



28 Pulford Street, Kingsville, Ontario N9Y 1B4

January 21, 2020

Report to Council
The Corporation of The Town of Kingsville
2021 Division Street North
Kingsville, Ontario

Subject: The Annual Meeting of the ROMA (Rural Ontario Municipal Association) Conference
January 19-21, 2020 Held at Toronto

This conference was well attended by from many Essex County towns. I noted Council people from Tecumseh, LaSalle, Lakeshore, Leamington, Pelee Island as well as our own community.

This Conference is both a learning opportunity, and a chance to speak one on one with many of the Ministers and their staff.

Topics of Learning and Discussion included more topics than anyone could attend. Delegates pick from topic offerings, as well as gather for the Main Speakers such as Mr. Ford and the other leaders.

During Mr. Ford's speech several funding announcements were made.

He highlighted some grants success stories.

In the Past the residents did not have a voice.

GOVERNMENT works for all and includes rural Ontario.

Created more jobs.

Can apply for ½ cost to create new jobs

Low unemployment now in the province.

One town used the modernization funds to set up a program that allows users to book ice time and recreation online.

Some other towns are working together on joint projects such as IT.

Another Slide noted the business program changes to reduce red tape.

Government welcomes input a suggestion on many topics.

Latter in the Conference during a Question and Answer with many Ministers, a delegate asked about the 92 reports were going to be eliminated for towns to be filed annually. Response was that the list includes many, and the list is yet to be released.



Minister Elliott highlighted changes in the Health sector. Building on the good works of the past but acknowledging that quick access to medical files is needed for all providing service. From the EMS staff to the receiving hospital. The bill to change this is being prepared. It was suggested by a one that the scope of Services and aid at Senior Homes be Changed with Staffing and training to allow treatment for such things as dehydration and IVs.

The Conference also noted the Changing roles of Health Units. Example Some Health Units provide Septic System Inspection. Other Units do not. It was noted that an effort is being made to develop a list of best practices.

Doctors

The need for Doctors is high in many areas.

With the ever-changing health section, community input was noted as important.

Health within the Community, and education may assist if less calls to 911, enabling the limited Drs and Hospitals to deal with true emergencies.

Virtual Health Care allows video technology to connect with Doctors.

EMS

As EMS services are studied, it was noted that any reduction of EMS services should not be at a cost or adverse effect to our local volunteer fire services.

Water Testing

Several of the Communities in the North have halls and community buildings on well water. Years ago, the province did the water test a no charge. Of late the testing must be done by other firms (far away) at rising costs (\$75 & going up). It was suggested that the Province Consider Providing Testing or some funding for the Non-Profit or Volunteer run Community Halls.

Access

The Community Halls in remote areas have Accessibility Problems. Question asked about support with funding to support such programs. The response was not clear. The value of Seniors was noted and the fact that they wanted to provide things for them to do.

Broadband Access has been noted as important. The SWIFT model was Highlighted as a great Example. Lambton was successful in moving forward under this government supported program.

Farms and the new revisions to the No Trespass Bill # 156 were discussed. The intent to ensure all our Farmers can be safe as well as their Farm animals in transit. The Minister responsible asked for support from all his fellow Ministers in attendance when it is voted on the legislature.

MPAC is 20 years old. A review noted 700 less Farms now.

25 percent increase in the number of properties.

70,000 new property last year for assessment

When the assessment notes this year seek to be clearer that they are not tax notices

The new notices also will attempt to show how one can make a request for review easier with online application.

The Minister Steve Clark Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

It was noted an updated PPS supports easier expansion of Urban areas. Change is underway.

Government is cutting red tape.

Building Code Changes. One Panel of experts noted that the Building Code is changing. It will include or look more like the national building code in the future.

Housing

The CAO of Bluewater noted that they are addressing the issue of Short-term Accommodations are being addressed with Licensing. Over 300 sites are complying. The others are being followed up. This includes B&Bs as one example. The need for clear Official Plans and Zoning was noted.

Affordable Housing in Bluewater was discussed.

A lot of costs about 400 K

A House costs about 700K

For affordable housing, it was noted best to buy the land and provide affordable rent.

Tree Bylaw

Should better be referenced as a Forest Conservation Bylaw. A local Conservation authority has assisted in other areas. (Huron County Example)

Conservation Authorities

The Province is attempting to clarify the roles of Conservation Authorities. Local Towns may be asked to sign agreements regarding services provided. Changes may occur in coming months. Question was asked if the same agreement will be used by all, or unique. No answer as of this date.

Smart Serve

The Ontario Smart Serve Program is being updated. During the conference it was noted we will require a new test after the update includes the effects of Cannabis.

Human Trafficking

This topic noted it is not a problem for cities, but includes all areas of the Province including the Rural Towns and Townships. Ages range from 11 years and up.

It was suggested that AMO and All encourage a greater learning on the subject, including our local schools and trustees.

SECURITY

The USE OF computers and PHONES SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THE ONES PROVIDED BY THE Towns. It was noted that not just the information may be required but could include providing the actual units for investigation. (Aird Law Firm)

The Leader of the NDP noted she missed seeing SANTA (Mr. Ford) earlier in the day.

The Leader of the Green Party noted that the members of all Parties need to work together to advance the work needed for all the residents.

As a Community we did have the opportunity to meet with representatives of Education and Finance. In each case we were able to highlight the town, as well as challenges and opportunities.

Gord Queen

These notes are my own rough notes.

Others in attendance may have attended discussion topics.