

Notice of Motion – May 12, 2020 Regular Meeting of Council

Background:

At the April 28, 2020, Regular Meeting of Council, a Notice of Motion was given that a resolution relating to the recent news of Post Media Network Inc. which owns Tecumseh Shoreline Week, will be closing its publication permanently, along with 4 other community newspapers in the County of Essex, as the newspaper conglomerate navigates the financial fallout due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tecumseh's Shoreline Week was established in 1992, as a weekly newspaper providing local coverage of Town news, events, sports, and editorials. It has strong readership being delivered to 20,450 homes, and provides a vibrant communication platform for local business to raise awareness and promote local services.

Community newspapers plays an unique role for local governments as a forum for local issues and encourages community engagement. The Town of Tecumseh was a strong supporter of Shoreline Week with regular advertisements on news and events as a means to communicate with residents.

Statutory advertisements are also placed in the local papers at a cost savings from the local larger newspaper.

Print media is relied upon by persons of various demographics that do not have access to social or other media.

Resolution:

Moved By: Deputy Mayor Joe Bachetti

Seconded by:

Whereas community newspapers, including Shoreline Week, provide the only print source of local coverage and information in their communities, and facilitates pride and a sense of community that residents and businesses are proud of;

And Whereas the Shoreline Week maintains a strong readership and a valuable media source that residents go to for their local news;

And Whereas the Shoreline Week often provides the only voice for residents to facilitate involvement on local issues that ultimately shape our community, or to celebrate and acknowledge the Town's rich history, businesses and its people;

And Whereas community newspapers fulfill a major gap in local news coverage, where media coverage originating from larger municipalities is minimal or scarce;

And Whereas the permanent closure of operations for Shoreline Week, and other community newspapers will have a devastating effect on informing residents of news and events in small and rural communities, and shut down a community voice for discussion on local decisions;

And Whereas community newspapers are vital communications to area residents by municipalities and marketing tool for businesses in small and rural communities;

Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved that the permanent closure of **Shoreline Week and its sister** community weekly newspapers owned by Postmedia Network Inc. will hinder the ongoing efforts of the Town of Tecumseh to effectively reach and inform all residents of key Council decisions that affect their community and opportunities to participate in local community events;

And that Postmedia Network Inc. reconsider their decision to permanently close Shoreline Week and other local community weekly newspapers in an effort to preserve an open forum for accountability and transparency in local government and continue to facilitate community engagement;

And that Postmedia Network Inc. consider the introduction of alternative models to maintain local news coverage in communities such as Tecumseh, such as continuing online community newspapers with portals such as those provided by Metroland Media Group;

And further that this resolution be circulated to Postmedia Network Inc. president Andrew MacLeod, and area municipalities for support.