

## **Council Highlights November 21, 2017**

There was nothing to report from the regular council meeting, but there is one item from the Economic Development Committee meeting minutes from October 19, 2017 and an open letter about new county signage.

### **Economic Development Committee**

#### **Policies and Regulations on Home Base Business**

The municipality has put together a document on Home Based Businesses and it will be added to the Economic Development page.

The Committee discussed ways that they can proactively support, assist and encourage home based businesses, and supported offering a series of small workshops specific to rural home based businesses.

Six workshops were suggested:

1. Utilizing Taxable Deductions to help small businesses understand if they are utilizing all their possible deductions.
2. Social Media for Beginners Do you need it, how to use it and what it all means.
3. How to Attract and Keep Good Employees Soft skills and critical thinking challenges, ideas to find the people needed.
4. Entrepreneurship How To How to start, what to consider, where to find resources.
5. How Local Businesses Can Work Together & Marketing Alliances Using group marketing so that an event/project benefits many
6. Human Resources Employment Law Requirements and responsibilities of small businesses with only a few employees and upcoming Human Rights Code amendments.

The tax deductions workshop will be the first workshop offered in January 2018 as a kickoff. The workshop would be approximately one hour with two accountants speaking 15 minutes each and then 30 minutes for questions/networking. It will be held at the municipal office.

***The following is an open letter from Guy and Cindy Windover about Peterborough County signage rules.***

## **One More Nail in the Small Business Coffin**

Hello everyone,

I am sending out this e-mail as I'm sure many of you don't realize what's happening with regards to signage rules and how they will affect our businesses.

It was recently brought up at County Council, but fortunately it has been deferred until the January meeting. This means we have 2 months to put some pressure on our local politicians.

Here is what they want to do:

They want to get rid of all "Bush Country signs", that means ALL Billboards along the roadways that tens of thousands travel every single day.

This movement is being pushed by the Trent Lakes Council, but also gaining traction with other municipalities.

My understanding is that billboards, currently rented or leased from the MTO could be removed. Also, billboards that have been erected on private property could also be removed.

I'm not sure what other signage will be affected.

Please reach out to your local politicians for clarification.

Also, those of you on Economic Development Committees, please ask if they are following their own strategic plans when it comes to Economic Growth.

Here are my issues:

1. Rural businesses don't have huge marketing budgets, but a billboard on a roadway that thousands see is a great use of marketing dollars, and promotes their business.
2. Making private land owners remove signs from their own land, that also provides some income for them, is a slippery slope.
3. There is a definite "trickle down" effect from people having signs that promote this area. How else are people going to know what is here?
4. If billboards & signs are removed, how is that municipality going to drive traffic and business to the area?
5. Things like local attractions will suffer, which means all business that benefits from tourism will suffer.
6. If people can't put up large billboards, they will put up even more small, unsightly signs nailed to trees. Our road, Deer Bay Road, is littered with these signs on trees. Who is going to monitor those and take them down to keep them from being eyesores?

Windover Plumbing used to have a billboard across from Sandy Beach, it started on our property, and when we sold, we paid a fee every year to keep the sign there. It was amazing how many people referred to that sign, and even though it's been down for a few years, people still refer to it. Signs work, and in a large geographical area like ours, they are some of the best ways to get our name and brand out there.

**We also benefit through referrals. I.e: We work for local realtors, resorts etc, and if people ask them who they recommend, and they say Windover Plumbing, we stay busy, which means employing people.**

**I don't think anyone would have a problem with some standards for signage, we all want our communities to look nice and orderly. If Councils were truly in support of local business, they could create a committee under property standards, and ensure that billboards and signs meet some requirements.**

**Finally, I would like to know if any of the politicians and policy makers had this as part of their platform when elected? Not likely. It seems more like a personal agenda which once again, will hurt local business....the people that actually provide the money for the pay of politicians.**

**It's also shocking to me how many people who are making these decisions HAVE NEVER OWNED A SMALL BUSINESS! I've said it before regarding changes to the ESA, but if you've never had to make payroll, or gone without your own paycheck for weeks (or months) so your employees got paid, you SHOULD NOT get a say on issues of how to run a business.**

**Wouldn't it be great if this area got to be known as "The Best Place to do Business!" in Ontario! Instead of the alternatives (which I'm sure you can all chime in on).**

**Sorry for the long e-mail, lots of info and this is too important to ignore. Please let others who may be affected know of this issue.**

**Sincerely,  
Guy & Cindy Windover  
Windover Plumbing Inc.**