



## **Media Release**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 10, 2023

Here are the highlights from the South Dundas Council meeting held January 9, 2023

### **House of Lazarus and its Community Benefit**

Cathy Ashby, Executive Director was in attendance and provided Council with an overview of the programs and services offered by the House of Lazarus (HOL). “We are building community and sharing hope through striving to fill in the gaps of services and resources,” noted Ashby.

House of Lazarus is a non-profit organization that works with the community to ensure that people have the basics of life. Their food bank and many outreach programs offer food, clothing, household goods, furniture and housing supports to those in need and the Linking Hands program is a voice for people living in poverty.

With an extensive list of programs and services, the HOL is a key community resources for those in our community who need a helping hand. Having attended the Community Food Share event in December and learning more about the programs and services offered throughout South Dundas, Mayor Broad reflected on the fact that we (*the Municipality*) recognize that rural poverty issues are vast and complex and cannot be solved by one organization. When asked, following the meeting, Mayor Broad noted “Council recognizes the need for collaboration on a community-wide scale and is committed to ensuring that affordability and access to basic needs for our most vulnerable population is front of mind in our decision making.”

In attendance with Ms. Ashby was Reverend Mark Lewis of the Anglican Parish of South Dundas. The Parish and the HOL have recently established a partnership to open the South Dundas Community Hub and Warming Centre at the rectory, offering a warm, safe place with showers, laundry facilities, and meals for people who are living in sub standard conditions – cars, shacks, camping trailers in the winter. Work is also underway to offer space for community partners to offer resources and services to those attending the Hub.

“If there is a need that you hear of or know of, let us know. If you’d like to be partners with us to do something, let us know. Our next focus will be on youth programs because what we are hearing from Canadian Mental Health Association is that it’s our 16–22-year-olds that are in a lot of trouble right now with their mental health,” explained Ashby.

Following the presentation by Ashby and Lewis, Mayor Broad stated, “the situation continues to grow and it is not visible to all of us, so thank you for sharing and all you do for our community. Coming out of the holiday season where people are charitable and volunteer and do a lot of work, we have to remember that these programs are 365 days a year, so for our residents out there, please continue to volunteer and donate where we can to help these types of organizations.”



Learn more about the House of Lazarus, including how you can help: <https://hol.community/>

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### **Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022**

Municipal Planning Consultant Peter Young presented a report to Council in response to the Province of Ontario's recently adopted *Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*. The Bill received royal assent on November 28 and includes changes to the land use approvals system in the province, with the goal of facilitating the construction of 1.5 million new homes by 2031.

The Bill will result in changes to several statutes, including the *Development Charges Act (DCA)*, *Ontario Heritage Act*, *Municipal Act* and *Planning Act* – which are all crucial pieces of legislation that guide land use planning in the Province of Ontario. While the bill has received royal assent, certain aspects are effective immediately, while others will be implemented at a date to be confirmed. Further information from the provincial government is expected.

Mr. Young provided an overview of planning services and the extensive list of issues, proposed changes and impact to South Dundas. A copy of the full report can be found [here](#). Reports regarding peer review of applications and changes to the zoning by-law will be presented in the future and applications and forms will be updated to reflect any new regulations. Additional fees for service may be required depending on if services are taken on by South Dundas, another organization, or a consultant.

“It is very clear that Bill 23 will have a significant impact on Ontario municipalities. While South Dundas is a unique community in many ways, we are certainly not immune to these changes,” said CAO Shannon Geraghty, following the meeting. “Amendments to these Acts will change how we fund the services and programs our community members expect from us. We will need to look seriously at the way we do business, as will all other municipalities across Ontario.”

Following the Council meeting, upon reflection and in discussion with his colleagues, Mayor Broad said “The timing of this legislation is quite concerning. We are a team of newly elected council members who are embracing the transition into our new roles and inheritance of responsibilities. To have legislation of this magnitude get pushed through very quickly without fully understanding the impacts on municipalities, is quite disappointing.”

Learn more about Bill 23, [More Homes, Built Faster Act](#).

For more information, email [Peter Young](#), Municipal Planning Consultant

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### **Committees of Council Set Up for Success Through Creation of Handbook**

As Council prepares to launch their committees over the next two months, a key priority to ensure standardization, consistency and clear expectations was the development of a Committees of Council Handbook.



Citizen knowledge, interest and action are important ingredients to the delivery of top-quality public services. More than ever, citizen participation is playing an important role in local government. The richness that comes from citizens serving on a municipal committee is one of the things that makes South Dundas exceptional.

Citizens serve on committees because they want to improve the quality of life in their community, because they feel strongly about local issues, and because they feel they have something of value to offer. Mayor Broad explained, “To have committees that are efficient, it is essential that members be properly oriented, so they understand their duties and carry them out effectively.” This handbook will assist those appointed to municipal committees. It provides a brief description of roles, responsibilities, meeting procedures, legislative requirements, and offers templates to ensure consistency.

Applications are being accepted for citizen appointees until mid-January. Further applications will be accepted once Council has an opportunity to review the draft terms of reference for the proposed Parks and Recreation Committee, later this month.

Once Council and citizen members have been appointed by Council, the intent is for Staff to undertake training with each respective committee, including a thorough review of the Committees of Council Handbook.

For more information, contact [Leslie Drynan](#), Clerk/Deputy CAO at 613-543-2673

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### **Council to Review Cost of Living Adjustment Policy**

Mayor Broad opened the discussion by providing an overview of the municipality’s Personnel Policy, specifically section 13.7, as it relates to the annual cost of living adjustment for staff and noted that the increase provided in 2021 and 2022 was 0.7%. “If we were looking at where we would be for 2023, it would be at 5.2%, which is the increase that was noted in December’s water budget meeting” said Mayor Broad.

“I brought this forward because it is a hot topic of discussion. We have been introduced to CPI through the water budget and during our first Counties Council meeting in December, and what bothers me is the notion that I think this policy is a little open ended. I think we should be setting the parameters based on some fixed numbers versus just CPI and waiting to discuss during budget. I think there are better formulas out there.” explained Deputy Mayor Marc St. Pierre.

Deputy Mayor St. Pierre further explained “I am not presenting this to shortchange any of our staff, but my experience with budgets, is the first thing we tend to slash is the salary increases, so I think this would be fairer for staff, because at least it will give them idea of what to expect, from a formula perspective.”

Mayor Broad concluded the discussion by noting that “If we did the 5.2%, it’s 175,000 increase to salaries overall which is 2.2% taxation rate. If we look at what our neighbours have been doing over the last few years, we are significantly behind. We have also launched a compensation



review where we are looking at all of our positions, the pay and pay equity, which we will have data from, so I am supportive of us looking at a fair formula.

Councillors offered comments on the topic and subsequently agreed to have staff develop options for consideration and report back at the January 30 Regular Council meeting with several options.

For more information, contact [Shannon Geraghty](#), CAO at 613-543-2673

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### **Council Agrees to Reconsider Request from Morrisburg Junior Lions Hockey Club**

Council agreed to reconsidered a request from the Morrisburg Junior Lions Club (the Club) to host a Special Occasion Permit to sell alcohol at home games. The Club proposed to make application to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario for the permit, cover any additional insurance costs and provide Smart Serve attendants.

The request to reconsider was brought forward by Deputy Mayor Marc St. Pierre, “At this time, I am asking, do we want to reconsider supporting a liquor license for the Junior C games? I feel like it is our responsibility, when businesses and residents come to us with requests, that we should be talking about it and coming up with a resolution. This request was turned down by the previous Council and I understand there are logistics that we need to get educated on, but this is a simple ask, do we want to reconsider,” explained St. Pierre.

“I am supportive of the request,” stated Mayor Broad. “I travel all the arenas in Eastern Ontario, and alcohol sales are at most of the events within their arenas for Junior games, so we should have a discussion. What the exemption would entail, is that we would pass a motion providing the Junior C’s an exemption to Policy 9.1 Municipal Alcohol Policy, and then Staff and the Club would make sure we execute against the policy.”

Councillors Veinotte, Smyth and Ward provided comments on the request to reconsider and subsequently unanimously agreed to reconsider the request at the next meeting, scheduled for January 30.

When asked about the request following the meeting, Mayor Broad said, “the Junior C Lions are an important tenant, and their games have an economic impact on the municipality as a whole. We will ensure that Council has all the data, insurance particulars and staff and team ownership input to make a proper informed decision in a few weeks time.”

For more information, contact [Shannon Geraghty](#), CAO at 613-543-2673

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**Looking Ahead: Upcoming Meetings**

Regular Council Meeting: Monday, January 9, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

Regular Council Meeting: Monday, January 30, 2023 @ 6:00 pm

**2023 Budget Meeting: Friday, February 3, 2023 @ 8:30 am**

Regular Council Meeting: Monday, February 13, 2023 @ 6:00 pm