



Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

**Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus/Mayor Millers  
Meeting Minutes  
September 21, 2007  
9:00 a.m.  
The Ramada – Belleville, ON**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>HEAD OF COUNCIL 2007</b>	<b>STAFF</b>
County of Frontenac	Ron Maguire	Elizabeth Fulton
County of Haliburton		Jim Wilson
County of Hastings	Terry Clemens	Jim Pine
City of Kawartha Lakes		Jane Lunn
County of Lanark	Al Lunney	Peter Wagland
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville	J. Douglas Struthers (Chair)	Stephen Fournier
County of Lennox and Addington	Clayton McEwen (Vice-Chair)	Larry Keech
County of Northumberland	Hector Macmillan	Bill Pyatt
County of Peterborough		Gary King
United Counties of Prescott and Russell	Jean-Yves Lalonde	
County of Prince Edward	Leo Finnegan	Dick Shannon
County of Renfrew		Norm Lemke
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Dennis Fife	Mike S. Waddell
Other guests:		Mayor Neil Ellis, City of Belleville Warren Sleeth, MMAH Doug Reycraft, President, AMO Don Wannagis, Communications Director, City of Toronto Len Britten, Finance Director, City of Toronto Michael Booth, City of Toronto

<b>Members Absent</b>		
<b>County</b>	<b>Head of Council 2007</b>	<b>Staff</b>
County of Haliburton	Murray Fearrey	
City of Kawartha Lakes	Ric Magee	
County of Peterborough	Ron Gerow	
County of Renfrew	Janice Vesneskie Bob Sweet	

### **1. Call Meeting to Order/Welcome**

Warden Clemens welcomed everyone to the Hastings County.

Mayor Neil Ellis, City of Belleville, also welcomed the group and noted that there are challenges ahead for everyone and by working together there may be an opportunity to solve them.

### **2. Introductions**

Introductions were made of all present.

### **3. Meeting Overview/Comments**

Chair Struthers outlined the meeting's agenda. He stated that there may be common issues and goals shared between the City of Toronto and the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and this meeting may facilitate future opportunities to review and possibly work on common issues.

### **4. Initial Comments**

Mayor Miller remarked that the meeting with the EOWC was an important opportunity to share common issues and goals. Given the possibility of working together with the EOWC and AMO around similar issues Mayor Miller sees a greater likelihood of the positive results on those issues.

### **5. EOWC Presentation – Key Priorities**

A Power Point presentation was given by Mr. Pine which summarized the key priorities and activities of the EOWC for 2007. A copy of the presentation is available upon request or can be viewed on the EOWC website.

### **6. City of Toronto Presentation**

Mayor Miller complimented the EOWC for their thoughtful and forward thinking and noted the parallels of the issues facing Eastern Ontario and the City of Toronto. Highlights of Mayor Miller's presentation are as follows:

- Parallel between the EWOCs' Crown Land issue and the Toronto Port Authority which is owed \$20 million.
- Toronto's fiscal issues include the necessity to lower commercial/industry tax to assist in the retention of manufacturing jobs in the Toronto area which is also an area that the EOWC advocated to the provincial government.
- The "livability of the City of Toronto" includes an environmental strategy. The City is the largest landlord in Canada with 140,000 living in social housing units and \$300 million needed to repair these units. Many units are rundown. Many of these complexes house individuals below the poverty level. An apprentice program was developed to teach individuals in that area a trade and to fix up their communities at the same time. Materials used during the renovations include items which will make the units much more energy efficient.
- The City of Toronto has a great transit system in place and has a goal to enlarge its territory but the financial costs are enormous.
- The City of Toronto's plan is to push for the provincial uploading of programs which have been downloaded to the municipal level.
- Advocate for the federal government to give municipalities 1% of the GST to use towards infrastructure costs and developments. This would result in \$300 to \$400 million dollars per year which the municipalities could share.
- Recognition that Ontarians are pay more property tax than any other province in Canada.

Mayor Miller shared with members of the EOWC a basic chart of the amount of money which could be forwarded to the municipalities by the 1% campaign. The figures are included as Appendix A

## **7. Round Table Discussion**

Chair Struthers recognized the provincial government's announcement of the upload of ODSP and health care to the province from the municipalities and noted the benefit this will have for taxpayers across the province. Chair Struthers noted that now is the time to invest in Eastern Ontario.

Mr. Reycraft stated he appreciated the opportunity to join the EWOC and Mayor Miller to discuss the common issues which affect all municipalities across the province. Mr. Reycraft stated that each person living in Ontario pays \$237 more in taxes a year, which is the highest in Canada. Infrastructure across the province is on life support and needs to be addressed immediately. The cost of social assistance is \$1.5 billion with social housing costs pegged at \$1.2 billion and these needs are growing by double digits each year.

Warden Macmillan asked Mayor Miller if it would not be advantageous to ask the government to support a 1% portion of the GST to the municipalities versus 1 cent of the GST. Mayor Miller explained that they have been lobbying the government for 1% of the GST, but find it is easier for the public to comprehend a 1 cent campaign. Warden

Macmillan stated that the advocating of a 1% campaign should be a national or AMO effort.

Chair Struthers stated that there is a challenge between urban and rural centers and used the need for broadband development in Eastern Ontario as an example.

Warden Maguire stated that many seasonal residents complain of higher taxes on their properties, as there is a higher property tax on waterfront cottages and homes. Warden Maguire stated that to improve infrastructure (i.e. roads) there needs to be funding and at this time this funding comes from property taxes. No changes will be seen until after uploading of various programs including social services, is once again the responsibility of the province.

Warden Finnegan stated he faces similar issues and needs funding for roads. The tax base is a rising concern for him and his residents in Prince Edward County.

## **8. Concluding Remarks**

Chair Struthers remarked the meeting was a healthy exercise which brought clarity to many of the issues being faced by Eastern Ontario and by the City of Toronto. What is good for Eastern Ontario is also good for the City of Toronto.

Mayor Miller thanked the EOWC again for meeting and is very impressed with the EOWC's advocacy. The City of Toronto will work closely with AMO around the issue of uploading services to the province. Mayor Miller offered to use his voice to advocate the EOWC's issues and he asked the EOWC to consider the City of Toronto's resolution to endorse a campaign for 1% of the GST which potentially could be shared nationally.

Mr. Reyecraft stated that the fiscal challenge being faced by Ontario is bigger than ever before. The provincial election has put a higher profile on the issue of downloaded services with the City of Toronto facing the biggest fiscal crisis.

Warden Clemens presented Mayor Miller with a gift on behalf of the EOWC.

## **9. Media Questions**

Chair Struthers and Mayor Miller agreed to answer questions from the Media after the meeting concluded.

## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

**APPENDIX A – 1% CAMPAIGN FIGURES**

<b>EOWC</b>	<b>2006 Population</b>	<b>Population Divided by 12,160,282</b>	<b>X 2 Billion</b>
<b>County of Frontenac</b>	143,865	0.011830725	\$ 23,661,450.07
<b>County of Haliburton</b>	16,527	0.001359096	\$ 2,718,192.65
<b>County of Hastings</b>	130,474	0.010729517	\$ 21,459,034.76
<b>City of Kawartha Lakes</b>	74,561	0.006131517	\$ 12,263,033.95
<b>County of Lanark</b>	63,785	0.005245354	\$ 10,490,707.21
<b>United Counties of Leeds and Grenville</b>	99,206	0.008158196	\$ 16,316,392.56
<b>County of Lennox and Addington</b>	40,542	0.003333968	\$ 6,667,935.28
<b>County of Northumberland</b>	80,963	0.006657985	\$ 13,315,969.71
<b>County of Peterborough</b>	133,080	0.010943822	\$ 21,887,643.10
<b>United Counties of Prescott and Russell</b>	80,184	0.006593924	\$ 13,187,847.72
<b>County of Prince Edward</b>	25,496	0.002096661	\$ 4,193,322.43
<b>County of Renfrew</b>	102,267	0.008409917	\$ 16,819,834.67
<b>United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry</b>	110,399	0.009078652	\$ 18,157,303.21