



**COVID-19 Economic Task Force  
Meeting #4  
AGENDA**

**April 8, 2020  
3:15 pm – 4:15 pm**

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/331091208?pwd=Y1VFZnhscngwZHFoUTdjTGNYcjh5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 331 091 208  
Password: 031262

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**WindsorEssex COVID- 19 Economic Task Force Purpose:**

**In a timely manner, collect, coordinate and disseminate information on strategies, programs and other remedies that are available to mitigate the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the economic well-being of workers, entrepreneurs, businesses and the Windsor-Essex regional economy.**

1. **3:15 pm – 3:20 pm**      Remarks from Chair – Stephen MacKenzie
  
2. **3:20 pm - 4:00 pm**      Committee Reports
  - Survey** – Workforce Windsor Essex & SBC
  - Agriculture & Agri-Food** – Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers
  - Logistics, Transportation and Cross Border Issues** – Institute for Border Logistics & Security
  - Hospitality & Tourism** – Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island
  - Professional Services & Retail** – Windsor Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce
  - Manufacturing** – Canadian Association of Mold Makers
  
3. **4:00 pm – 4:10 pm**      Communications/ Media Plan – April 14-April 17 – Stephen MacKenzie & Ryan Donally

4. **4:10 pm – 4:15 pm** Ongoing Concerns – (all)

**Notes**

**Meeting Begins: 3:17pm**

**Remarks from the Chair**

*Steve MacKenzie*

- Congratulations to Justin Falconer for new appointment of CEO Role
- Thankfully, Michelle is staying on in a senior role

**Survey**

*Justin Falconer - Workforce Windsor Essex*

*Natasha Marar - Small Business Centre*

- Survey closed at 4pm
- 573 Response
- Workforce is setting up the dashboard
  - o Online social media and press release to educate on results
- Finishing up the data dashboard just now
- People can use the data dashboard to dig deep into any categories that they would like
- Working on a news release

**Agriculture & Agri-Food**

*Justine Taylor– Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers*

- Since last week
- Arrival of first migrant workers – first have arrived going smoothly
- Working freely with Jamaica with some hiccups with Mexico
  - o Mexican Gov't are comfortable now with the
- Importance of self isolation with Health Unit has been provided to all workers and all growers. Also working with OPP to enforce
- OGVG has a website
- TFW using WSIB, CERB, or EI if there is some isolation
  - o Working though clarity on this process
- Non-workforce
  - o Construction
    - Active expansion plans from some greenhouses
    - Mixed messaging from the gov't and looking for clarity on the issue of what can continue vs. what might not
- What happens if losses if we cant get workers in a timely manner
- Robust recruitment panel; needs to improve and something that OGVG is working with
- Help from Other Committees
  - o Looking for help with shipment in the future – envisioning issues with logistics issues

**Logistics, Transportation and Cross Border Issues**

*Susan Anzolin– Institute for Border Logistics & Security*

- A summary of key matters associated with COVID-19 and its impact on the logistics, transportation & cross-border sector has been drafted and shared with the Committee members. The summary report is organized the following areas of focus:
  - o key policy /legislative changes introduced since the COVID-19 outbreak that are unique to the logistics, transportation & cross-border sector, namely: the designation of "essential workplaces", Hours of service impacting truck drivers, extension of driving licenses and permits, easing up of noise by-laws to allow for deliveries, travel bans
  - o safety matters: best practices and guidelines issued to support employees in the logistics and trucking industries
  - o economic impact data
  - o positive news stories
  - o summary of key government initiatives that are of greatest interest to this sector
    - wage subsidies and cash flow liquidity
      - WSIB with high costs despite the trucks being idle
- Since last week's meeting, Mark Galvin, CEO of the Windsor International Airport has joined the group.
  - o His participation is important because of the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the airline industry This decision is important to the Region's transportation sector as well as its impact on the City of Windsor and its budget.
  - o Demonstrates the link to municipal gov'ts, tunnel isn't running, parking is down, CRISIS will now change the budgeting models of municipalities due to this crisis.
- The link between the Region's logistics and transportation sector and the automotive sector is evident during this crisis.
  - o Many local transportation companies are suffering because of the suspension of automotive manufacturing.
  - o Likely continue with the OEMs declaring that they will suspend auto activities until early May.
  - o Cross-border traffic is down 40% and this number is expected to go even lower until the auto sector is back up and running
- While some trucking companies have experienced increased activity in delivering medical, food and other essential supplies, the drop in activity of the rest of their freight is significant and it means many trucks are returning with empty loads.
  - o There is still an overall drop and there is considerable drop in this region.
- Reduction in goods being moved is coupled with a number of truck drivers and other transportation workers fearful of working due to the risk of COVID-19. The sector tends to have an older labour force and thus the risk is much greater that if one is COVID-19 positive that it might lead to serious health consequences.
- Cross-Border healthcare workers have been getting a lot of news attention.
  - o Henry Ford Health Systems has enlisted over 40 hotels to house its workers and they have offered the spaces to Canadian workers. To date, not many have taken up the offer, mainly because many have already established non-contamination processes as well as not wanting to pay for the room. To that

end, HFHS has indicated that it is receiving donation and has offered to cover the costs of its employees under certain conditions.

- Good news stories: the Windsor Transportation Club (WTC) on behalf of its hard-working members proudly announced a new initiative to feed Windsor-Essex's hardworking healthcare workers. This initiative is in addition to donations that were made by the Windsor Transportation Club to the Generations Diner (a local restaurant providing free meals to truck drivers), the Welcome Center Food Bank and the Children's Aid Society. the GoFundMe page is:
  - o <https://www.gofundme.com/f/feed-the-front-lines-windsor>  
More than \$13k has already been donated, 8 local restaurants are on board and about 1000 mls will be served next week

## **Hospitality & Tourism**

### *Gordon Orr - Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island*

- Tourism Marketing
- Diane, Dharmesh
  - o Business is down year over year – 30% - 90%
  - o All have laid off employees
  - o Workers are working for free
  - o TWEPI is only 3 full time staff
- June cancellation of events
- Festival of Birds, Kingsville Highland Games, Pelee Island (half marathon and island unplugged)
- NO paid marketing
- Only digital marketing
- What would be helpful to
  - o Gov't access
  - o How do you access them and how do you make it easy and convenient?
- Marketing on the other side
  - o Micro level
  - o Small business with regional focus
  - o Marketing efforts should be local first, then grow up the 401 then finally into Detroit (long term)
- Ministry Association of Ontario
- YQG Stands Strong
  - o Ryan needs to send to the group
- Wine order Wednesday
  - o Coopers Hawk has a buy one give one
  - o 35 cases matched to healthcare workers
- Fill-up Friday
  - o Beer Fridge on Fridays

Anything that the other comms can do to help?

- Package to promote the package going forward
- Embrace YQG stands strong

## **Professional Services & Retail**

*Rakesh Naidu/ Keith Chinnery – Windsor Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce*

- Second meeting yesterday
  - Accessing gov't programs
    - PM addressed some of the issues today from the meeting yesterday
  - Great examples of collab
    - Wendy Parsons – funeral homes for essential supplies – help from Marion and Lee
  - Windsor Star
    - Connecting Local businesses – WS is aggregating – digital and on-paper
  - Jubzi App
    - Sophos restaurants to conduct online commerce
    - There is not cost to the retailer
    - More advantageous for the restaurant
  - Shannon Dyck – Small Business
    - Digital Mainstreet
  - EpiCentre
    - Project Nimble
  - Windsor and Canadian Chamber
    - 450 Chambers of Commerce, and associations – CBRN.ca
  - Gov't Programs and Funding is are only through Chartered Banks but not credit unions
  - Jim Lyons – Construction association
    - Late to the game
    - Essential businesses just cut construction recently
    - Lots of confusion: cost of fines vs. cost of incurring charges if they do not meet project deadlines
    - Tech adoption is quite low in the industry
    - Struggling with tenders
  - Tax returns being processed
  - Webinar Thursday
    - Noon- 1pm on the choosewindsorsex.com
    - Ontario Chamber of Commerce
  - 30<sup>th</sup> annual Chamber of Commerce Awards are postponed – more details to come

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/covid-19-webinar-labour-and-immigration-impacts-tickets-102109973680>

*Rakesh Naidu*

- 10-12 Credit unions are now being allowed to be able to distribute funds
- A lot of companies that are under two years that are struggling to access funds due to the structure of the announced programs
- WSIB payments and premiums
  - Premium should reflect the current conditions of work – but it is not true at this point – echo's the comments from Susan Anzolin
  - Insurance Premiums are also becoming an issue
  - Webinar series is growing
  - Follow up from the Survey from Keith – important for our local companies to get this information out

Yvonne Pilon

- Companies are struggling with rent?
  - o Will be response soon from ministers – should hear something soon from province and federal gov't
  - o Landlords are also struggling

Help

- Please – Windsor Essex Businesses – Complete the StatsCan Survey- [www.statcan.gc.ca/CSBC](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/CSBC)

## **Manufacturing**

*Shelley Fellows – Automate Canada*

- Lots of companies in the region are stepping up
- Magna/Linamar – also stepping up
- Industries are stepping up and coming together

Survey Results

- 100 Respondents
- Mixed messages – some negative / some positive
  - o Less companies are
  - o Number of people that are off are about the same
  - o 46% of workplaces report no layoffs
  - o 2700 people are total laid off
  - o Permanent Layoffs
    - Sharp increase this week
  - o There are still people hiring
  - o Gov't programs
  - o Impacts so far
    - Employee anxiety remains at top of list
    - Employee protection is near top
    - Declining sales are also increasing
  - o Sales pipelines are being hit
  - o Cashflow issues are top of the list
  - o Health and Safety concerns are increasing
- Increasing medical equipment is increasing
- 16% of respondents are doing the products or services relating to Health for no charge
- Almost 30% are at full operations
- 8%-19% shutdown
  - o Shortage of employees
  - o Loss of work
  - o Health and safety
- Measure of optimism
  - o People are not sure when they are going to return
  - o People are becoming more pessimistic of speed to return
- **Webinar Wednesday – CMHA – Mental Health in the Workplace**

- *YVONNE PILON & DHARMESH PATEL – both echo the need for mental health in the community*

Survey will be attached to notes and included on Website.

## **BDC**

*Celso Oliveira*

- Any business that is legally eligible to operate in Canada can now work with BDC (cannabis, Bars, Nightclubs, etc.)
- Not a direct lend from BDC – BDC is doing 80% or up to \$5m in co-lending
  - Bank is underwriting the disbursement of funds
    - BDC is purchasing the debts
    - Financial institution is managing the relationship
- EDC is doing up to 100%
  - Tied to the export guarantee
- Canadian Emergency Business Account
- Sometime next week
  - CIBA and Small Loan Program

## **MEDIA PLAN**

*Ryan Donally*

- To keep the community abreast of the goings on and to help tell the story of the efforts that are being undertaken the community, we are proposing a **full week of media releases that cover each committee.**
- Each media release will cover essentially these four key pieces of information (\*if possible):
  - What was the state of the industry.
  - What have the past three weeks looked like and current state
  - Where we expect the industry to go for the coming months
  - Any positive stories
- Each media release will have a quotation from the Committee Chair and a quotation from a Committee Member (preferably a business).
- Each committee will need to complete the attached, MEDIA RELEASE TEMPLATE.
- WE EDC will write the press release then send back to the committee for approval.
- Recognizing that we are coming up to the Easter long weekend, we propose the following schedule of releases. The release will be sent in the morning of the associated date.
  - **Tuesday, April 14** - Task Force Overview and Report from the Windsor-Essex COVID-19 Business Impact Survey Committee
  - **Wednesday, April 15** - Manufacturing Committee
  - **Thursday, April 16** – Agriculture and Agri-Food Committee; Logistics, Transportation and Cross Border Issues Committee

**Friday, April 17** – Professional Services and Retail Committee; Hospitality & Tourism Committee

*Approved to proceed*

## **MEDJCT**

*Nancy Creighton*

- WSIB issue
  - o Two elements:
    - Payroll times rating
  - o Not likely to re-classify companies
- Proud of our community
  - o Everyone is stepping up and doing the part
- Wage Subsidy
  - o Concerns this morning – looks like that people will be covered by people that are on furlough
  - o Changing of calculation to 15% for March
  - o Tech Companies – looking at January and February with respect to March

*Diane Deslippe*

- Nonprofits and Charities
  - o Going well and organizations are being tied together

When we come out of this – start thinking about that as a next step.

Starting conversations with consultants who are thinking about moving into the next step

Arranging some facilitated sessions and tangible planning for the next step

**Meeting ends 4:20**

