Mayor Christine Robinson, Deputy Mayor Tom Hutchinson, Councillor Beth Hamilton, Councillor Rebecca Hergert, Councillor Doug Hutchinson, Councillor Geoffrey Shea, Councillor Stephen Townsend

Laura Johnston, CAO/Deputy Clerk; Mark Turner, Clerk; Kerri Mighton, Director of Finance/Treasurer; Vance Czerwinski, Director of Infrastructure and Public Works; Karl Schipprack, Chief Building Official; Kodey Hewlett, Recreation, Supervisor; Jonathan Zettel, Coordinator, Office of the CAO

Pat Morden, Facilitator

**Declarations of Pecuniary Interest & General Nature Thereof - None**

**Items of Business**

   - Introduction by Mayor Robinson
   - Facilitated session with Pat Morden

Mayor Robinson welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained the purpose of the meeting, being, to introduce the draft West Grey Vision Plan: 2019-2022, and hear comments from the public on issues that are important to them.

Council members introduced themselves to the audience. CAO Johnston introduced staff members in attendance. Ten members of the public attended the meeting.

Pat Morden, Facilitator, noted she owns a farm in Glenelg Township, and stated what happens in West Grey is important to her. Ms. Morden indicated her appreciation for the draft West Grey Vision Plan: 2019-2022, as Council has put together a map of where they want to go based on three pillars. These three pillars include engagement and involvement, being responsible and accountable, and to celebrate and promote West Grey. The meaning of the three pillars was expounded upon by Ms. Morden, as detailed in the draft Vision Plan.

Ms. Morden indicated there will be five questions posed with discussion groups around the tables, including:
1. What in this document stands out for you as being very important in Ayton/West Grey?

Responses to this question included:

Technology is important, however, West Grey needs to use other means to communicate such as newspapers to engage certain segments of the populace. Radio is another means of communication. Advertising of events could be enhanced by placing electronic signs in all urban centres, however, it was admitted that there would be a significant cost to do so. The positive use of the internet by youtube recording of Council meetings was mentioned.

A need to communicate that this is a partnership and the benefit of ratepayers participating in the vision sessions needs to be emphasized. Need to launch the Vision Plan when approved, to celebrate its completion. The need to enhance internet in rural West Grey was put forward. Council/staff presence in the community was noted as an important factor.

In terms of economic development, it was noted certain commercial and industrial operations are struggling to fill vacant jobs due to the lack of a skilled or available employee labour force in the area. Pat Morden suggested we should concentrate on working with the people who want to work. The enhancement of water/sewer/gas services in Ayton/Normanby was stated as a future need.

2. What parts need clarification for you to understand them better? What specific questions might we answer to provide that clarity?

The public questioned if the Vision Plan was provided to all communities to date, and whether or not sufficient advertising/notice of these sessions was given. The CAO replied that there have been staff reports and discussion regarding the Vision Plan in previous Council or Committee meeting, and it is difficult in getting the engagement of the public even when events are sufficiently advertised.

It was questioned if the Vision Plan will be undergo continuous improvement as each vision session is held and feedback obtained. Ms. Morden responded that is one of the purposes of these vision sessions.

A member of the public stated there was a huge crowd for the 2018 Municipal Election candidate debate, and wondered why the same turnout wasn’t realized for this meeting. Ms. Morden opined that perhaps ratepayers felt their vote could make a difference in the election outcome, however, ratepayers may not realize they can make a change to the Vision Plan with their input. A member of the public opined that perhaps the Vision Plan should have been made more readily available.
It was suggested that the Vision Plan might better identify what certain terms such as “executive sponsor” means.

Ms. Morden noted there is some ambiguity in that in certain circumstances the “one size fits all” philosophy is appropriate, however, the document also celebrates differences that make up the community.

A member of the public opined that the statement “nestled in nature” needs also to identify/include the farming community, as nestled in nature may have a different meaning to farmers who work the land as opposed to retirees who want to live undisturbed in a rural setting.

It was noted that the term “nestled in nature” could be a little bit dated, as agri-business is now an important economic driver and we want to attract people and jobs. Ms. Morden added that people do want to be good stewards of the land. The need to stress tourism as a large economic driver was also emphasized.

3. What is missing from this Vision Plan that feels very important to you in Ayton?

Responses to this question included:
- Encompassing/enhancing youth demographic in the Vision Plan;
- need to elevate the focus on seniors;
- encourage volunteerism.
- re-assurance of cohesiveness as a whole while celebrating the differences in each community.
- expansion of Ayton – particularly if water/sewer services are available.
- further focus on issue of climate change and educating ratepayers on climate change, innovative recycling.

4. How might you as a community use this plan to communicate more effectively with Council?

Use as a yardstick to ensure what we are doing coincides with the Vision Plan.

5. How might council demonstrate to you they are aligning with this plan in their work?

Identify how their decisions/actions align with the plan. Promote the Vision Plan, and discuss how Council will use the Vision Plan. How respond to ratepayers requests that align with the Vision Plan. Feature parts of Vision Plan in branding initiatives and social media.

The CAO noted Council’s intent to shape the Vision Plan to be our community’s plan. The CAO also mentioned from a staff perspective, staff will shape what is presented to Council for their decision-making process with identified Council priorities.
The CAO added that the Vision Plan will be West Grey’s philosophy to consider during budget deliberations, for instance. There will be assessments completed to determine how Council is meeting the Vision Plan pillars.

Mayor Robinson thanked everyone for participating in the vision session, and stressed Council wants to continue engaging with the public through other upcoming Vision Plan sessions and other venues.

Adjournment
Deputy Mayor Hutchinson-Councillor Hergert, Resolved that, we do now adjourn at 8:57 p.m., to meet again on November 6, 2019, 7:00 p.m., or at the call of the Mayor. Carried.