development charge levy for these types of properties. We will be expecting the County of Grey to do the same.

Q. What will the private sector be expected to do?

- A. We are proposing to use a public private partnership for this initiative – much like what was done in Whistler for their attainable housing build. The private sector will be expected to design and build and in the case of the rental units operate the new units. For the rental units, the Blue Mountains Resort will be expected to provide a rental guarantee to the TBM which the TBM will assign to the private developer on conditions. The private developer must meet design criteria for the buildings.

Q. Will the new buildings fit with our Town's look and feel?

- A. Absolutely and that will be a main criterion of the design work to be done by the private sector. They must design buildings that fit with our unique look and feel yet still provide for the affordability requirements.

Q. How will the Town Houses plan work?

- A. The Town Houses will be available to families and all applicants must be of legal age, Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, must be qualified employees working in the TBM area, and must be pre-approved for a mortgage. Employees must work a minimum average of 20 hours per week within TBM. Applicants or their spouse must not own, either personally, jointly or indirectly through a trust or business assets, any real estate anywhere. The Town Houses will be purchased from the TBMHA and can be owned by the applicants.

All homes must be sold back to the TBM in order to maintain a stock of more affordable housing in perpetuity for TBM resident employees. The object is to start it lower and keep it low. The TBMHA will calculate a maximum resale value for every resale restricted unit. Depending on the unit, the resale appreciation will be tied to an index.

Q. How will the Rental Units plan work?

- A. Where needed, the TBMHA will provide land to the private sector for rental units on a long-term lease basis. The rental units will be built, owned and operated by the private developer. The Blue Mountain Resort will provide an occupancy guarantee to TBMHA who will then assign that guarantee to the private operator on certain conditions including that the rental units be occupied by needy residents of TBM. Rents will be closely monitored by the TBMHA and must be geared to inflation and needed capital reinvestment. Rental properties can only be sold back to the TBMHA.

The Rental units will available to families and all applicants must be of legal age, Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, and must be qualified employees working in the TBM area. Employees must work a minimum average of 20 hours per week within TBM. Applicants or their spouse must not own, either personally, jointly or indirectly through a trust or business assets, any real estate anywhere.

Q. How will you restructure the TBM Attainable Housing Authority?

- A. The TBM Attainable Housing Authority ("TBMHA") is an independent municipally owned corporation of The Town of The Blue Mountains. It will be refocused to oversee the development, administration and management of resident restricted housing in TBM. It will have a Board of Directors consisting of seven members of the community appointed by Council, as well as an Executive Director.

The Board mandate will be to achieve the goal of providing attainable rental accommodation and home ownership options for at least 75 per cent of employees within the TBM, as well as to provide attainable housing solutions for our seniors.in both

Q. How much will this cost the Town?

- A. The Town will be expected to contribute surplus land that will have a value but will be contributed on a long-term lease basis only. This is an investment by the Town in its community's health and welfare and is critical at this time. If we follow the Whistler example, this initiative will be self-funding and can grow on its own.



Media Release

February 1, 2021

Notice- Chief Administrative Officer Performance Review

Each year, Council conducts a comprehensive performance appraisal process with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to evaluate and measure performance against the overall corporate goals and objectives and to define key goals and objectives for the Chief Administrative Officer for the next year.

Council concluded that the CAO has performed well and particularly complimented his leadership in dealing with issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. As this was not a normal year, it was challenging to measure the overall performance of the CAO as related to meeting targets on other goals as many had to be adjusted.

Overall a common thread was that more emphasis should be placed on corporate structure, organization, defining roles and aligning staff positions with that of Council, rather than on managing specific projects. Council recognizes that the Town of The Blue Mountains is a rapidly growing and changing community, and Council and the CAO agree that both the CAO and the entire organization will need to continue to grow their capabilities to keep up with the challenges of our complex and growing community.

In terms of core competencies, the CAO was rated most highly for being able to deal with ambiguity and his decision making. Visioning and planning, as well as improving customer service, were identified as areas of focus for the coming year.

In terms of specific performance goals, the highest marks were awarded for the development of the Corporate Strategic Plan and health and safety initiatives, as well as management of internal operations. Focus areas for 2021 relate to improving corporate organization and internal communications, including between staff and Council. An important role for the CAO is facilitating communication and understanding between staff and Council.

Council would also like to see a greater profile for the Town of The Blue Mountains and the CAO on the regional and provincial stage.

Specific goals for 2021 include:

- 1) Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the corporate report process
- 2) Regular reporting to Council on performance objectives
- 3) Regional, Provincial and local stakeholder outreach
- 4) Communications and leadership with regard to COVID and development

- 5) Improvements on the delegation to other staff for completion of corporate tasks
- 6) Review and consideration of potential realignment of the corporate structure
- 7) Definition of goals and projects for the Senior Management Team
- 8) Ensure safety record superior to the sector average
- 9) Update of employment policies, roles and responsibilities and organizational matrix
- 10) Support for the Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee
- 11) Support for the Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation
- 12) Initiate the preliminary planning process for an East Side Multi-Departmental Facility

For more information, please contact:

Alar Soever

Mayor

519-599-3131 ext. 400



Staff Report

Administration

Report To: Committee of The Whole
Meeting Date: September 22, 2020
Report Number: FAF.20.150
Subject: 2020 CAO Update
Prepared by: Shawn Everitt, Chief Administrative Officer

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.20.150, entitled "2020 CAO Update" for information purposes.

B. Overview

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the previous quarter's activity.

C. Background

As part of the Town's performance evaluation and goal setting process, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is required to provide three update reports to Council beginning in 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic (between March until early September), the CAO provided Council with weekly emails that included COVID-19 related operational updates and Daily Calls for Service statistics provided by our Ontario Provincial Police Detachment. These statistics included a breakdown of Day Shift, Night Shift and COVID-19 related calls for service. Starting in September, these updates will be provided on a monthly basis unless otherwise discussed with Council.

This information sharing with Council was critical to ensure members of Council were well informed during the pandemic and as we moved through the phases of the Provincial reopening.

D. Analysis

COVID-19 Pandemic

Since mid-March of 2020, the Town has maintained much of its typical level of service by developing and implementing measures that gave many of our staff the ability to work

remotely and or using rotational shifts in place to ensure limited contact between staff members.

During the past six and a half months the pandemic shifted some of the Town's scheduled plans and tasks. However, Town staff continued to complete projects and function at a high level while Council committed to continue meeting regularly and even took on additional tasks such as the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force and events organized by the Grants and Donations Committee.

To date, we have successfully reopened Town Hall and undertaken the soft reopening of other Town facilities. Our staff are continually monitoring the state of the pandemic and are prepared to take the appropriate steps to promote the safety of our entire community.

Thornbury Pier Resurfacing Project

The Thornbury Pier was approved for resurfacing by Council in the 2020 Budget. During the summer months, the pier was closed to the public as a result of COVID-19 and the associated concerns regarding limiting access to ensure appropriate social distancing. There were also concerns regarding the large number of rubber mats that had been lifted due to the high water and significant wave action over the past year.

Town staff had brought forward the request to complete the pier resurfacing during 2020 while access to public beaches and waterfronts were being limited by the COVID-19 pandemic and reopen the pier to the public for the summer of 2021.

To date, Town staff have worked with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) staff and engineers to review the pier. DFO engineers were able to provide original pier drawings and recommended a consulting engineer for the project that they have worked with on other Federally owned piers throughout Ontario and Canada.

Town staff have removed all the matting previously covering the pier, coordinated the x-ray review of the concrete decking for rebar locations, coordinated the bore holes for inspection of sub deck granular material and will be working with the consulting engineer for either a layover or full deck replacement. If a full deck replacement is required, removal of the existing deck may take place this fall/winter. Otherwise, all works are to be complete by May 1, 2021 to ensure public access in the summer of 2021.

Approved 2020 Goals for the CAO Set by Council

Goals Identified	Status/Progress To Date
Improve the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Corporate Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of the Town's Communications Strategy • First draft being provided to the Communication Committee in October of 2021
Regular Reporting to Council on Performance Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of this report outlining status of approved Goals
Develop a Higher Profile at County, Regional and Provincial Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed three deputations at AMO Conference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ministry of Health ○ Ministry of Transportation ○ Ministry of Infrastructure • Initiated a South Georgian Bay COVID-19 Regional Recovery Group that had staff from Meaford, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Clearview and Grey Highlands meeting virtually once every two weeks during the pandemic to discuss how each was progressing through the stages of the pandemic
Completion of a New Corporate Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved by Council on July 13, 2020
Improve on Conceptual and Analytical Thinking and Task Delegation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of SMART Goals for all members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) • Promote the expectation for staff to take ownership of tasks with measurable results by implementing SMART Goals and performance pay for staff for 2020 • Recently approved Performance Management and Goal Setting Program has been initiated, all SMT members have met with the CAO to develop 2021 Goals and performance measures • Training for staff has been scheduled to implement the program throughout the Corporation for 2021

Goals Identified	Status/Progress To Date
Corporate Structure Enhancement to Deliver Improved Service at a Lower Cost or More Efficient Manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance internal operations to increase service levels while lowering cost to the taxpayer or in a more efficient manner • Created a Legal Services Department within the Town Structure, which includes a Director of Legal Services and a Legal Clerk
Enhance the Council/Staff Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Council and Staff are aware of and aligned with priorities and initiatives • This will ensure both Council and Staff resources are not overextended by repeating/ reworking initiatives and reports • The CAO will ensure that no more than 8 staff reports generated by Town staff are tabled due to lack of information provided to Council • This remains a priority and goal that requires additional improvements • Communication remains the priority of staff and includes provision of clear, transparent and proactive information sharing with Council and the public
Define Goals for Senior Management Team (SMT) and Prepare List of Projects and Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review list of goals with SMT and agree on targets for 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Director of Finance and IT ○ Director of Planning and Development Services ○ Director of Human Resources ○ Director of Community Services ○ Director of Legal Services ○ Director of Operations ○ Manager of Communications and Economic Development ○ Fire Chief ○ Town Clerk • This goal is aligned with the 2021 Performance Management and Goal Setting process • The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted some planned goals and projects and this aspect is being recognized in those reviews

Goals Identified	Status/Progress To Date
Ensure a Healthy and Safe Working Environment for Town Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CAO will support the strategic goals of the SMT and the Joint Health and Safety Committee to ensure a continued safe working environment for Town staff
Ensure Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities through RACI Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Job Descriptions are up to date • Performance Assessments completed for SMT members • This goal is being realized through the implementation of the Performance Management and Goal Setting process
Support the Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CAO will ensure that sufficient staff resources are implemented to support the initiatives of the Committee • The CAO will assist the Committee to recruit a minimum of 2 physicians to work within the Town of The Blue Mountains by the end of 2023 • The Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee continues to move forward and have an approved Terms of Reference and additional membership • The review of the Terms of Reference was helpful to ensure that the Committee remains focused on the original mandate of the Committee
Community Wellbeing Safety Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CAO is playing an active role in the creation of a regional Community Wellbeing Safety Plan • Consultation with Collingwood will take place in the development of the Plan • By the end of Q4 2021 the CAO will have completed a regional Community Wellbeing Safety Plan
Support the Sustainability Committee by Ensuring Fulfillment of Town - Designated Commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAO will support the Director of Operations and the Committee by ensuring knowledge sharing through sufficient staff resources to support Committee initiatives • CAO will ensure that the Manager of Sustainability Coordinator is appointed/hired • The realignment of existing staff established the Manager of Sustainability position and the Operations Department has taken the lead in providing support to the Committee

Goals Identified	Status/Progress To Date
Support for Attainable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CAO will ensure former Foodland site is ready for land use• The building demolition and site reclamation of the existing Foodland site is being completed• A Request for Proposals by the Attainable Housing Corporation has been issued• A CEO for the Attainable Housing Corporation has been hired

In addition to the 2020 Goals that were set by Council, the following bullet points identify projects that CAO is currently working on:

- Development of logistical options for water line for irrigation ponds that support the Tender Fruit Industry
- Rural Access to Broadband Internet Task Force (RABIT)
- Purchase of 15 and 17 Arthur Street and development of future Public Parking Lot Design

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

This report supports the goals and objectives outlined in the Town's Corporate Strategic Plan.

F. Environmental Impacts

None at this time

G. Financial Impact

No financial impacts specific to this update

H. In consultation with

Senior Management Team

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required.

J. Attached

None

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer

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R. Tipping



February ??, 2021

Attn: Mayor, Council and BMAHC Chair Person

Re: Financial Accountability

I was disappointed to see that your latest correspondence continues to reiterate the expected political rhetoric. A superficial review might suggest Council has made significant progress over the past two years but I believe the manner in which the attainable housing initiative is being implemented is symptomatic of Council's failures to act in the best interests of the electorate. There are indicators this Council is driven by personal agendas and political ambitions.

Various surveys conducted by the business sector and municipalities over the past several years identify many complex and co-dependent issues contributing to the labour shortages in the region. In no order of importance these include an aging population; the influx of retirees and its impact on property values; the constricted labour market; high turnover; lower skill groups; affordable housing; transportation; low wages; part-time and seasonal positions and weak local awareness.

The demographics of the region are changing. Due to the pandemic business owners have determined they can live locally and operate businesses remotely. On-line shopping will continue to impact retail businesses as consumers change their purchasing habits. A controlled level of development will attract more permanent and seasonal residents, creating more stability in the local economy. An increasing permanent and semi-permanent population will change the dynamics of the local business sector as it responds to demands for consumer goods and services unrelated to the Tourism sector. This diversification is vital as it provides greater stability with local businesses and less dependence of the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Population growth is inevitable and is the greatest challenge facing our Town. Extreme care must be taken to avoid over-development, threatening the environment, the unique character of then Town of The Blue Mountains, traffic volumes and over-crowding that will destroy the various attractions and quality of life enjoyed by both residents and visitors.

Another significant issue impacting residents, is the manner in which the Town funds infrastructure projects. Several proposed projects that will extend water and/or waste-water services into currently unserved areas will impose significant financial burdens on property owners. Current estimates for the Bayview Ave properties are some

\$50,000 each. In addition, residents must hire a contractor to connect services from their home to the street.

The Town is well within its rights to impose a local improvement bylaw but many municipalities abandoned this practice years ago. Infrastructure replacement and new initiatives should be considered an imperative and a positive step in protecting the natural environment that benefits the entire community. Infrastructure should be funded from grants and general revenues. The Town justifies this approach by arguing the owner will benefit from property appreciation. This argument is dated and ignores the resulting increases in property tax and sewer usage charges. The financial implications facing those residents living on fixed incomes may challenge their ability to maintain their homes. Maybe they are among those who will be accommodated in the new housing project.

Finally, the Town purchases two lots on Arthur St., demolishes the existing home in preparation for a future parking lot. Once again private sector demands trump housing.

From the above observations, I draw the following conclusions regarding the Council's lack of fiscal accountability and responsibility.

- We are a town of approx. 7,000 residents and the housing project is political over-reach.
- The primary components affecting labour shortages are low wages and job insecurity. These two issues are key components for all job seekers and must be addressed before desirable housing becomes a consideration.
- It is apparent the private sector is not committed to addressing these issues. In fact, during one Council meeting it was stated that business owners can't afford wage increases. Interestingly, councillor Sampson dismissed those residents in their million dollars homes but the businesses owners in their million dollars homes have his ear.
- The current attainable housing project appears to have morphed to include fifty affordable units (County Responsibility). Several weeks ago, the County confirmed a total of ten individuals are on the waiting list for affordable housing in the Town of The Blue Mountains.
- Because these recommendations are not being implemented, this project will fail miserably in achieving its stated primary objective of attracting labour.
- History demonstrates government's direct involvement with the private sector usually ends up costing the taxpayer. As an example, the Harris government in the late 90's, leased Hwy 407 ETR to a private sector consortium for ninety-nine years. This has resulted in costing taxpayers billions of dollars.
- It is now quite apparent why previous Councils refrained from implementing this project. It would suggest they were committed to protecting public interests rather than submitting to private sector interests. All these factors were available prior to the last election and I am positive that if residents had been honestly informed all aspect including the financial impacts, public support would have been minimal. I feel the two main proponents on Council have deceived the public from the beginning. This

project will only facilitate the disenfranchisement of the local workers and line the pockets of the business owners.

- Given the current economic climate, moving this project forward is imprudent and fiscally irresponsible. This project poses significant financial exposure for the Town. Proceeding is not a business decision but purely a political action to satisfy the greed of local business at the expense of the workers.
- Also, Council displays a double standard towards residents. On the one hand, it can allocate millions to a questionable housing initiative that will help the private sector and on the other imposing direct financial hardship on local property owners who have for years faithfully paid their taxes to support Town initiatives.
- I find it interesting when a project is supported and promoted by Council, there is a direct financial benefit to the property owner but if a resident dare suggest a proposed project may devalue their property or have other detrimental effects on neighbourhood character, they are rudely dismissed, in some cases with derogatory remarks and name calling (NIMBYists). This arrogance and lack of basic respect for residents, including those serving on our various committees is intolerable. Council members were elected to serve the needs and desires of the entire community and not a platform for its members to implement personal agendas and further political ambitions.
- Also, given our small population, the increased staffing numbers and associated costs is very concerning. A burgeoning bureaucracy only creates greater inefficiencies, increased financial burden and a reduction of funding for town infrastructure and amenities. What small Town has a lawyer on staff?
- Finally, how does this Council justify eighteen staffers being on the Sunshine List while Meaford with approximately twice our population has four?
- In his campaign literature the mayor boasted: "I will work to rebuild the trust that has been lost between the community, Town Staff, and Council". We are still waiting.
- The mayor also wrote, "I will work with the new Council and Town staff to set clearly defined goals and measures of performance for Council and staff. We will manage your tax dollars responsibly and provide you with the details of how your money was spent." I'm sure the residents on Bayview Ave. will take much comfort from this when writing their cheques to the Town.
- I would like to believe there are those councillors new to the political arena that maintain a genuine desire to help the entire community but it has become quite apparent that raising any significant concerns regarding the composition and intent of this and other initiatives is being swept aside by inflated egos.
- This Town is bleeding money without showing any tangible results. Please bring this to an end.

Respectfully

Rick Tipping