



City of Barrie

70 Collier Street (Box 400)
Barrie, ON L4M 4T5

Minutes - Final General Committee

Saturday, December 12, 2015

9:00 AM

Sir Robert Barrie Room

GENERAL COMMITTEE REPORT

For consideration by the Council of the City of Barrie on December 14, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Lehman at 9:06 a.m. The following were in attendance for the meeting:

- Present:** 9 - Mayor, J. Lehman; Councillor, B. Ainsworth; Councillor, R. Romita; Councillor, D. Shipley; Councillor, B. Ward; Councillor, M. Prowse; Councillor, A. Khan; Councillor, S. Morales; and Councillor, M. McCann
- Absent:** 1 - Councillor, P. Silveira

STAFF:

Chief Administrative Officer, C. Ladd
City Clerk/Director of Legislative and Court Services, D. McAlpine
Executive Director of Access Barrie, R. James-Reid
Executive Director of Innovate Barrie, R. Bunn
Executive Director of Invest Barrie, Z. Lifshiz
General Manager of Community and Corporate Services, P. Elliott-Spencer
General Manager of Infrastructure and Growth Management, R. Forward.

The General Committee met and reports as follows:**15-G-259 2014 TO 2018 COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REVIEW AND
DISCUSSION**

Mayor J. Lehman provided opening remarks related to the purpose of the session, noting that it was opportunity for members of Council and the Executive Management Team to review the goals identified in the strategic planning session held last year and to discuss what Council was seeking to accomplish during the 2014 to 2018 term of office. He explained that a secondary purpose of the session was to discuss how Council measures and communicates progress on its objectives. Mayor Lehman noted the importance of linking the objectives to the Business Plan and capital planning.

Mayor Lehman reviewed the individual responses he received when he asked each member the question, "What do you want to accomplish on City Council?" He discussed the different approaches that were taken to responding to the question and the scope of the responses. Mayor Lehman discussed the potential polarity in the individual responses. He noted that it was important to be clear on what Council expects staff to deliver related to its objectives and asked the Committee, "How do we measure success?"

Carla Ladd, Chief Administrative Officer stated that it was staff's intent to ensure that it has full clarity on Council's expectations to allow it to deliver on those expectations successfully. She noted that there appear to be some disparate views with respect to the individual perspectives that could make it challenging to deliver successfully on expectations. Ms. Ladd indicated that staff is interested in finding the common ground on the objectives.

Mayor Lehman provided an example of how he measured the success of the 2010 to 2014 term of office. He discussed the variety of potential ways of measuring objectives associated with words such as prosperous, sustainable and affordable.

Ms. Ladd provided display boards and utilized the City's geographic information system (GIS) to illustrate how the Executive Management Team (EMT) is tracking progress on projects and Council's 2014 to 2018 Strategic Priorities digitally. Examples were provided for the Waterfront and Marina Strategic Plan, infrastructure projects that contribute to Well Planned Transportation priority and heritage walking tours that contribute to the Inclusive Community priority. She noted that the examples also highlighted the importance of digitizing information as it allows staff to manage and monitor the lifecycle of its assets with greater accuracy and consistency while providing better access to information and she described the relationship to the Responsible Spending priority.

Ms. Ladd provided an example of a project underway related to the Vibrant Business Environment priority to make all of the information on the City's employment lands available digitally to assist investors and staff in Invest Barrie in accessing site or investor specific profiles.

Members of Committee asked questions with respect to examples provided and received responses from the members of EMT.

Mayor Lehman asked members of General Committee for their views on investing in a better Barrie while controlling expenditures/maintaining affordability. The members of General Committee provided their feedback related to how they measure providing value for money, how they make a determination related to the return on an investment and the importance of economic prosperity to set the stage for achieving other goals for the community. General Committee discussed the challenges of balancing projects and initiatives contributing to the 2014 to 2018 Strategic Priorities with affordability, in the context of the following matters:

- The Waterfront and Marina Strategic Plan and Lakeshore Drive Reconstruction/Centennial Park Improvements;
- The Neighbourhood Renewal Program and the importance of maintaining the existing community;
- The Dedicated Infrastructure Fund;
- The ability to attract international companies;
- The provision of crossing guards;
- Cutting services that are redundant to allow for new initiatives;
- The sustainability of introducing enhanced services and the annualized costs;
- The amount of use of a facility or service as a measure of success;
- The provision of services by the municipality versus the private sector;
- The level of assessment growth;
- The provision of affordable housing;
- The Intensification Strategy and the development of the annexation lands;
- The potential for a multi-year operating forecast highlighting cost pressures that would drive future tax increases;
- Investing in projects that reduce ongoing operational costs;
- Attracting investors;
- Balancing a small town atmosphere with developing a world class city;
- Downtown and waterfront development;
- Debt as a financing tool;
- The importance of examining revenues as well as costs;
- Facilities for emergency services;
- Barrie as a regional centre;
- Opportunities for partnerships with the County of Simcoe on further services including transit and tourism; and

- The importance of being confident that the municipality is on a financially sustainable path in the context of making decisions.

General Committee asked questions related to recent organizational changes and staffing requests as part of the 2016 Business Plan and received responses. The importance of understanding the annualized operating costs of initiatives and programs, particularly when decisions are made outside of the Business Plan was highlighted. Comments were provided by members of General Committee regarding the need to be disciplined and make difficult decisions to not implement new services or cut service levels, if members are unwilling to increase taxes rather than approaching the Business Plan in an ad hoc manner. Mayor Lehman highlighted his concerns related to the base budget increases as it related to funding available for strategic priorities. Previous service reviews were discussed as well as the potential to undertake further service reviews.

The meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

CHAIRMAN