



Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus MINUTES

Friday, June 23, 2017
County of Prince Edward
The Waring House Inn
395 Sandy Hook Road
Picton ON

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. with the following individuals in attendance.

Present		
County	Head of Council	Staff
County of Frontenac	Warden Ron Vandewal	Kelly Pender, CAO
County of Haliburton	Warden Brent Devolin	Mike Rutter, CAO
County of Hastings	Warden Rodney Cooney	Jim Pine, CAO
City of Kawartha Lakes	Mayor Andy Letham	Ron Taylor, CAO
County of Lanark	Warden Bill Dobson	
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville	Warden Robin Jones	Andy Brown, CAO
County of Lennox & Addington	Warden Bill Lowry	Larry Keech, CAO
County of Northumberland	Warden Mark Walas	Jennifer Moore, CAO
County of Peterborough	Warden Joe Taylor	Gary King, CAO
United Counties of Prescott and Russell	Warden Gary J. Barton	Stéphane P. Parisien, CAO
County of Prince Edward	Mayor Robert Quaiff, Chair	James Hepburn, CAO
County of Renfrew	Warden Jennifer Murphy	Jim Hutton, CAO
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Warden Jim Bancroft	Tim Simpson, CAO

Regrets		
County of Lanark		Kurt Greaves, CAO

Others Present	
Delegation/Guests	Organization
Justin Bromberg	Communications and Policy Coordinator, EOWC
Lisa Severson	Communications Stakeholder and Relations Officer, EORN
Stephen Seller	Municipal Services Manager, Ministry of Municipal Affairs
Brandon Forrest	Manager, Local Government and Housing, MMA
Leslie Drynan	Deputy CAO, County of Lanark
Meredith Staveley-Watson	Intern, County of Hastings

1. Call Meeting to Order/Welcome

The meeting was called to order and Chair Quaiff welcomed the members.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest – N/A

3. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Warden Murphy
Seconded by Warden Lowry**

THAT the Agenda of the June 23, 2017 meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

4. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the EOWC Inc. meeting of April 21, 2017 were presented.

**Moved by Warden Bancroft
Seconded by Warden Jones**

THAT the Minutes of the EOWC Inc. meeting of April 21, 2017 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

5. Delegations

5.1 Erin Lee, Executive Director, Lanark County Interval House – Presentation regarding Violence Against Women in Eastern Ontario

Erin Lee of the Lanark County Interval House presented several statistics and recent occurrences regarding domestic violence in rural Eastern Ontario. She highlighted, among other things, some of the problematic concerns for victims in courthouses and courtroom situations. Lanark County Interval House has been working with several Counties on a public awareness campaign, including words to use, and that violence is not acceptable and not necessarily a gender-based issue. Ms. Lee distributed material to EOWC members and reiterated the need to create safe and healthy communities and attract residents to live in small town, rural communities. She recalled that violence against women is a public-health issue and that it has been recognized as such.

5.2 Lynn Dollin, President, and Pat Vanini, Executive Director, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – The Local Share

Lynn Dollin and Pat Vanini of AMO presented the Local Share Proposal, including a timeline of the work and consultations over the last two years. They presented several statistics on the proposal for a 1% HST increase and noted that it has received support from AMO's Board of Directors. EOWC members expressed interest in the concept and shared their thoughts and concerns. Jim Pine highlighted the widespread support for this proposal in Eastern Ontario and noted that it was to the EOWC's credit for getting the message out to local communities.

**Moved by Warden Vandewal
Seconded by Warden Dobson**

WHEREAS Ontarians identify infrastructure and transit as the biggest problems facing their municipal government and Ontarians already pay the highest property taxes in the country;

WHEREAS municipalities have limited authority to make changes that are needed to reduce the cost of delivering municipal services and financing infrastructure projects;

WHEREAS a ten-year projection (2016-2025) of municipal expenditures against inflationary property tax and user fee increases shows there to be an unfunded average annual need of \$4.9 billion to fix local infrastructure and provide for municipal operating needs;

WHEREAS this gap calculation presumes all existing and multi-year planned federal and provincial transfers to municipal governments will be fulfilled;

WHEREAS each municipal government in Ontario faces unique issues, fiscal health is a challenge shared by all municipal governments, regardless of size;

WHEREAS diversifying municipal revenues strengthens municipal long-term infrastructure planning and financing and would reduce the vulnerability of municipal governments to any federal or provincial changes and their own respective fiscal health;

WHEREAS a 1% increase to the provincial portion of the HST, adjusted for low income rebates, would result in about \$2.5 billion in new revenue would be distributed equitably to help every municipal government in Ontario fund their infrastructure and services with greater predictability;

BE IT RESOLVED that Council supports the Association of Municipalities of Ontario in its efforts to secure this new source of revenue to help fund critical municipal services like roads, bridges, transit, clean water and other services.

CARRIED

6. Reports for Review/Discussion

6.1 Update on the Eastern Ontario Leadership Council – Chair Quaiff

Chair Quaiff opened the floor to discussion on the Eastern Ontario Leadership Council. David Fell explained that the three working groups have recently been constituted and met in June, and will be reporting to the board with ideas on how to move those plans forward. There has not

yet been any news regarding the RED funding application through OMAFRA. An update is expected on the Province's Regional Economic Development Plans, from the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth at the July 5 board meeting. Gary King explained that if the RED funding application were successful, it would fund some of the work activities and research to be done by the Leadership Council.

6.2 Update on Eastern Ontario Capital Infrastructure – James Hepburn

James Hepburn explained that Kathryn Wood was retained to update the data on Eastern Ontario's capital infrastructure. The last data dated back to 2011. The report is included on the agenda for information purposes. Among other things, the report highlights that Eastern Ontario continues to fall behind, with the infrastructure deficit growing by 6% every year.

6.3 Update on new EOWC Logo, Video and Website – Justin Bromberg

Justin Bromberg presented an update on the new EOWC logo, video and website. The three projects shall be completed over the summer, and together the combined cost is expected to come in under budget.

6.4 Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) – Jim Pine / David Fell

Cell Gap Project Report

Jim Pine noted that the EOWC Chair and the EORN Chair met with Minister Leal and Minister Chiarelli in Toronto, for a one-hour meeting to present the formal submission on the \$299-million cell gap project. The Ministers were supportive of what EORN is proposing, as well as its funding model. The project is now officially with the federal and provincial governments. Mr. Pine noted that the majority of EOWC Counties have now passed resolutions to support the cell gap project. He and David Fell also attended the last EOMC meeting, where the Mayors agreed to support the project. A working group of CAOs has been established to determine the contribution across the rural and urban areas. Mr. Pine requested that all lower-tier municipalities also adopt a resolution to support the project. Redbrick is working on some material for the upcoming provincial election. EORN and the EOWC will be providing another update at the Multi-Ministers delegation at the AMO Conference. Jim Pine responded to questions from members.

EODP – CEDP Update Report

David Fell presented a report highlighting all of the companies that have received funding from the Collaborative Economic Development Project (CEDP) portion of the Eastern Ontario Development Program, for a total of \$5.9 million. This funding will remain in Eastern Ontario.

CRTC Basic Service Financial Consultation Report

David Fell represented a report on the CRTC Basic Service Consultation, noting that the presentation last year went very well. EORN is pleased with the decision, which includes all of the key recommendations put forth to the CRTC, including access to high speed internet services as an essential service; the inclusion of mobile broadband in the definition of essential services for all Canadians; a minimum level of service for all Canadians (at least 50Mbps down and 10Mbps up); and the creation of a \$750-million fund over five years to spur new broadband infrastructure across rural Canada. EORN is also drafting a response to the CRTC's proposed \$700-million broadband funding regime.

Moved by Warden Jones

Seconded by Warden Dobson

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the EOWC Inc. accept the CRTC report as presented and request that EORN present its submission to the CRTC next week.

CARRIED

EORN Fee for Service Consulting Report

David Fell explained a number of changes to the EORN bylaws, among other things to ensure two sitting Wardens at all times, as well as board insurance and risk mitigation, while allowing EORN to conduct consulting work, such as for the Province of Nova Scotia. David Fell responded to questions about why EORN would work in other provinces; if EORN were to be successful externally, it would reduce municipal contribution costs for the cell gap project. Some Wardens expressed concerns about losing the focus of EORN or Ontario. Mr. Fell provided assurances that the board has asked questions, has provided approval and demands accountability from him. In contrast, the SWIFT project in Western Ontario would have been problematic and conflicting to manage.

Jim Pine also explained that having a majority of the board membership coming from the EOWC allows EORN's administration to remain grounded and focused. David Fell noted that Nova Scotia shares the same concerns as rural Eastern Ontario, and that the support is leveraged by the board. The project is ambitious, but also serves to strengthen EORN itself. Lisa Severson noted that if EORN continues past 2024, without a supporting project, some of this funding could extend the life of EORN past that point.

**Moved by Warden Vanderwal
Seconded by Warden Bancroft**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the EOWC Inc. approves the Fee For Service Consulting Report as presented, and authorizes the EORN CEO to proceed with incorporation of the for profit wholly owned subsidiary of EORN.

CARRIED

6.5 Discussion on AMO "The Local Share" Proposal – Chair Quaiff

Chair Quaiff opened the floor to comments, following AMO's presentation earlier this morning. There were some concerns from members about the upcoming election and this proposal becoming a polarizing issue. It was noted that a 1% HST increase would not resolve the infrastructure deficit, but that it represents a good start. The Chair recalled that all municipalities received letters from AMO outlining the amount of funding that would be received every year. He noted that the AMO board unanimously supported the proposal earlier this month. EOWC members were largely supportive.

6.6 Meeting with EOMC during Ontario East – Chair Quaiff

Chair Quaiff explained that EOMC requested an attendance at the EOWC Multi-Ministers meeting, but that he declined the request based on the different issues and priorities. The EOWC will try to set up a separate meeting with the EOMC during Ontario East. The Chair requested topics for discussion from the members. Warden Dobson suggested the opioid crisis, the Basic Income Pilot, and the minimum wage increase. Warden Murphy suggested OMB reform. It was decided to remove infrastructure funding and the cell gap project, given the EOMC's support. Jim Pine suggested the fire-medical proposal. Discussion ensued on the fire-medical proposal and members expressed their outright opposition to the proposal.

6.7 OFA Proposal to EOWC/WOWC for Provincial Gas Tax – Chair Quaiff

Justin Bromberg noted that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture is requesting support from both the EOWC and WOWC on a proposed policy change for the Provincial Gas Tax funding. The OFA has prepared a draft resolution, which is included in the agenda package. The OFA will handle the lobbying component of this proposal, similar to the partnership last year on natural gas for rural municipalities. OFA President Keith Currie will present the resolution at the joint EOWC/WOWC meeting during AMO.

6.8 OFA Proposal on Farm Value-Added Activities – Tim Simpson

Tim Simpson explained that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has been working on this file for about 10 years, including lobbying for relief for on-farm activities and working on a regulation with the Ministry of Finance. The OFA expects to have a proposal released next year, which is something the EOWC could support.

6.9 Definition of Small and Rural Communities – Andy Brown

Andy Brown explained that the proposed resolution follows the EOWC's meeting with Eastern Ontario Federal MPs in May. The definition of "small and rural" includes municipalities with a population of 30,000 and less, as well as upper-tier and single-tier municipalities with 50 people per square kilometre or less. This is consistent with the EOWC's white papers.

Moved by Warden Murphy

Seconded by Warden Cooney

WHEREAS the Government of Canada announced a \$2-billion investment towards infrastructure improvements for rural and northern communities in Canada in its 2017 Budget;

WHEREAS this investment is required to grow local economies, build stronger and more inclusive communities and help safeguard the environment and health of Canadians;

WHEREAS these funds shall be allocated in partnership through the provincial governments;

WHEREAS there have been discussions that the definition of 'rural' may be based on a population of 30,000 people;

WHEREAS this proposed definition would eliminate most Counties and rural single-tier municipalities in eastern Ontario;

WHEREAS the Eastern Ontario Members of Parliament stated that it would be the Government of Ontario which would establish the definition of 'rural' for this infrastructure program;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus request the Government of Ontario to establish the following definition of 'rural' for any funding involving the Government of Canada's Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure Fund:

A 'rural' municipality shall be:

- a) a municipality with a population of 30,000 or less, or
- b) rural single-tier or upper-tier municipalities with a population density of 50 people per square kilometre or less;

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be circulated to the Ontario Minister of Finance, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Premier, all local municipalities in eastern Ontario, and all eastern Ontario MPPs and MPs.

CARRIED

6.10 EOWC Queen's Park Breakfast, October 19, Toronto – Chair Quaiff

Chair Quaiff noted that the EOWC would proceed with the Queen's Park Breakfast on October 19. The event will precede the last EOWC meeting of the year, being held in Kawartha Lakes on October 20.

6.11 Meetings at AMO (WOWC / Liberals / PCs / NDP) – Chair Quaiff

Chair Quaiff mentioned that there would be several meetings held at the AMO Conference, including with the WOWC, the Provincial Ministers, and the PC and NDP Caucuses. Stéphane P. Parisien suggested that new dress shirts be ordered for the conference. EORN will handle the order.

6.12 Topics for Multi-Ministerial Delegation at AMO – Chair Quaiff

Chair Quaiff opened the floor for comments. Discussion ensued on the importance of only having three issues for discussion, in addition to the new EOWC video, which will cover the cell gap project, infrastructure funding and the Eastern Ontario Leadership Council. Following brief discussion, the Wardens decided that the three items would be:

- the 1% HST Increase / Provincial Gas Tax Policy;
- the Ontario Municipal Board Reform; and
- the Fire-Medic Proposal.

6.13 Support for VIA Rail High-Frequency Rail Project – Chair Quaiff

Following VIA Rail's presentation to the Wardens in April, VIA Rail is now seeking supporting resolutions from municipalities and other partners that would benefit from the proposed High-Frequency Rail Project. A map of the proposed route was displayed for information purposes. After some brief discussion, the Wardens agreed to support the project.

Moved by Warden Jones

Seconded by Warden Walas

WHEREAS VIA Rail has submitted a High-Frequency Train proposal to the Government of Canada for the Windsor-Québec Corridor, the busiest in Canada;

WHEREAS this project aims to improve the quality, frequency and reliability of passenger rail services and will have a direct effect on the viability of Via Rail by attracting more customers while stimulating economic growth;

WHEREAS the VIA Rail project allows more options for connections with other modes of transportation such as light rail and local railways;

WHEREAS the VIA Rail project provides access to the city centers of the railway network, which maximizes its relevance, efficiency and use;

WHEREAS the VIA Rail project increases connections with smaller communities and increases intercity transit, and increases services on existing lines;

WHEREAS this project requires a significant financial contribution from the Government of Canada but also from private sector investments;

WHEREAS this project allows an increase in intercity passenger services, which will lead to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, thereby effectively supporting the Government of Canada's environmental objectives and directions following the signing of the Paris Protocol;

WHEREAS the VIA Rail Project is consistent with the Government of Canada's priorities for public transit infrastructure;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus:

- 1. Support VIA Rail's High-Frequency Train project;**
- 2. Call upon the Government of Canada to provide financial support for Via Rail's High-Frequency Train project;**
- 3. Request the Government of Ontario to include VIA Rail's proposed High-Frequency Train project in the list of priority infrastructure projects for Ontario;**
- 4. Call on the governments of Canada and Ontario to ensure that the High-Frequency Train projects of VIA Rail are carried out in a way that enables the user to have direct and fast access to railway stations and hubs in communities across rural Eastern Ontario.**

CARRIED

7. Closed Session – N/A

8. Reports from Wardens

8.1 Chair's Update – Robert Quaiff

Chair Quaiff provided several brief updates, including several highlights from the most recent EOMC and AMO board meetings. The EOMC's four priorities for 2017 include sustainable infrastructure and federal gas tax funding; the Eastern Ontario Economic Development Strategy as well as immigration and workforce; MPAC valuation; and medical response changes, interest arbitration, and PTSD-WSIB policies. He also recalled that the EOMC has supported the cell gap project in principle.

The AMO board approved a response to raise several concerns with the proposed Provincial regulations for Municipal Asset Management Plans. AMO has also advised that the Province has proposed changes to emergency health services, including changes to the dispatch system as well as two pilot projects to test the use of firefighters certified as paramedics to respond to low-acuity calls.

Finally, the Chair recognized and presented plaques to CAOs Larry Keech and Gary King, both founding members of the EOWC, who will be retiring this summer. He thanked them on behalf of the EOWC for the many years of loyalty, service, dedication and commitment to rural Eastern Ontario. Mr. Keech and Mr. King made speeches about the value of the EOWC and the friendships they have formed over the years, and thanked the CAOs and politicians for their leadership.

8.2 Wardens' Updates

Wardens provided various updates from their Counties, including the proposed cement plant in L'Orignal and a new fire dispatch agreement for Prescott and Russell; the announcement of the new CAO in the County of Lennox and Addington; the recent passing of Deric Quimby, IT Manager at the County of Northumberland; rural school closures in SD&G; and the overall excellence, value and professionalism of the EOWC.

9. Correspondence

9.1 Outgoing

9.1.1 Letter to Federal MPs from Eastern Ontario regarding the EOWC Federal Breakfast Meeting, dated May 3, 2017

9.2 Incoming

9.2.1 Letter from Premier Kathleen Wynne regarding the Joint EOWC/EOMC Roundtable Meeting, dated May 1, 2017

9.2.2 Letter from Minister Sohi regarding the Mobile Broadband / Cell Gap Business Case and Proposal, dated May 30, 2017

9.2.3 Letter from resident Bob Miller regarding complaint about Xplornet broadband service, dated June 7, 2017

**Moved by Mayor Letham
Seconded by Warden Devolin**

THAT the outgoing and incoming correspondence be received.

CARRIED

10. By-laws

11. Notice of Motions

12. Confirmation By-law #17-06

**Moved by Warden Cooney
Seconded by Warden Taylor**

THAT the Board of Directors of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus hereby enacts as follows:

1. THAT the action of the Board of Directors at its meeting held the 23rd day of June, 2017 in respect of each motion, resolution, by-law and other action passed and taken by the Board of Directors at its said meeting, except where prior approval of any other body or agency is required, is hereby adopted, ratified, and confirmed.

2. THAT the Chair and the proper officers of the Corporation of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus Inc. are hereby authorized and directed to do all the things necessary to give effect to the said action or to obtain any approvals where required, and to execute all documents as may be necessary, and the Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to affix the Corporate Seal to all such documents.

13. Adjournment

Moved by Mayor Letham
Seconded by Warden Taylor

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 12:35 p.m.



Robert Quaiff, Chair



James Hepburn, Secretary-Treasurer