



Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

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April 21, 2006

9:00 am

Best Western Hotel, Cobourg

In attendance:

COUNTY	HEAD OF COUNCIL	STAFF
County of Frontenac	Bill Lake	Elizabeth Fulton, CAO
County of Haliburton		Jim Wilson, CAO
County of Hastings	Clarence Zieman	Jim Pine, CAO
City of Kawartha Lakes		Jane Lunn, CAO
County of Lanark	Aubrey Churchill	Peter Wagland, CAO
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville	Ron Holman	Stephen Fournier, CAO
County of Lennox and Addington	Doug Bearance	Larry Keech, CAO
County of Northumberland	Rick Austin	Bill Pyatt, CAO
County of Peterborough	Neal Cathcart	Gary King, CAO
United Counties of Prescott and Russell		
County of Prince Edward	Leo Finnegan	Richard Shannon, CAO
County of Renfrew		Norm Lemke, CAO Lorna Knight
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Jim McDonell	Michael Waddell, CAO
Other guests:		Vince Fabiilli, MMAH Warren Sleeth, MMAH Doug Reycraft, Rural Caucus Andrew Wallen, CFDC

1. Call Meeting to Order/Welcome

2. Approval of Minutes

- January 19th and 20th, 2006
- February 19th, 2006

Moved by: Mayor Finnegan

Seconded by: Warden Lake

THAT the EOWC minutes of January 19th and 20th, 2006 and the minutes of February 19th, 2006 be approved.

CARRIED

Joint Minutes

- February 19th, 2006

Moved by: Warden McDonnell

Seconded by: Warden Holman

THAT the EOWC/WOWC joint minutes of February 19th, 2006 be approved.

CARRIED

3. Approval of April 21st, 2006 Agenda

There was a request to add to the agenda the following topics:

- Discussion Paper from Leeds and Grenville
- Invitation to legislative meeting at the Rural Caucus on May 9th
- Invitation to joint WOWC/EOWC meeting in June 8th and 9th in Collingwood
- ESA Part VII exemption (Frontenac)

Moved by: Warden Austin

Seconded by: Warden Zieman

THAT these aforementioned items are added to the agenda and the agenda be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

4. Conservation Authority Meeting Update

Gary King updated the Caucus on the March CAO meeting with the Conservation Authorities (CA) in Kingston. The topic of this meeting was Source Water Protection and the Conservation Authorities provided the CAO's with an update on how this legislation was moving forward. Jim Kelleher and the other Eastern Conservation Authority representatives noted that the first reading of the Source Water Legislation was passed in December 2005 and a royal assent is anticipated in the fall of 2006. Currently, the Conservation Authorities are concentrating on completing watershed characterization reports, as well as watershed budget reports. Once these are completed, they will move to create assessment reports and then Source Protection plans, it is this last stage that will require municipal involvement. The CA's are concerned about myths that are circulating regarding the legislation such as the myth of metering rural water, greater restrictions on farmers etc. Since there are many myths being spread around, the CA's have asked the assistance of Municipalities, to dispel these myths and ensure there is a consistent message.

One positive outcome from the Conservation Authority meeting is that it was suggested that their internal bulletins, concerning the Source Water Protection Legislation, be made available in an edited electronic version for various stakeholders.

Neal Cathcart, Vice-Chair, has been at a meeting recently where it was suggested that the bill would be passed in the summer and that there would be three regulations that would be implemented early on in the process, but none of these that would involve implementation in the field. Also it was indicated that it would be 16-18 months after this legislation was passed before regulations were implemented that would directly affect the public.

5. Update on Regional Directors Meeting

Norm Lemke, CAO of Renfrew County, updated the Caucus on the recent March meeting with the Regional Directors. He noted that as the Caucus is aware, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has provided ongoing support and involvement with the CAO's, with the most recent benefit being the organization of a Regional Directors meeting that was put forth through Warren Sleeth.

Warren also wanted to recognize that MMAH has been involved for the past several years with the EOWC and by tapping into the regional directors group (consisting of 11 program directors in Eastern Ontario) that greater communication will be possible. To sum up the history of how this meeting came about; last summer Warren met with the regional directors and they walked through reports/documents that the EOWC had published in order to bring them up to date on the EOWC activities. After review of the documents, the next logical step was the meeting in March, marking the first of many meetings between the two groups. Feedback from the Regional Directors indicated that they were very interested in participating in future meetings.

Norm noted that one of the things that the CAO's found most interesting was the gap at the municipal level and it is to our benefit to have a review of our communications and fill this void. As a direct outcome of these meetings it is obvious that we need to do more work with regional directors in future meetings on specific topics. More work will need to be done in order to determine which subjects need to be covered and how best to keep the whole group informed of these meetings.

6. Communications Strategy

There has been discussion that an educational radio campaign should be launched to assist in informing taxpayers about what their property taxes are being used for and why taxes continue to increase. One EOWC County is currently going forth with this campaign, their County financial obligation is approximately \$10,000 for this year, with the anticipation that separated cities will be contributing similar funds. The campaign will consist of ads aired on two or three radio stations throughout the County, as well as print ads in local newspapers. The campaign is scheduled to run throughout May/June with a second campaign in September. The one County that is looking into running this campaign will bring forward the financials outlining the upfront costs, per ad cost etc. to which the greater group can determine whether they will also run similar campaigns. It was emphasized that the initiative be truly educational and not political.

7. Federal/Provincial/Municipal Fiscal Relations Commission

At the ROMA/OGRA conference Premier McGuinty announced an initiative to create a Federal-Provincial-Municipal to fully examine fiscal relations between the three levels of government. Discussion took place as to whether there is any interest on the behalf of this group to have a member on this panel.

Warren Sleeth noted that he has not heard any addition information but he suspects that things are happening.

There was further discussion as to whom would participate on this panel and it was determined that there would be time to make this consideration in advance of the first panel meeting. The candidates would vary depending on time commitment and location of the meetings.

Moved by: Warden Holman

Seconded by: Warden Zieman

THAT the EOWC submit a letter requesting participation on the Federal-Provincial-Municipal Commission be sent to the Premier and other interested parties.

CARRIED

8. Leeds and Grenville Update- Discussion Paper

Leeds and Grenville apologized for the late agenda item, noting that this item does not need to be approved today, but they are asking that this paper to be referred to the CAO group. The discussion paper details that the recent provincial budget clearly demonstrates a lack of sustainable funding for Eastern Ontario. The paper proposes that a formal pre-forecasted funding formula be determined by allocating a set percentage of provincial revenues to be transferred to Eastern Ontario annually. The concept would be that these funds would be insurance that as Provincial revenues grow, municipalities would still receive a set percentage of Provincial revenues.

Moved By: Major Finnegan

Seconded by: Warden Churchill

THAT this discussion paper be referred to the CAO's May meeting for comment and recommendation to be brought forth to the next EOWC meeting in June.

CARRIED

9. EODF update

Gary King spoke to a meeting with Jim Pine, Larry Keech, Dan Borowec (CFDC), Kathy Woods and Cheryl Forth (FedNor representative from Sudbury) which focused on the Rural/Prosperity plan and the status of the EODF. Just prior to the January federal election, all individuals at the Federal level were supportive of this program and they now form the new minority conservative government. FedNor believes the program is worthwhile and the latest information is that the EODF will be a line item in the upcoming federal budget.

10. EOOAP update

Gary King noted that the Eastern Ontario Opportunities Action Plan (EOOAP) contained multiple recommendations for which the results have been positive, as many economic agencies have utilized this information to update their strategic plans. We are now at the stage to create a steering committee to move forward the recommendations and sustainable funding for Eastern Ontario. At the recent meeting there was a focus on the RED application to the government with a commitment from Christine Dukelow for provincial assistance. During this meeting there was a great amount of discussion to identify what will be accomplished through this process and how we intend to measure the outcomes.

Within the next while, the employment services and skills development programs will devolve from the federal to province level, which will give us the opportunity to give direction and influence these programs and services. Kathy Wood has completed a comparison of the 2006 Rural Plan update to the 2004 Rural Plan document, which will be made available next week to the Caucus members.

Larry Keech noted this is an excellent opportunity to advance the Prosperity Plan for Eastern Ontario. There was general discussion around the timeline and it will be a challenge for

Kathy to move forward with this and have a draft by mid-September with the final report ready by the end of October. However, it was felt that if the EOWC were to have an influence over the next provincial budget that this would be key input. The application that was proposed was to have the steering committee established with 10 representatives (2 from EOWC, 2 from CFDC's, 1 from a separated city (probably a MUND rep), 1 from the Eastern Ontario Economic Commission and 2 public representatives (one from education and one at large). Administrative support will be afforded to the steering committee from three or four CAO's to oversee the work of a consultant. In addition, subcommittees may have to be formed from the steering committee for areas that require expertise. The EOWC will be looking for two elected officials to attend the steering committee meetings (one meeting a month), and these individuals need to be comfortable to speak on behalf of the group with the realization that these steering committees could exist for a long period of time. At this time the elected individuals who will be acting on behalf of the EOWC will be Warden Clarence Zieman and Vice-Chair Warden Neal Cathcart.

Moved by: Warden Austin

Seconded by: Mayor Finnegan

THAT the EOWC is supportive of the creation of the steering committee and the appointed elected officials to participate in this committee are Warden Zieman and Warden Cathcart.

CARRIED

11. Broadband Update

Peter Wagland, CAO from Lanark County, introduced Andrew Wallen from the Kawartha Lakes CFDC who will be presenting an overview of the Broadband Report. This document has been in the works for quite some time and the results will hopefully leverage some broadband funding for Eastern Ontario. The Eastern Ontario Broadband Coalition engaged 47 out of 50 Internet Service Providers, operating in Eastern Ontario for this project, and as a result the report is an excellent representation of the coverage that exists.

The report section of the document examines why Broadband is so important to our region and itemizes issues such as family income as justification for region wide broadband service needs. The Internet Service Providers (ISP's) worked with Canada Geographic Information Systems, in order to create over 40 layers of information, which they then transposed their information onto. The CFDC's invited the ISP's to highlight their areas of varying degrees of area coverage, with the security of not being able to see competitors' information. There were some cases in which coverage was not as complete as was originally assumed by the ISP's, and so some on-the-ground analysis was done in order to determine the actual coverage.

These maps demonstrated that per square kilometer coverage, 65% of Eastern Ontario is under or un-serviced.

In terms of determining a cost for Broadband coverage, an amount per square kilometer was determined by looking at three examples of actual broadband installation costs to determine an average cost. Utilizing the average cost of \$2000 per square kilometer, the total cost to bring broadband to all of Eastern Ontario is \$64,124,143. Note that there are some areas the cost will vary from this average figure.

The recommendations also have been made on a go forward basis, there continues to be the need to have a communication strategy and find support for this project.

At this time a CRTC order has resulted in a large account of refunds, which may be allocated for broadband use instead of being refunded to individuals. However, at this time the funds are tied up in legalities. If funds are available there will still be a lengthy process, to re-engage the ISP's, to raise the technological needs and depth of the study and a large sum of funds would be necessary to complete this collaborative effort in order to create broadband accessibility across Eastern Ontario.

It should be noted that establishing the broadband service initially and sustaining it over time are two separate costs. If the CRTC funds do not become available until after broadband projects have been completed, then these funds could still be utilized for sustainability.

Vice-Chair Warden Cathcart extended thanks to Andrew for his presentation.

12. Health Protection and Promotion Act- Regulation 562

A CAO noted that within their County there seems to be vigilance around this particular regulation of the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Specifically there have been problems with the serving of food at fundraising events, in particular when food is prepared in an individuals' home and then brought to the event. Some local fundraisers have been cancelled as a result of the enforcement. This County is inquiring whether it is just their health unit or if this is more widespread.

Currently there is a 40-page draft document that has been put together with 10 representative Health Units from across Ontario and this discussion will be tabled until this document has been viewed.

13. Pre-budget Submission—Follow Up

There was discussion around next steps in terms of the pre-budget follow-up. It was suggested that a letter from the chairman to Minister Duncan noting that the EOWC would still like to discuss these issues regardless of the budget outcome would be in order.

In terms of the legislative meeting, there needs to be a common, consistent message as we go forward, perhaps this document can be the basis of the meeting which will ensure that we do not lose momentum as these issues continue to be at the forefront.

14. MPAC- (Ombudsman's recommendations)

MPAC taken the recommendations to heart, noting that the recommendations revolved around an increase and better communication with the taxpayer, more complete investigation into appeals and better documentation. Some of the recommendations are suggesting that there needs to be a 100% site inspection for; each property sold, each Request for Reconsideration (100,000 were filed this year) and also an implementation of a 6-year property investigation cycle. There is also the recommendation to increase information access by neighborhood, which is very difficult for rural communities. There is the hope that these recommendations will build a better product especially since the recommendations did not suggest reinventing the current assessment system.

15. Engaging the Federal Government

There is currently a move to create an unofficial Federal/Eastern Caucus, by Daryl Kramp, who is willing to meet with EOWC. There is a willingness to take our agenda forward which would be beneficial to the EOWC. There were clear indications that they are aware and supportive of the EODF and want to meet with Caucus.

Chair Warden Sweet was anxious to let Mr. Kramp's office know that the EOWC would be interested in meeting, he has a call into the constituency office and was waiting to hear back. There is an interest in having this meeting as our own group, separate of other interests.

Moved by: Clarence Zieman
Seconded by: Mayor Finnegan

THAT the EOWC continue to seek a meeting with Daryl Kramp in the near future.
CARRIED

16. Correspondence

Moved by: Warden Bearance
Seconded by: Warden Holman

THAT the correspondence be received.

CARRIED

17. New/Old Business

Legislative Meeting

An opportunity to attend a Legislative Rural Caucus Meeting is currently being offered for May 9th for a half hour at Queen's Park. At this time the EOWC will need to identify attendees, (4-6) for this delegation time period. Warden Holman would like to put his name forward as a possible attendee and availability will be confirmed with the Chair Warden Sweet and the Vice-Chair Warden Cathcart.

Joint Meeting

The EOWC has been extended an invitation to attend a joint meeting with the WOWC on June 8th and 9th in the Town of the Blue Mountains. At this point there is some concerns with agenda topics, as we are not apprised of their activities to date. Doug Reycraft attends their WOWC meetings and assured the EOWC that they are active with a number of issues. The EOWC would be pleased to attend a joint meeting, perhaps an agenda can be determined in order to ensure common topics of interest.

ESA Part VII

As this has not been addressed by the Provincial government since the February OGRA/ROMA meeting, the Frontenac County Council has passed another slightly changed resolution, which still requires the full exemption of Part 7, including meal breaks, and also asks for certain language in the agreements to be included.

It was apparent from the Regional Director's meeting that they seem unaware of this issue. To date there has been no further communication with the Eastern Regional Directors on this issue, although communication has been sent via Elizabeth Fulton.

There was general discussion that perhaps another joint letter is necessary, in order to keep this topic at the forefront. Elizabeth will take this direction and proceed with another joint letter on behalf of EOWC, WOWC, AMO and AMENSO.

18. Adjournment

Moved by: Mayor Finnegan

Seconded by: Warden Churchill

THAT the meeting of April 21, 2006 be adjourned.

CARRIED

Warden Clarence Zieman would like to note that he is really impressed by the level of professionalism displayed by the staff. He particularly is appreciative of the consistent, accurate numbers and data as well as the efforts of the CAO staff to forward EOWC issues.

Vice-Chair- Warden Neal Cathcart
Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

Norm Lemke
Secretary/Treasurer