



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE (GRC)

MINUTES

GRC-1/2016

The Government Relations Committee met on Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 1:05 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Regional Administrative Headquarters, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, Brampton.

Members Present: B. Crombie; G. Gibson; J. Innis; L. Jeffrey; A. Thompson; J. Tovey

Members Absent: F. Dale, due to a personal matter; M. Medeiros, due to a personal matter; K. Ras, due to a personal matter; G. Miles

Also Present: D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer; K. Lockyer, Acting Commissioner of Corporate Services and Regional Clerk; S. VanOfwegen, Commissioner of Finance and Chief Financial Officer; D. Labrecque, Commissioner of Public Works; Dr. E. de Villa, Medical Officer of Health; D. Arbuckle, Manager, Strategic Public Policy and External Relations; L. Rubin-Vaughan, Advisor, External Relations; S. Mistry, Specialist, External Relations; C. Thomson, Committee Clerk; J. Welosky, Legislative Assistant

Chaired by Councillor J. Tovey.

1. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST - Nil

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RECOMMENDATION GRC-1-2016:

That the agenda for the March 3, 2016 Government Relations Committee meeting include a communication from Yvan Baker, MPP, Etobicoke Centre, to be dealt with under Communications – Item 6.4;

And further, that the agenda for the March 3, 2016 Government Relations Committee meeting include a communication from Peter Fay, City Clerk, City of Brampton, to be dealt with under Communications – Item 6.5;

And further, that the agenda for the March 3, 2016 Government Relations Committee meeting be approved, as amended.

See also Items 6.4 and 6.5

* See text for arrivals

◆ See text for departures

Items 4.1 and 4.2 were dealt with.

4. REPORTS

4.1. 2016 Government Relations Opportunities and Priorities

RECOMMENDATION GRC-2-2016:

That the government relations opportunities and prioritization process identified in the report of the Chief Administrative Officer, titled "2016 Government Relations Opportunities and Priorities", be approved.

In response to a question from Councillor Gibson, David Arbuckle, Manager, Strategic Public Policy and External Relations, Corporate Services, confirmed that Region of Peel staff work with area municipal staff to advocate on issues of mutual importance.

David Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that the Region of Peel's Executive Leadership Team meets a minimum of three times per year with the City of Brampton's Executive Leadership Team to identify common issues and to coordinate work.

4.2. 2016 Rural Ontario Municipal Association/Ontario Good Roads Association (ROMA/OGRA) Annual Conference Update (Oral)

Discussion led by Jim Tovey, Chair, Government Relations Committee

Received

Councillor Thompson advised that participants at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association/Ontario Good Roads Association Annual Conference sensed a willingness on the part of the Provincial Government to work with municipalities to move ahead on long-standing issues and that provincial representatives are fully participating in these discussions.

Councillor Tovey advised that he, along with Councillors Downey, Innis, Shaughnessy and Thompson, represented the Region of Peel at the 2016 Rural Ontario Municipal Association/Ontario Good Roads Association Annual Conference held February 21 – 24, 2016. The Conference included several key note speeches, workshops on various topics, as well as, the Ministers Forum.

Emphasis at the Conference was on strengthening relationships with indigenous communities with speakers noting the importance of working together to address infrastructure, water and climate change challenges.

The keynote speech from Premier Kathleen Wynne, focused on her commitment to strengthening relationships and building cooperation at the municipal, inter-provincial, federal and international levels of government; the announcement of increased funding for the Connecting Links program for infrastructure in smaller communities; and the commitment to increase access to natural gas and expansion of broadband for rural communities to help increase economic competitiveness.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing highlighted the release of the new Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program Guidelines and the new Affordable Housing Strategy.

The Progressive Conservative Party Leader, Patrick Brown, recognized that municipalities have limited funds to support services that have not traditionally been municipal responsibilities, such as hospital construction and health services. He also stated his support for limits on municipal liability.

The Ontario New Democratic Party Leader, Andrea Horwath, focused on calling for the government to lower electricity costs, providing more supports for the manufacturing and mining sectors and criticizing the government for the cost of the Pearson Union Express and the damaged Nipigon Bridge.

The Ministers Forum included 15 Ministers who answered several questions on topics including the shared economy, public health funding models and the new proposed waste legislation.

3. DELEGATIONS

3.1. Omar Alhabra, MP, Mississauga Centre, Discussing Issues Related to the Federal Government and Local Constituents in the Riding of Mississauga Centre

Received

Councillor Tovey welcomed Omar Alhabra, Member of Parliament (MP), Mississauga Centre, noting that he serves as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and that he is a long-time community activist who is passionate about his involvement in various local organizations including those supporting initiatives to empower new Canadians.

Omar Alhabra stated that Mississauga Centre was a new riding in the 2015 federal election that includes 140,000 residents, 59 per cent of whom were born outside of Canada. He noted that the challenges facing the riding are similar to those faced by all ridings in the Region of Peel, with some attributable to the large number of new Canadians and the issue of recognition of foreign credentials, while others relate to the challenging economic times. He advised that the Federal Government is focused on economic growth, tax relief for middle income families and increased investments in infrastructure.

The MP shared his interest in the creation of an innovation hub in the City of Mississauga where young entrepreneurs could come together and benefit from shared resources and experiences.

Councillor Jeffrey commended the current Members of Parliament for respecting the challenges faced by municipalities and their willingness to listen to concerns.

In response to questions from Councillor Thompson, Omar Alhabra advised that the Federal Government recognizes the challenges associated with affordable housing and that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister is Adam Vaughan who is known as a champion of affordable housing. He agreed with Councillor Thompson that there is need for investment in research and development, noting that local MP Navdeep Bains has been appointed Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development.

Councillor Thompson stated the need for a national strategy on transit and was advised by Omar Alhabra that an additional \$10 billion per year has been earmarked for infrastructure, a large portion of which would be designated for transit and that the Federal Government wants to be a meaningful partner on transit issues.

In response to an inquiry from Councillor Crombie, Omar Alghabra undertook to look into the status of City of Mississauga “Canada 150” projects and requested that he be provided with a copy of the City’s submission.

Councillor Crombie noted that an all day, two way GO Transit service is a priority for the City of Mississauga. She expressed concern regarding the lack of criteria for municipalities to access infrastructure funding and requested clarification as to whether eligible projects would need to be shovel-ready, medium term or legacy projects. Omar Alghabra advised that he has requested input from Mississauga staff regarding funding criteria.

Councillor Crombie noted that the Lakeview lands in the City of Mississauga could be considered as a site for an incubator that supports start-up companies.

Members of the Government Relations Committee expressed appreciation for the Federal Government’s consideration of reinstating the long form Census.

Councillor Tovey offered the support of the Government Relations Committee in addressing the amount of settlement funds the Region receives compared to other jurisdictions. Staff was requested to provide the MP with settlement funding comparison data.

Omar Alghabra invited members to attend his “office warming” event on March 19, 2016 at 151 City Centre Drive, Suite 400.

4. REPORTS

4.1. 2016 Government Relations Opportunities and Priorities

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting

4.2. 2016 Rural Ontario Municipal Association/Ontario Good Roads Association (ROMA/OGRA) Annual Conference Update (Oral)

Discussion led by Jim Tovey, Chair, Government Relations Committee

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting

5. FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL UPDATE (Oral)

Discussion led by Lowell Rubin-Vaughan, Advisor, External Relations, Corporate Services

Received

Lowell Rubin-Vaughan, Advisor, External Relations, Corporate Services, provided highlights from the Federal Election and noted that staff would be contacting all Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament to seek their participation in future meetings of the Government Relations Committee. He reviewed several key provincial initiatives, noting that several can be connected to the Region of Peel’s Strategic Plan and Term of Council Priorities, including the re-introduction of the *Waste Free Ontario Act* that captures a long-standing request of Regional Council to support full producer responsibility.

With respect to the Provincial Budget, Lowell Rubin-Vaughan noted that the province is moving forward with their proposed Cap and Trade Program, which will result in a financial impact to the Region of Peel, including the projected increase in gasoline. The government reaffirmed their infrastructure investment in transit and transportation including specific projects in the Region of Peel such as additional trips between Brampton and Kitchener, the Hurontario LRT and projects identified in the New Wave of the Big Move. A commitment to invest \$178 million over three years to provide housing subsidies and benefits to households was also included in the Budget. Other highlights of the provincial budget were noted, such as a 1.5 per cent increase for adult Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program; a commitment to the creation of the Community Hubs and the continued demonstration of the province's willingness to work with local municipalities on finding solutions through its Local Poverty Reduction Fund.

Lowell Rubin-Vaughan concluded his presentation by noting that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario is considering providing recommendations to "Patients First: A Proposal to Strengthen Patient Centred Health Care in Ontario".

Councillor Jeffrey requested that staff monitor the activities of the Large Urban Mayors Caucus who are actively working with upper levels of government to address issues of importance to municipalities.

Councillor Jeffrey advised that she would be attending the Premier's Summit on March 7, 2016 with Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton Mayors and Chairs, where there will be opportunity to discuss issues related to transit, infrastructure and broadband.

The Chief Administrative Officer advised that staff would be reporting to a future meeting of Regional Council with details related to the recently released Cap and Trade regulations.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

6.1. Region of Peel's 2016 Federal Pre-Budget Submission

Received

6.2. Region of Peel's 2016 Provincial Pre-Budget Submission

Received

6.3. Spring 2016 MP/MPP Advocacy Update

Received

Additional Items – Items 6.4 and 6.5:

- 6.4. **Yvan Baker, MPP, Etobicoke Centre**, Letter dated February 11, 2016, Thanking Regional Chair Dale for Presenting at the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

Received

See also Approval of Agenda

- 6.5. **Peter Fay, City Clerk, City of Brampton**, Letter dated March 2, 2016, Providing a Copy of the City of Brampton Recommendation and Report titled "City of Brampton Council Priority re. Regional Representation"

Referred to the March 10, 2016 Regional Council meeting

See also Approval of Agenda

Councillor Jeffrey stated that the issue of regional governance representation is a priority for the City of Brampton.

Councillor Gibson expressed concern regarding the progress of the work of the Governance Review Task Force and requested an update.

David Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that a Task Force facilitator has been engaged and would be attending the next Task Force meeting.

Councillor Jeffrey noted the differing positions among the three area municipalities and stated that while she would continue to participate on the Task Force, she also plans to meet with the Premier of Ontario on March 10, 2016 to discuss the issue of Brampton's regional representation.

7. IN CAMERA MATTERS - Nil

8. OTHER BUSINESS - Nil

9. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Government Relations Committee, scheduled for June 2, 2016 conflicts with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Annual Conference and staff were directed to reschedule the meeting to another date in June, 2016.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.