



Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

**Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus
Minutes
April 20, 2007 - 9:00 a.m.
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville – Council Chambers
25 Central Avenue, Brockville, Ontario**

COUNTY	HEAD OF COUNCIL 2007	STAFF
County of Frontenac	Ron Maguire	Elizabeth Fulton
County of Haliburton	Murray Fearrey	Jim Wilson
County of Hastings	Terry Clemens	Jim Pine
City of Kawartha Lakes	Ric McGee	Jane Lunn
County of Lanark	Al Lunney	Peter Wagland
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville	J. Douglas Struthers (Chair)	Stephen Fournier Lisa Severson
County of Lennox and Addington	Clayton McEwen (Vice-Chair)	Larry Keech
County of Northumberland	Hector Macmillan	Bill Pyatt
County of Peterborough	Ronald Gerow	Gary King
United Counties of Prescott and Russell	Jean-Yves Lalonde	Stéphane P. Parisien
County of Prince Edward	Leo Finnegan	Dick Shannon
County of Renfrew	Janice Visneskie Bob Sweet (Past-Chair)	Norm Lemke
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Dennis Fife	Mike S. Waddell
Other guests:		Warren Sleeth (MMAH) Matt McDonald (MMAH) Barry Krampton (EOBC) Jim Nubel (EOBC) Dan Borowec (CFDC) Katherine Wood

REGRETS		
County	Head of Council 2007	Staff
County of Haliburton	Murray Fearrey	Jim Wilson
County of Lennox and Addington		Larry Keech

1. Call Meeting to Order/Welcome

Chair Struthers welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:17 a.m. Introductions of all in attendance commenced.

2. Approval of Minutes – February 25, 2007

Warden Maguire referenced page five, third paragraph, of the minutes stating it should read the provincial government, not the federal government. The change was noted.

Moved by: Warden Gerow
Seconded by: Warden Fife

THAT the EOWC meeting minutes from February 25, 2007 be approved, as amended. Carried.

3. Approval of Agenda

Chair Struthers stated item 6.3 will be added to discuss a request made by the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus.

Moved by: Warden Hector Macmillan
Seconded by: Warden Ronald Gerow

THAT the agenda is approved, as presented. Carried.

4. Broadband Delegation

Mr. Barry Krampton and Mr. Jim Nubel, members of the Eastern Ontario Broadband Coalition (EOBC) and Mr. Dan Borowec, CFDC made separate presentations to the EOWC on both the EOBC's and CFDC's endeavour to promote and implement broadband throughout Eastern Ontario (presentation available upon request).

The EOBC and CFDC requested the endorsement of the EOWC for canvassing the provincial and federal government for funding to implement broadband services in Eastern Ontario to assist with economic development strategies for the region.

Motion

Moved by: Warden Visneskie
Seconded by: Warden Macmillan

WHEREAS the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus recognizes the need for Broadband Services in Eastern Ontario, as part of our economic development strategy for community competitiveness;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the EOWC endorse the proposed implementation plan presented by the EOBC for submission to the federal and provincial governments.

Carried.

Motion

Moved by: Warden McEwen
Seconded by: Warden Clemens

THAT the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus support a submission by the EO CFDC Network Inc. for \$10 million from the Province of Ontario to be dedicated to providing broadband coverage for all of Eastern Ontario; and

THAT furthermore the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus supports a similar request on the part of the EO CFDC Network Inc. for \$10 million from the Government of Canada.

Carried

5. Prosperity Plan

Chair Struthers stated that the Prosperity Plan had received positive coverage and a high level of interest related to the Prosperity Plan had been indicated.

5.1 Consultant Update

Ms. Katherine Wood provided the EOWC a brief update on the Prosperity Plan since the launch on March 27, 2007.

Ms. Wood stated that the launch of the Prosperity Plan on March 27, 2007 in Merrickville brought a good cross-section of people from various organizations together. The targeted attendance for the event was set at seventy-five, which was exceeded. The agenda for the Prosperity Launch included case studies and work that is presently being done. Approximately two hundred (200) media contacts received a summary of the Prosperity Plan via a mass media release. All MPPs also received a copy of the Prosperity Plan and its supporting documentation.

Ms. Wood stated the challenges related to the Prosperity Plan launch included the Provincial Budget release on March 22, 2007 which in turn meant the province did not send representation.

Since the launch the Prosperity Plan, the two supporting documents have been posted on the EOWC website. An electronic version of the priorities of the plan has been completed and forwarded to the CAOs and a profile of all of the MPPs has also been compiled and forwarded to the CAOs. The Federal Government has also expressed interest in the Prosperity Plan.

Ms. Wood stated a next step for the EOWC is to determine the priorities of the Prosperity Plan and to begin implementing the priorities. Ms. Wood stated that it is important to maintain the coalition across Eastern Ontario and to ensure the other stakeholders impacted by the Prosperity Plan are kept informed of all progress and decisions.

5.2 Discussion on Strategies and Meetings

Mr. King proposed a time frame in which to determine the EOWC's priorities related to the Prosperity Plan. Mr. King stated the EOWC CAOs would meet on May 11, 2007 in Frontenac to formalize a framework for the EOWC to use to set their priorities as time is of the essence with the impending fall election. Mr. King stated the EOWC need to spearhead the Prosperity Plan initiatives instead of letting other groups take the ideas from the Prosperity Plan and implementing them in a way that does not best represent the interest of the EOWC.

The EOWC could meet on May 17, 2007 in Frontenac to review the priorities formulated on May 11th.

The May 24, 2007 EOWC CAOs meeting would be cancelled.

Mr. King stated a focus on the priorities of the Prosperity Plan could tie into the ongoing work of the service delivery and fiscal capacity review. Mr. King recognized the need to return to the EOWC's core issues and concerns and stated there needs to be consistency put into the messages endorsed by the EOWC.

Warden McEwen stated the EOWC must move forward on their initiative and focus on the things that the EOWC can change in the short-term. There needs to be a focus on the areas which the EOWC can "win". There needs to be a plan for the AMO conference in Ottawa in August as this will be the EOWC's last chance before the provincial election to be heard. The EOWC needs to cognizant when completing the priorities as it moves through the timelines, post-election.

By a show of hands the members of the EOWC endorsed the timeframe for the implementation of the Prosperity Plan priorities.

6. Chairman's Update

6.1 MUND

Chair Struthers stated he had been invited to attend a MUND meeting to give MUND an overview of the Prosperity Plan. Chair Struthers stated he will not be able to attend the MUND meeting on May 17, 2007 due to a meeting of the EOWC. He agreed to advise the MUND Group accordingly.

6.2 AMO Update

Chair Struthers stated there was nothing of significance to report from AMO at this time.

6.3 Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Request

A request was received from the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus inviting the EOWC to a dinner meeting on Saturday, August 18, 2007.

The question was raised as to if a specific agenda or concerns had accompanied the invitation. The response was that there had not been an agenda or items which the WOWC wished to discuss. Warden Visneskie stated she supports the dinner event as a way of fostering a good working relationship. Warden Macmillan stated that it is difficult to justify why they would want to meet on the Saturday evening as this would mean added costs to the EOWC membership, as many do not arrive at the AMO Conference until Sunday, August 19, 2007. Past Chair Sweet commented that in previous years the topic of meeting with the WOWC had been discussed at great length and it was agreed that it is expensive to meet on a regular basis and the opportunity to meet at the OGRA/ROMA Conference and the AMO Conference was deemed satisfactory.

Warden Macmillan stated that unless both the EOWC and WOWC had specific items to be discussed any meeting should be held on the Sunday of the AMO Conference.

Mrs. Fulton stated the EOWC was invited to Collingwood last year by invitation of the WOWC. She stated that a similar opportunity may arise around the ACRO Conference which will be held in October in Cornwall.

Chair Struthers stated he will see WOWC Chair Burns in June and will discuss the matter at that time.

7. Input on Service Delivery and Fiscal Capacity Review

Mr. Pine reviewed the key principles which the EOWC CAOs developed at their April 19, 2007 meeting for the Wardens to review.

Mr. Pine stated that currently a three billion dollar gap exists between the province and the municipalities. Professor Harry Kitchen is compiling more data and the amount of three billion may increase once his work is completed.

Mr. Pine stated that if the province chooses to move programs around, but not address the funding issues for the programs, the burden of paying for the programs will continue to be a property tax burden to all residents in Ontario.

Mr. Pine stated expectations are high, as are the municipalities' frustration levels. There needs to be a way to eliminate the fiscal gap. The GTA and City of Toronto have been working together and have formulated a plan to bring to the fiscal review table. Mr. Pine needs to know what the EOWC wants brought forward and the EOWC needs to develop a strategy.

The principles developed by the EOWC CAOs are:

1. Gap on Table (new gap) – Fix it
2. Revenue Neutrality - Out
3. New Standards
 - Authority pays
 - What “core services” – determine
4. Social services, health, income redistribution not funded in the property tax
5. Most cost effective delivery system
6. Ability to pay
7. Sustainable funding – inflation on cost-sharing

A report on these principles will be discussed in greater length at the May 17, 2007 EOWC meeting.

Warden Macmillan stated this will assist Past-Chair Sweet and other members of the EOWC who are representatives for the Service Delivery and Fiscal Capacity Review exercise. Queen's Park does not have a good understanding of how rural Ontario works. The property tax is not designed to be used to pay for the downloaded services from the province.

Past-Chair Sweet stated the government has stated that they will not necessarily wait for the eighteen month review to be completed before implementing government initiatives. Past-Chair Sweet needs to have the EOWC's input to ensure Eastern Ontario's concerns are heard by the province during this review.

Warden Lunney recommended that four main principles should be focused upon by the EOWC at this time. The four main principles are:

- Fiscal Gap
- New Standards
- Sustainable Funding
- What is Core Business

Mr. King stated information gathered to support these principles should also be conveyed to the public as they have an enormous impact on property taxes.

Warden Macmillan stated that uploading services to the province may not be the answer. Delivering the services is often best completed by the municipalities as they deliver the services in a cost effective and efficient manner. Funding from the province is required to continue to manage these programs.

By a show of hands the members of the EOWC accepted the principles presented and instructed staff to prepare a report for the May 17, 2007 EOWC meeting focusing on the four main principles (Fiscal Gap, New Standards, Sustainable Funding and Core Business).

Carried

8. Property Tax Related Advertising

Mr. Pine presented to the EOWC an initiative currently being developed by the County of Hastings and other partners to launch a public education awareness campaign related to property taxes and what they pay for. The campaign is intended to be positive and non-confrontational and hopes to convey to the public that the municipalities are providing good value and spending tax dollars prudently. The campaign will be in a print and radio broadcast format and will be targeted for the Victoria Day holiday weekend. Some municipalities include this type of information in their tax bills.

Mr. Pine stated if other members of the EOWC are interested in participating the cost would be \$5000.00. Mr. Pine will need to know within two weeks if others are interested in participating.

Warden McEwen stated that most budgets have been passed and many would need to get Council approval to undertake this initiative. Warden McEwen stated that initiatives such as this should be paid for by the EOWC and if yearly fees are not enough they should be reviewed and increased.

9. New Municipal Act Requirements Investigator

Mr. Pine reported to the EOWC that the Counties of Hastings and Prince Edward with the City of Belleville and Quinte West have hired an independent Closed Meeting Investigator. Under the new Municipal Act there will be a requirement to investigate a closed meeting if a member of the public requests it. The group has retained the services of John Maddox who has twenty-five years experience in government. Mr. Maddox lives in London, Ontario and is seen as being very impartial. Mr. Maddox has been put on retainer for one year. If other municipalities are interested in this service Mr. Pine will inquire as to Mr. Maddox's interest in performing similar services for them. Mr. Waddell added that if a municipality does not have a closed meeting investigator the

case will default to the Ombudsman which could potentially have large economic impacts. Mr. King stated that there are other individuals who are also interested in doing this type of work.

10. Future Directions Update

Mr. Wagland has received quotes from Mr. Howard Allan for completion of Future Directions 2007. Discussion at the EOWC CAOs meeting on April 19, 2007 indicated there may be a desire for a more in depth report. Mr. Wagland is to receive quotes from Mr. Allan and Mr. Wilson will be receiving quotes from Mr. Nigel Bellchamber to complete the narrative analysis of the report. This information will be shared with the EOWC on May 17, 2007. The 2006 Future Direction is ready to print and Mr. Wagland was authorized to proceed.

11. Bill 198 Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act – Impact on Industrial and Commercial Business

Mr. Wilson will be bringing this issue forward at the next AMO meeting.

12. Queen's Park Day

Chair Struthers stated that MPP Brownell had not yet contacted the EOWC to coordinate a meeting at Queen's Park. Chair Struthers stated that the Provincial Conservative's have contacted him and would like to coordinate a meeting. Chair Struthers is hoping that both parties will agree to meet on the same day.

13. City of Toronto – One Cent Campaign

Chair Struther reported to the members that he had been in contact with Mayor David Miller, City of Toronto. Mayor Miller feels that there could be areas in which the City of Toronto and the EOWC could work together to advocate change within the province.

Three main areas Mayor Miller would like to focus on are:

1. National transit
2. The provincial social services programs should not be on the residential tax bill
3. One cent of the GST be allocated to cities and municipalities

Chair Struthers' response to Mayor Miller on the area of national transit was that rural Eastern Ontario transit is not necessarily means of transportation (i.e. bus, subway, etc), but is their roads and bridges. Chair Struthers agreed that social services programs not be included on the residential tax bill. Chair Struthers stated that in regards to the one cent GST initiative that the EOWC works closely with AMO and they would respect AMO stance on this item. Chair Struthers stated there would be value in communicating with each other and felt this could best be done on a staff level.

14. Press Releases – Input from Members

Chair Struthers stated that the process for press releases will, for the most part, be forwarded to each County for review, to ensure the Warden/Mayor has an opportunity to

review the release and add comments. Each County would be responsible for the distribution of the press release. When there is a need to distribute a press release in a timely fashion, a mass media release will occur from one source. An example of this would be the Prosperity Plan Launch.

By a show of hands the members of the EOWC accepted the above noted process in which press releases will be issued by the EOWC.

Carried.

15. Lanark County 2007 Annual Warden's Golf Tournament and Dinner

A number of golf tournaments will be occurring throughout the season. The following were discussed:

Lanark Golf Tournament August 10, 2007 - proceeds will be donated to the United Way

Renfrew Golf Tournament June 22, 2007

Loyalist Golf Tournament May 25, 2007 – proceeds will be donated to the Christmas for Kids

16. MMAH Update

Mr. Sleeth stated that MMAH will continue to assist in promoting the Prosperity Plan.

17. Correspondence

17.1 Incoming:

17.1.1 Resolution: City of Pembroke (22-March-07) Re: Program Download to Municipalities

The members reviewed the resolution passed by the City of Pembroke regarding the program download to municipalities. Past-Chair Sweet stated that the resolution, if acted upon by the government would have severe negative financial impacts on municipalities. Past-Chair Sweet has already been in contact with the Mayor of Pembroke and explained to him in detail the financial implications. The City of Pembroke has decided to rescind the resolution to the province regarding program download to municipalities.

Warden Visneskie feels the EOWC should respond to the City of Pembroke. A letter will be sent on the EOWC's behalf.

17.1.2 Letter from Honourable John Gerretson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to Warden Struthers, Chair, EOWC (26-Mar-07)

Re: EOWC's Six Priorities outlined at OGRA/ROMA

Warden Maguire commented that the response from the Minister Gerretsen was appreciated, but Minister Gerretsen did not answer any of the questions asked of the Liberal caucus at the OGRA/ROMA Conference.

Warden Visneskie stated she feels any opportunity to meet with government officials is beneficial and the caucus should continue to do so when an opportunity arises.

By a show of hands the members of the EOWC agreed to send a letter to Minister Gerretsen acknowledging receipt of his response to the EOWC priorities at the OGRA/ROMA Conference and continue to meet as opportunities arise.

Carried.

17.1.3 Letter from Mayor Ed Jacyno, Mayor of Pembroke to Mayor Bob Sweet (03-Apr-07)

Re: Tabling of Resolution 009 (City of Pembroke) Pending Decision by the Government of the Fiscal Review Committee's Recommendations

17.1.4 Letter from Sarah Anderson, Initiative Officer, FedNor/Industry Canada to Warden Struthers (30-Mar-07)

Re: The Wardens' Caucus Support of Activating the BGAP GIS Portal for the Next Phase of the EOBC Initiative

17.1.5 Letter from Dean Sauriol, CAO/Clerk, Township of Whitewater Region to Mayor Jacyno, City of Pembroke (11-Apr-07)

Re: Support of Programs Downloaded to Municipalities

A letter will be sent to the City of Pembroke stating that the EOWC does not support the resolution passed by the City of Pembroke regarding programs downloaded to municipalities.

18. New/Old Business

Warden Macmillan inquired if there will be a possible press release regarding the various initiatives currently underway by the EOWC. The press release could include accolades to Premier McGuinty for initiating the review, for any funding received by Eastern Ontario municipalities and to also support Past-Chair Sweet's position at the Service Review and

Fiscal Capacity political table. The fall election may see additional monies for funding from the made available to Eastern Ontario.

19. Next Meeting(s)

May 11, 2007	EOWC CAOs' Working Group Meeting – Frontenac
May 17, 2007	EOWC Meeting – Frontenac
June 15, 2007	EOWC Meeting – Renfrew
July 20, 2007	EOWC CAOs' Working Group Meeting CANCELLED
August 19 to 22, 2007	AMO Conference – Ottawa

20. Adjournment

Motion

Moved by: Warden Lunney
Seconded by: Warden Visneskie

THAT the EOWC meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

EOWC Chair, Warden J. Douglas Struthers

EOWC Vice-Chair, Warden Clayton McEwen