



Corporation of the County of Huron
1 Courthouse Square
Goderich, ON N7A 1M2
Canada

2018 COUNCIL ORIENTATION SESSIONS DEBRIEF REPORT

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Dates	Monday, December 17, 2018 Wednesday, December 19, 2018	
Times	9:00AM – 10:30AM 10:30AM – 12:30AM	Presentations by County Staff Passport to Huron County (Speed Networking)
Location	Huron County Museum, 110 North Street, Goderich, ON N7A 2T8	
Guiding Principles	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Build respect and share knowledge;2. Council and staff, not Council vs. staff;3. Communicate now and communicate often;4. Fostering discussion that encourages progress;	

INTRODUCTION

In keeping in line with the momentum of the Council Orientation Sessions and ensuring that there is 180 degree feedback, the following is a brief overview of the Sessions and key themes that emerged from discussions.

OVERVIEW OF SESSION

On December 17th and 19th, 2018, the County of Huron held two innovative Council Orientation Sessions to introduce the newly elected Council to the various roles and functions of each County department.

Each morning, the sessions began with presentations from County staff on County policy, procedures, human resources, financial profile and asset management. Following presentations, Council members were invited to tour departments with senior staff in a speed networking event named “Passport to Huron County”. Through this event, Council Members had an opportunity to rotate between departments and learn more about their individual challenges, opportunities and successes. Each Councillor was provided with a “Passport” (guide pamphlet) which contained an overview of each

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Department's functions, a list of hot topics or key questions for discussion during their 20 minute rotation for every booth. Departments set up their individual booths, using visual aids like rotating slides, games, and storyboards to communicate their narratives to Council Members.

At the end of the second day, each Councillor was provided with a resource binder which contained detailed information about County council governance, corporate profiles, corporate values, policies and additional Councillor resources.

Following the Orientation Sessions, each Councillor and staff member were asked to complete a Feedback Form to provide guidance in improving future orientation sessions.

OVERALL PROCESS – FEEDBACK FROM COUNCIL

The general feedback from Council was that the speed networking portion of Council Orientation provided interactive engagement and two-way conversations between Council and staff. Councillors left the orientation sessions with a greater understanding of County departments relating to their services and functions. The primary area of improvement rated less favourable was: 'Information Received Prior to Orientation'. Overall, the feedback from Council was largely positive with expressive enthusiasm.

Specific comments from Councillors included:

- *"Excellent format and very informative."*
- *"Well done. Better than any previous."*
- *"No swag."*
- *"Every department did a great job."*
- *"Absolutely wonderful".*
- *"Excellent!"*
- *"Every department did an excellent job. Thank you."*
- *"20 minutes was too long."*
- *"Excellent venue."*
- *"Excellent work."*

OVERALL PROCESS – FEEDBACK FROM STAFF

Overall feedback from staff was that the interactive portion of the Orientation Sessions allowed staff with the opportunity for better understanding of Council's vision and healthy engagement between Councillors and staff.

Interestingly, multiple comments were that staff would have liked the opportunity to cycle through the department booths. Further, a recommendation was received

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to offer new members of County Boards and Committees the chance to participate in the speed networking event as well.

Specific comments from Staff included:

- *"This was so great to eliminate the 'intimidation' factor of meeting new Council."*
- *"Thank you for this opportunity. It was super!"*
- *"All was great!"*
- *"Really enjoyed the sessions. I really appreciate the efforts that were put into the orientation. I feel that it will really make a difference moving forward!"*

FINAL WORDS

A particularly highlighted moment throughout the session occurred when Councillors and staff were requested to share their individual "take-aways" from orientation sessions. The common theme was that the interactive sessions fostered engagement and opened dialogue channels between Council and staff.

As a corporate event and education session, the 2018 Council Orientation Sessions served great value to both Council and staff.



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