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June 18, 2020

RE: Universal Basic Income Resolution

Please be advised that the Council of the Municipality of Grey Highlands, at its meeting held June 17, 2020, passed the following resolution:

2020-438
Moved by Cathy Little, Seconded by Aakash Desai

Whereas the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020 declared COVID-19 a pandemic, pointing to the growing number of cases of the coronavirus illness around the world and the sustained risk of further global spread; and

Whereas in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Province of Ontario and the Municipality of Grey Highlands have declared a state of emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act; and

Whereas, to help reduce the financial strain on its citizens and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Municipality of Grey Highlands has approved disbursement of funds to local food banks and redirection of Community Grant Program funds to local community organizations providing relief to Grey Highlands residents in crisis; and

Whereas Statistics Canada has reported that the unemployment rate has risen to 13.7 per cent in Canada and 13.6 per cent in Ontario in May 2020; and that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the employment of 3.1 million Canadians from February to April; and that lower-wage earners, women and students are being impacted disproportionately; and

Whereas the Federal government has announced $82 billion in relief funding for the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, utilizing tax deferrals, subsidies, loans, and credits to support citizens, businesses, and industries; and

Whereas according to a 2018 Parliamentary Budget Office report, a Canada-wide basic income of the type previously piloted in Ontario would have an annual net cost of $44 billion; and

Whereas a basic income ensures everyone an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live with dignity, regardless of work status; and

Whereas a basic income has the potential to improve individual physical and mental health, labour market participation, food security, housing stability, financial status and social relationships and generally raise the standard of living for vulnerable members of society; and

Whereas a universal basic income would likely have many positive societal effects, including reducing poverty, reducing strain on health care and social assistance systems, supporting businesses and the economy, reducing crime, as well as reducing administrative complexity and creating efficiencies for those in need of financial and economic support measures; now

Therefore, be it resolved that the Council of the Municipality of Grey Highlands urges the Ontario Provincial government and the Federal government to work together to investigate the feasibility of implementing a universal basic income program; and

That this resolution be forwarded to the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada; the Honourable Premier of Ontario; the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services; the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; local MPPs and MPs; The County of Grey; all Municipalities with the Province of Ontario; and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.
CARRIED.

As per the above resolution, please accept a copy of this correspondence for your information and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jerri-Lynn Levitt

Jerri-Lynn Levitt
Deputy Clerk
Council and Legislative Services
Municipality of Grey Highlands