

Bluewater Dune Questionnaire

C. Hastings – 9-21-18

1) Governance:

- 1a) Tiny staff organization structure

An organizational review of all Township departments was identified in the Strategic Plan. Public Works was the most critical. While it still needs some adjustments, it is almost complete. I would expect that a review of the other departments would commence during the next term.

- 1b) Council By-laws & procedures

The new open deputation period and easier scheduled deputation process is working very well and gives residents better access to Council. The procedural change to provide an additional two weeks (min) to ratify decisions allows additional time for residents to review and contact Council. There is still the ability to move business forward on the same day if a matter requires immediate attention.

- 1c) Transparency (e.g. in-camera sessions)

It is unfortunate that business needs to be conducted in-camera but it is necessary at times and is allowed under the Municipal Act. I can assure residents that our Clerk is very good at ensuring that staff and Council do not deviate from the topic.

- 1d) Committees

The Clerk's department is working on a report regarding committees of council for the next term. In advance of this report, I have asked for a discussion on this topic at the next council meeting. There are some committee terms of reference that should be revised. Council also needs to consider committee composition and the viability of some committees (ie for specific master plans). We need to ensure that we are making the most of staff resources and most importantly, that of residents who have committed their time.

- 1e) Customer service (all departments)

This was identified in our Strategic Plan. We did a review of the customer service with staff and Council through an outside facilitator. Staff have received customer service training. This is an area that needs constant review in all organizations.

- 1f) By-Law department services

There will need to be further discussions about the role By-Law will play with the new cannabis legislation. The bike program continues to work well and is receiving good feedback from residents.

2) Finances & Budget:

- 2a) budget process (e.g. zero budgeting)

I'm not sure if you are referring to zero increases or zero-based budgeting. I'll comment on both.

Our current budget process is a mixed approach. We do partly utilize the traditional method and try to maintain a reasonable overall increase each year. These increases are not consistent in each department though. We have also been asking departments to provide more of a business case for projects. This is similar to the zero-based budgeting approach. We also tried to identify areas where there was unnecessary carry-over. The concept of true zero-based budgeting makes sense but could be challenging and time consuming to implement. It will be interesting to see how we could utilize our new financial software to assist in this process.

Regardless of the method used, it would not be responsible or realistic to say that the tax rate will never increase. We have identified the services our residents expect, and we know we have a significant amount of aging infrastructure that must be addressed.

- 2b) accountability & Monitoring

Council receives quarterly financial reports accompanied by a summary of items that need to be highlighted. Council receives a staff report and must give final approval for project tenders so we know in advance of deviations from the budgeted amount.

-2c) reserves

We are fortunate to have a significant amount of reserves compared to other municipalities. It is important to always maintain a healthy level, but it needs to be balanced with necessary infrastructure improvements and the option of a reasonable tax increases.

3) Public Works & Water:

- 3a) Infrastructure maintenance

We have made some good improvements to our communication to residents when there is scheduled maintenance. There has been more consideration regarding on-going maintenance costs when evaluating new infrastructure and items like road re-surfacing (ie asphalt versus service treatment).

- 3b) water department projects, maintenance, billing

Our water system projects are funded by the water user group and not the general tax base. Users pay a flat fee. There is evidence to suggest that more water

conservation occurs when it is metered. This could be considered. A analysis would need to be done as there would be costs associated with the installation of the meters and on-going monitoring.

4) Emergency Services:

- 4a) Fire department master plan

The draft master plan was presented to Council in 2017. It had not been done for several years and was definitely overdue. It contained some good initiatives that we will be moving forward with as well as some that were already underway. We agreed to allow the new Fire Chief the opportunity to review the document before giving approval. There were some changes to the draft plan that were recommended in the latest staff report to council. I am more comfortable with these. The combined input from all sources makes it a good guiding document.

- 4b) Administration and volunteer recruitment

Volunteer recruitment remains an issue for all municipalities. Volunteers are now required to have a lot of the same training as full-time firefighters. There also aren't as many people working close to home or those that can leave their jobs during the day. To secure and keep good recruits we need to be reasonable about their schedules and be as flexible as possible. Using Township employees, with the permission of their department heads, has been contemplated.

Being a volunteer firefighter is a big commitment and they deserve the upmost respect from their leaders. We are fortunate to have a solid administrative team in place.

5) Parks and recreation:

- 5a) Recreation programs (e.g. viability)

We have many wonderful programs available in our Township. The recreation department tries to operate its programs on a cost recovery basis. If a program is not receiving the anticipated response, then its viability needs to be reviewed. Based on my experience, it sometimes takes a couple of sessions before you get a true idea of the interest.

Thanks to recreation staff, the Township has been very successful over the last three years in securing funding for various projects.

- 5b) Infrastructure rental

The Strategic Plan identified that we need to have better utilization of our facilities and, in particular, the community centres. The usage has been increasing but continued effort needs to be put into this area. The soccer pitches can definitely be

more fully utilized. The primary goal, however, is not to maximize the financial return (although it helps) but to maximize the use and provide activities for our residents.

- 5c) Accessibility for people with disabilities

The Accessibility Advisory committee is a legislated committee of council and has been doing some great work. We are actually envied by our neighbouring municipalities. The AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) mandates that all new structures in the Township be accessible and that we have public consultation before we go to construction. We did this for the first time with our new (beautiful) accessible playground in Lafontaine Beach.

- 5d) Watercraft safety (e.g. installation of buoys)

I expect a staff report to come forward before next season. There are on-going concerns with watercraft close to shore.

-5e) Smoking on public property

Current provincial legislation and enforcement includes sports fields and playgrounds. We installed new signage this year. Smoking on beaches is not covered by the province but there can be a municipal bylaw. It will take some additional resources, but we are still working towards this. The best way to start is through education and the creation of a smoking policy prior to a bylaw being enacted. As an FYI, there was a suggestion at AMO that there was a pause on the Smoke Free Ontario Act. Will need to investigate this.

6) Environment:

-6a) SSEA action.

The SSEA provides a quite a number of valuable services to our Township. These include our Source Water RMO, an Invasive Species Coordinator, water monitoring and the peer review of planning applications (costs covered by the applicants).

-6b) Township leadership / cooperation with ratepayers' associations. (Water, Air, Invasive species, Pesticides, grass carp and any others you wish to comment upon.)

Township support of volunteer efforts by ratepayers' associations and other not-for-profits groups is essential. I think we do an excellent job balancing everyone's interests. We need ensure we maintain our capacity to assist the wonderful work being done by our volunteers. We currently provide assistance with recruitment, training and pick-up for invasive species. We support the volunteer efforts by our group in Farlain Lake as they battle Eurasian Watermilfoil.

-6c) Teedon Pit Site 42

All activities and permits related to gravel extraction are the responsibility of the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Township does not have any authority.

The Permit to Take Water is the responsibility of the MOECP. Even though we do not have any authority in this area either, we hired Burnside's hydrogeologist to review the situation and provide comments to the latest EBR posting regarding the renewal of this permit. There has been no decision made by the MOECP yet.

There was a Re-Zoning application and accompanying OPA (Official Plan Amendment) for the expansion of this operation that was under consideration by this Council. Council had concerns regarding the wash plant that, although not on the expansion land, would continue to be operated. We were waiting for a response from the applicants when we received a notice that they would be taking it to the OMB for Failure to Make a Decision. We have not received any further updates on this matter.

The Community Liaison Committee (Dufferin Aggregates and local residents) continues to meet quarterly. I am a newly appointed member. The last meeting was very informative. Dufferin brought their hydrogeologist. We were not able to get through the presentation or all the questions, so they agreed to bring him back for the next meeting. Agendas, minutes and presentations for this committee can be found on Dufferin's website.

Council had a presentation from the SSEA by our Risk Management Officer for Source Water Protection. They were accompanied by a member of the Source Water Protection Committee. It was made very clear that only municipal wellheads are covered under provincial legislation. Even if we have a municipal wellhead in the vicinity of the pit, it would not prohibit its operation. We also talked about the fact that gravel pits are not one of the 21 significant drinking water threats. They are considered a transport pathway. This means that while not a threat themselves, they can increase the vulnerability of the aquifer.

The Township of Tiny is very committed to the protection of water. I believe we need to continue to do everything within the scope of our power. At our request, the SSEA will be bringing a report back to Council regarding a program we could implement to encourage best practices surrounding our private wells – our own source water.

7) Public relations:

-7a) access to individual, Groups and Associations to Council & Deputations.

It is Council's job to be accessible to residents. We have received great feedback for improvements to our deputation process, town halls and increased consultation efforts for Township projects (ie. Recreation Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Woodland Beach drainage).

-7b) Council and staff response to ratepayers by phone, mail and e-mails.

This always needs to be monitored to ensure we are doing our best. I have received both positive and negative feedback.

8) Shoreline:

-8a) expansion of public beach property by purchasing private property.

This needs to be assessed on an individual basis. It is certainly not always practical or feasible. The purchase of the Surf beach was to ensure that a new owner could not put in a private beach club similar to what you see in the state of Florida. In other instances, a purchase would be important to ensure that residents, and in particular those that reside directly behind the beach, can have continued access to the beach.

-8b) legal claims.

Unfortunately, we are left with many uncertainties along our shoreline. This will be an on-going possibility. We need to mediate wherever possible to minimize costs and ensure good relations with our residents.

-8c) encroachment of private property owners onto public property. How would you define encroachment? Permanent structures or temporary items such as boats, chairs, umbrellas?

Encroachments include all of the above and there are many throughout the Township – beachfront and roadside. They do not all need to be dealt with in the same manner. The most critical encroachments are those that impede access to public space regardless of whether they are temporary or permanent.

-8d) surveys (cost and frequencies)

The cost of surveying has gone up in the last few years. It is the only way to accurately determine boundaries when dealing with ownership issues and encroachments.

-8e) Paid parking- net revenue of day-trippers

Our paid parking rates were set to be competitive. An annual review should take place to ensure we are maximizing our return.

-8f) B.E.S.T. to expand strategy to include more of Tiny's municipally owned beaches (e.g. Edmore , 13th Concession , 9th Concession, Sand Rd and their accesses.)

The BEST strategy was intended to improve the enjoyment of our beaches. It includes parking. The above noted beaches are included in the parking policy area. We can evaluate other issues as they arise to ensure residents are able to enjoy their beach experience.