



Economic Resiliency Task Force

June 24th , 2020 1:30 p.m.

ZOOM Meeting

Present: Co-Chairs:

Cathy Burghardt-Jesson, Warden

Cara Finn, Director of Economic Development

Middlesex County:

Kelly Elliott, Councillor

Lower Tier Municipal Representatives:

Michael Dillulo, CAO, Middlesex Centre

Demetri Makrakos, Economic Development Officer, Stathroy-Caradoc

Employment Representative:

Bill Pigram, Manager, Community Employment Choices

Manufacturing Sector Representative

Karl Pfister, President, Armatec Survivability

Finance Representative:

Todd Copeland, General Manager, CFDC of Middlesex County

Regrets: Small Business Sector Representative:

Kathy Manness, CEO, Strathroy & District Chamber of Commerce

Workforce Development Representative:

Debra Mountenay, Executive Director, Elgin Middlesex Oxford London Workforce Development and Planning Board

Middlesex County:

Kurtis Smith, Councillor

Agricultural Sector Representative:

Joanne Fuller, Member Representative, Ontario Federal of Agriculture

1. Welcome & Minutes

Cathy welcomed those in attendance; thanking them for their commitment to the Task Force. The minutes of the June 10, 2020 meeting were presented.

Motion by Kelly Elliott to approve the minutes as presented; 2nd by Bill Pigram; carried.

2. County Updates

- Business appreciation video featuring all County Council Mayors was produced and released on the 1st day of Phase Two opening. A related radio campaign is running on MYFM.
- Cara prepared and presented a report to Council recommending County support for lower tier CIP development and specific COVID-19 relief programs. The recommendation was unanimously supported by Council at their meeting on June 23rd
- The Middlesex Strong campaign window clings are being sent to local businesses to display in storefronts across the County.
- Following the receipt of the letter sent by Warden Burghardt- Jesson on behalf of the Task Force, Cara was contacted by Minister McNaughton's Queens Park office to follow up regarding policy meetings with Karl Pfister to discuss need for investigator criteria. Contacts have been shared.

Demetri Makrakos

- Working with BIA on pop up patio project (will be making application to County for support under TRRF)
- Focusing effort on community transportation project. Looking at a September launch. Route will include the Molnar Industrial Park, Fanshawe College, Kenwick Mall, Komoka YMCA, Mount Brydges
- Strathroy Farmer's Market moving back to municipal parking lot for controlled operations for summer

Michael Dilullo

- Has put together comprehensive COVID-19 information package for staff. Offices have been modified in order to accommodate distancing. A staggered return to the office is planned commencing July 6th. Expected that remaining staff will return following the CIVIC holiday in August.
- Has a number of registrations for the virtual business networking event planned for June 29th. Cara will be presenting about the Task Force and Middlesex County business supports. Todd will be presenting about CFDC offerings.
- Opening Komoka arena for ice pad rentals. Seeing demand to keep both pads operating through the summer.

Cathy Burghardt-Jesson

- CIP discussions taking place at local level following County Council's decision to support
- Local facilities being opened methodically
- Most businesses open and showing innovation in dealing with COVID restrictions

Kelly Elliott

- Working with County on confirming community routes for transportation pilot. Thorndale business community has been very engaged. Looking at links with Oxford County's transportation routes. Looking to be operational by September 1st.
- Thames Centre assisting businesses by providing window/floor physical distancing decals

Karl Pfister/ Gudrun Haas

- Karl reported that a representative from Minister Yurek's office has reached out however, the member from Minister McNaughton's office has not yet followed up.

Bill Pigram

- Partnered with OFA on Virtual Job Fair focused on Agricultural jobs on June 18th. Decent take up from employers and job seekers however, the technology was a bit of a challenge and Bonduelle was unable to take part as a result
- Office is keeping very busy. Working on return protocols at this time Expect that in person appointments will resume late summer/early fall
- Watching to see what the situation is like when CERB ends

Todd Copeland

- Approved an additional four Regional Relief and Recovery Fund loans over the past two weeks; three more in pipeline. Total value is \$320,000 to date. Take up is steady but lower than in some other areas.
- Two summer students and a social media/communications consultant are in place now
- New organization website will be launching in summer
- Four new board members have been brought on. Still seeking a board representative from Lucan Biddulph

5. Next Stage Tasks and Projects

- ✓ **Communication with MPPs**
Cara will follow up with Minister McNaughton's office to see why the intended meeting has not yet been scheduled re:
 - Provide transparency in sharing the COVID-19 Inspection Checklist to be used in evaluating business practices
- ✓ **Communication re: CIP Support and TRRF**
Cara will be hosting an Economic Development Roundtable with all lower tier municipalities to inform them of partnership opportunities. Business associations and community groups will also be contacted with the same intention.
- ✓ **Economic Development Strategic Plan Refresh**
Consideration is requested by Task Force members to assist with the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan Refresh (expected to commence and be completed in the fall of 2020).

6. Meeting Schedule & Adjournment

- ✓ Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- ✓ The meeting adjourned at 2:25p.m.