

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT COTW 11-2010

The Municipal Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara met in Committee of the Whole in the Council Chamber, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Wednesday, September 8, 2010 commencing at 6:40 p.m.

These are the individuals who were in attendance during the Open Session of the Committee of the Whole meeting:

ATTENDANCE

Council: Regional Chair Partington; Councillors Augustyn; Baty; Bentley; Burroughs; Bylsma; Casselman; Cordiner; Forster; Gabriel; Garcia; Goulbourne; Greenwood; Lepp; Marshall; Salci; Saracino; Smeaton; Timms.

Staff: Messrs. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Brothers, Commissioner, Public Works; Hutchings, Commissioner, Community Services; Bergsma, Commissioner, Corporate Services; Robson, Commissioner, Integrated Community Planning; McQueen, Operating Officer (Health); Weaver, Director, Community & Corporate Planning; Weir, Director, Administration; Mr. Bain, Regional Clerk; Ms. Pilon, Deputy Regional Clerk.

CALL TO ORDER

76. Regional Chair Partington called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

PRESENTATIONS

77. Update on Gateway Economic Zone and Centre

Mr. Weaver, Director, Community & Corporate Planning provided the Committee members with an update on the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre.

The presentation provided the Committee with background information; Niagara Gateway's Key Elements; Niagara's Initiatives; the Gateway's Priorities; Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and Bi-National Cooperation.

Mr. Weaver noted that the Niagara Gateway's key elements will be recognized as unique by all levels of government; they will be sustainable, economically diverse with superior tourist facilities including transit and natural environment that has been maintained and enhance; a Centre of Excellence for integrated multi-modal assets; it will abound with job opportunities in key economic clusters with fully serviced and attractive employment lands which are to be protected for future growth; in order for an entrepreneurial and innovative environment to continue to grow.

Moved by Councillor Bentley
Seconded by Councillor Greenwood

That Mr. Weaver's Presentation respecting an update on the Gateway Economic Zone and Centre, be received for information.

Carried.

(Refer to Councillor Information Requests)

(A copy of Mr. Weaver's presentation can be found attached to these minutes)

Conflict of Interest

Councillor Forster declared a pecuniary interest with respect to the presentation by the Niagara Health System, as she is a staff member of ONA, and she therefore took no part in the discussion of, or voting on, this matter.

78. Response to the Ontario Health Coalition

Ms. Souter, Board Chair and Ms. Sevenpifer, CEO, Niagara Health System (NHS) provided the Committee of the Whole with a presentation in response to a request by Regional Council to respond to the Niagara Health Coalition with respect to the Ontario Health Coalition's report, addressing their concerns with respect to complaints regarding patient care, surgery cancellations; infection rates; wait times in the Emergency Rooms (ER) and Urgent Care Centres (UCC) and the financial health of the NHS.

Moved by Councillor Salci
Seconded by Councillor Baty

That the presentation by Ms. Souter and Ms. Severpifer, Niagara Health System in response to a request by Regional Council to respond to the Niagara Health Coalition with respect to the Ontario Health Coalition's report, be received.

Carried.

(A copy of Ms. Souter and Ms. Sevenpifer's presentation can be found attached to these minutes)

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

80. PHSS 50-2010

The Committee, following a lengthy discussion:

Moved by Councillor Saracino
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That Correspondence Item PHSS 50-2010, a letter from Ashley Grigg, City Clerk, City of Port Colborne (July 5, 2010) in support of the Town of Fort Erie's resolution regarding the endorsement of local recommendations contained in the Ontario Health Coalition Report dated May 17, 2010 and requesting Niagara Region's support, be supported.

Upon a recorded vote being requested on the motion in support of the resolution from the Town of Fort Erie respecting the Endorsement of Local Recommendations Contained in the Ontario Health Coalition Report dated May 17, 2010, the Committee of the Whole was divided on the aforementioned motion as follows:

Voting for the Motion:

Councillor Bentley	Councillor Marshall	
Councillor Cordiner	Councillor Saracino	
Councillor Garcia	Councillor Smeaton	(7)
Councillor Greenwood		

Voting Against the Motion:

Councillor Augustyn	Councillor Gabriel	
Councillor Baty	Councillor Goulbourne	
Councillor Burroughs	Councillor Lepp	
Councillor Bylsma	Councillor Salci	
Councillor Casselman	Councillor Timms	(10)

Upon the recorded vote being taken, the Regional Chair declared the motion defeated.

Moved by Councillor Augustyn
Seconded by Councillor Casselman

WHEREAS in their June 2010 report, the Niagara Health Coalition outlined some specific concerns regarding the delivery of health care in Niagara and called for another review of the Niagara Health System (NHS); and

WHEREAS a number of Niagara area municipalities have expressed concerns regarding the delivery of health care in Niagara; and

WHEREAS the transformation of Niagara's hospital system continues to be a difficult and challenging process for the Niagara community and for the NHS' healthcare professionals delivering care; and

WHEREAS the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has agreed that the NHS has been underfunded and in 2010 provided the NHS with a \$14.1 million ongoing annual funding increase and one-time funding of \$25 million; and

WHEREAS the NHS is currently finalizing plans to meaningfully improve care over the short term; and

WHEREAS many of the changes to ensure and enhance the quality of hospital care over the long term have not been fully implemented; and

WHEREAS the NHS has been extensively reviewed having undergone multiple third-party quality reviews, efficiency reviews, expenditure control reviews, a review of all of the Reviews, annual audits and the most recent accreditation review; and

WHEREAS the Ontario Ombudsman's recent report condemned the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN) for a lack of transparency and made a series recommendations for improvement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That Regional Council does not believe another review is necessary nor that it will improve the quality of health care in Niagara; and

That Regional Council calls on the HNHB LHIN to fully comply with the recommendations contained in the Ombudman's report and provide an update to Regional Council on their progress; and

That Regional Council work with the NHS to establish a more effective, regularized relationship to improve the quality of healthcare care for the residents of Niagara; and

That semi-annual updates be given via the Region's Public Health and Social Services Committee.

Upon a recorded vote being requested on the aforementioned motion, the Committee of the Whole was divided on the aforementioned motion as follows:

Voting for the Motion:

Councillor Augustyn	Councillor Garcia	
Councillor Baty	Councillor Goulbourne	
Councillor Burroughs	Councillor Lepp	
Councillor Bylsma	Councillor Marshall	
Councillor Casselman	Councillor Salci	
Councillor Gabriel	Councillor Timms	(12)

Voting Against the Motion:

Councillor Bentley	Councillor Greenwood	(3)
Councillor Cordiner		

Upon the recorded vote being taken, the Regional Chair declared the motion carried.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

81. C7573

Moved by Councillor Cordiner
Seconded by Councillor Marshall

That Correspondence Item C7573, An email from Sue Salzer, Yellow Shirt Brigade; Pat Scholfield, People's Healthcare Coalition; Fiona McMurrin, South Niagara Chapter, Council of Canadians and Sue Hotte, Niagara Health Coalition (September 3, 2010) in support of the resolution from the Ontario Health Coalition to send an independent investigator to investigate the Niagara Health System, be received.

Carried.

COUNCILLOR INFORMATION REQUESTS

Staff was requested to:

- Add and image that depicts "Worldwide" to the first and last slide of the presentation. (Refers to Minute Item 77)

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee of the Whole meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Peter Partington
Regional Chair

Janet Pilon
Deputy Regional Clerk

Kevin Bain
Regional Clerk