

MINUTES

Ontario Small Urban Municipalities

Executive Committee Meeting

Sunday, August, 18th, 2024 at 2:00pm

Westin Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario

Alberta Room, 4th Floor

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Hilda MacDonald-Mayor, Town of Leamington-Chair

Bob Kwapis-Councillor, Town of Newmarket-Vice-Chair

Ron Elliott-Councillor, Town of Minto

Jamie McGarvey-Mayor, Town of Parry Sound

Lynn Dollin-Mayor, Town of Innisfil

Deb Doherty, Councillor, Town of Collingwood

Nicole Beatty-Deputy Mayor, Town of Cobourg

Gail Ardiel- Councillor, Town of The Blue Mountains

Michelle Smibert-Deputy Mayor-Municipality of Thames Centre

Larry David McCabe-Councillor, City of Stratford

Tanya Vrebosch-Councillor, City of North Bay

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:

Larry J. McCabe

ALSO PRESENT:

Petra, Wolfbeiss- AMO Staff

Bridgete Cherry- AMO Staff

Balqis Ehsan- AMO Staff

Farah Tayabali- Redbrick Communications

(MINISTER CALANDRA ATTENDED THE MEETING AT APPROXIMATELY 2:40PM)

Minister Clandra and Staff are present and Chair Hilda MacDonald welcomes the Minister to the meeting and advises that there are four matters that the Committee would like to discuss with him as follows:

1. Review of Provincial-Municipal funding relationship under a Social Economic Prosperity Review.
2. Physician Shortages and Municipal Incentives.
3. Municipal Access to Vacant School Board Lands.
4. Landlord and Tenant Review Timelines.

Members of the Executive Committee express their concerns on each of the above subjects and Minister Calandra provides his input and an update on his position concerning these matters. A detailed discussion occurs with an excellent exchange of views on the matters presented.

Following discussion, Chair MacDonald thanks the Minister for his attendance at the meeting and on behalf of the Committee expresses her appreciation for his attendance.

BUSINESS:

1. MINUTES:

Moved by: Deb Doherty

Seconded by: Bob Kwapis

That the minutes of May 1st, 2024 be approved.

"CARRIED"

- 2.** E-mail from Petra Wolfbeiss forwarding the OSUM delegation request brief noting that the Executive may wish to take time to prepare for the discussion with the Minister, including key messages and identifying speakers from the Executive to deliver messages. The Committee reviewed the delegation request brief and Members were identified to speak to each issue noted above.
A copy of the June 4, 2024 delegation request brief is attached to the minutes.
- 3.** Report from Redbrick Communications providing the Executive with an update on Communications.
Farah Tayabali and behalf of Redbrick Communications is present and provides the Committee with a summary of the 2024 Conference media and social analysis. She includes highlights from the conference and an overview of the communications strategy that Redbrick carried out during the conference. She provides the Committee with conclusions and considerations for 2025.

Moved by: Jamie McGarvey

Seconded by: Tanya Vrebosch

That Administrative Officer McCabe and Petra Wolfbeiss work with Farah Tayabali of Redbrick Communications to receive a submission from Redbrick Communications for next steps and a proposal for the balance of 2024 and 2025 Communication Strategy, including costs. for the Committee's consideration.

"CARRIED"

4. The E-mail from Administrative Officer, Larry J. McCabe including the June 30, 2024 OSUM Finances and the Statements of Operation and Statements of Financial Position for the months ending June 30th, and July 31st, 2024 are reviewed by the Committee. It is noted that the Conference was very successful with increased attendance. The projected surplus is estimated to be around \$30,000.00 to \$35,000.00. Following discussion:

Moved by: Ron Elliott

Seconded by: Gail Ardiel

That the Statements of Operation and Statements of Financial Position, for OSUM, for the periods ending June 30, 2024 and July 31st, 2024 be received.

The Committee discuss a fall meeting in Collingwood. The following dates were considered:

October 4/5

October 18/19

October 25/26

(other suggestions)

The Friday evening has been, in the past, a dinner with the Host representatives and the meeting, usually in the Town Hall, on Saturday starting at 9:00am to Noon. Following discussion;

Moved by: Deb Doherty

Seconded by: Ron Elliott

That AMO Staff follow up with Collingwood, through Member Deb Doherty, for a Fall meeting in Collingwood for the dates discussed being October 25th and 26th. October 25th would be a dinner of Collingwood representative and OSUM representatives. An OSUM meeting would be held at 9:00am on Saturday the 26th of October.

5. At this time Chair Hilda MacDonald announces that, due to the number of commitments that she currently has, that she will be resigning as Chair of OSUM Executive Committee and from the Committee effective this date. She states that she has enjoyed her involvement with OSUM and appreciates all the hard work carried out by the Committee and Staff. The Committee Members express their appreciation for all the hard work and strong leadership she has provided the Committee during her tenure.

6. Following further discussion Administrative Officer McCabe explains the election process that is currently taking place with AMO. There are currently eleven elected representatives running for the Small Urban Caucus to fill four positions. He further advises that the Chair of the OSUM Executive Committee, pursuant to AMO and OSUM policies, will also be part of the Small Urban Caucus at the Board. The Committee feel, at this time, that they will leave the Chair of the OSUM Executive Committee vacant until after the AMO elections are complete and then they will consider the appointment of a Chair for the OSUM Executive Committee.

ADJOURN:

Moved by: Michelle Smibert

Seconded by: Jamie McGarvey

That the OSUM Executive Committee hereby adjourns at 3:41 pm. "CARRIED"

Chair- Hilda MacDonald

Administrative Officer- Larry J. McCabe

June 4, 2024

The Ontario Small Urban Municipalities (OSUM) Executive Committee Multi-Minister Delegation Meeting

The Ontario Small Urban Municipalities (OSUM) Executive is submitting a request for a multi-Minister delegation meeting at the 2024 Association of Municipalities of Ontario Annual Conference.

The Executive is requesting to meet with Ministers Calandra, and Jones covering 4 issues:

1. Landlord and Tenant Board Review Timelines
2. Municipal Access to Vacant School Board Properties
3. Physician Shortages and Municipal Incentives
4. Review of provincial-municipal funding relationship

Following are the specific delegation issues, including context and the request/questions the Board wishes to discuss with the ministers.

Delegation Issues:

1. Landlord and Tenant Review Timelines

- Currently a tenant and a landlord wait anywhere from 8 to 12 months to resolve a dispute. During this period, a tenant may be exposed to severe accommodation issues throughout this long waiting period.
- Conversely, the landlord can be exposed to long-term nonpayment of rent and potential damages to the rental unit.
- The current long waiting period for an LTB hearing and the impact of this extended time period, can result in negative experience for landlords. These experiences and the common knowledge of the current LTB challenges will have deleterious impacts on the availability of rental units in communities, both in the immediate and long-term.
- Larger homes that could provide accessory dwelling units, might not be considered nor added to the potential rental housing stock, because homeowners are concerned with the current state of the LTB and potential hardship that a long waiting period for a hearing and dispute resolution may cause the homeowner.
- Ontario is in a housing crisis. The LTB processes and timeframes have been a long-standing concern and undoubtedly resulting in owners and operators not releasing units to the market.

- Addressing this long-standing issue is an important opportunity to freeing up more rental units.

Question: Is your Ministry intending to address this long standing issue and, will your Ministry consider implementing reasonable LTB timelines of 30 days or less?

Ministers: Calandra

2. Municipal Access to Vacant School Board Lands

- Municipalities are looking for every opportunity to increase affordable housing.
- In many small urban municipalities, there are vacant school board lands that would provide an efficient opportunity for municipalities to convert the lands to affordable housing.
- OSUM sees the province as an important partner in addressing the affordable housing crisis and for finding efficiencies in doing so.
- Currently, small urban municipalities are facing uneven, expensive and often frustrating roadblocks in accessing vacant school lands.
- Currently, municipalities are forced to pay millions of dollars for vacant lands that they may or may not see as a return on their investment above and beyond what affordable housing they can provide to their communities. This is unsustainable and unnecessary.
- Additionally, the timelines to turn vacant lands over to municipalities need to be shortened. There are costs associated with the current long processes. In addition to lack of housing, these costs are seen in security and property management costs while waiting to move ahead with build or demolition.
- Municipalities need a clear, consistent process and trajectory forward on working with school boards to access vacant lands.
- This includes not being bounced from one Ministry to the other to move forward, for example many municipalities try to work with school boards, then turn to MMAH and then are directed to the Ministry of Education .
- This also needs to include simple zoning changes from institutional to residential as a Ministers order to shorten timelines and avoid additional costs.
- These seem like changes that should be made, again, to find efficiencies and opportunities for increasing housing stock.

Question: Will your Ministry consider creating clearer and simpler processes for municipalities to access vacant school board lands; and;

Will you Ministry give all small urban municipalities an opportunity to create more housing by handing over vacant school board properties to municipalities without cost, since the taxpayers have already paid for these properties and buildings once.

Minister: Calandra

3. Physician Shortages and Municipal Incentives

- The Minister is very aware that physician shortages are at a crisis point. This is true across all municipalities in Ontario.
- The shortage of doctors in small urban municipalities has many impacts including increased pressures on our local hospitals and the overall service levels that can be met. This is acutely felt in our emergency department and in speciality medical services.
- To be competitive some municipalities are offering cash incentives to recruit physicians.
- This is a practice amongst municipalities who are in a position, who can afford, to offer incentives.
- This practice, at the end of the day, is relying on local property taxes to fund incentives and subsidize a responsibility that lies with the Ministry of Health.
- There are significant health care challenges and residents should not in effect, be punished or denied health care because of where they reside.

Question: Is the Ministry of Health taking any steps to address the physician shortage through some measure of fair, per capita distribution of both family and specialty physicians? When can we expect to see changes? And;

In the absence of immediate solutions, is the Ministry considering any actions to level the playing field between municipalities in physician recruitment.

Minister: Jones

4. Review of provincial-municipal funding relationship

- The Association of Municipalities of Ontario is calling on the province for a review of the partnership between provincial and municipal governments, under a "social and economic prosperity review".
- Municipalities invest almost \$65 billion in each year in services and infrastructure. Almost one

third of annual expenditures pay for services that are provincial responsibilities everywhere else in Canada – including public health.

- The fiscal framework that enables municipalities to deliver infrastructure and services is broken – failing residents, small businesses and major industries.
 - Long-standing structural problems have combined with growth pressures, economic factors, social challenges and provincial policy decisions to push municipalities to the brink.
 - This includes ongoing challenges with rural support programs, such as the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF). Flat levels of funding, combined with inflation have caused the value of the program to decline substantially.
 - OMPF is the main source of government funding for municipalities in rural Ontario to address operational pressures.
 - Last adjusted in 2008, a review of provincial-municipal financial arrangements is long overdue.
 - ROMA is calling for the province to work together with municipal governments to modernize this partnership and ensure both orders of government can deliver services effectively and sustainably.
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- **Question:** Can you commit to a joint social and economic prosperity review?
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- **Ministers:** Calandra

Contact: Petra Wolfbeiss, Director Membership Centre AMO
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