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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2020

The highlights of the regular United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Council Meeting held on Thursday, October 22nd, as well as the Committee of the Whole and Joint Services Committee (JSC) meetings earlier this month, are listed below.

Message from the Warden on Local Government: In recognition of Local Government Week in Ontario, Warden Sayeau, at the October 22 Council meeting, thanked all the municipal employees in Leeds and Grenville for keeping our communities safe and operational.

"Your dedication to your jobs is very much appreciated. And to all our local elected officials, I thank you for the work you do in leading your municipalities and making them strong and vibrant communities to live in," he said.

Support for Food Hub servicing Eastern Ontario: Leeds Grenville is sending a letter of support to the United Counties of Prescott and Russell for its innovative Food Hub in Eastern Ontario.

The letter of support was recommended by the Committee of the Whole and will help Prescott and Russell obtain federal and provincial support. The \$36-million project will service much of eastern Ontario and will create 65 jobs. Prescott and Russell will remain the 51% shareholder in the venture.

The purpose of the project is to meet the demand from the Eastern Ontario agriculture sector to process and market their produce locally, rather than shipping their produce outside of the region for processing and marketing. The project will include a slaughterhouse, food processing, and distribution to meet both regional and national demand. Research has confirmed retailers and consumers are increasingly interested in buying quality and traceable local products. The food hub will take the lead in the recovery and revival of agri-food in the region, particularly following the Covid-19 pandemic.

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The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus endorsed and supported this project in September. For more information contact Counties CAO Andy Brown at 613-342-3840, ext. 2301.

Housing Affordability Task Force sets terms of reference: The Joint Services Committee, at its recent meeting, formed a Housing Affordability Task Force and has determined its scope of work.

The terms of reference outline the Task Force's purpose, its responsibilities / scope of work, reporting relationship, support, time frames, and meetings. The Task Force shall bring an interim report to the Joint Services Committee by April 2021 and a final report by October 2021. The final report shall be a summary of the Task Force's work, its findings, and potential options and solutions to increase housing affordability in the region.

The purpose of the Housing Affordability Task Force is to strategically examine housing affordability and needs throughout Leeds and Grenville and recommend prioritized solutions to identify affordable housing and other related and / or associated urban and rural housing needs, that may be implementable by the different municipal levels and by stakeholders.

Paramedic Station option reviewed by council: The Joint Services Committee has reviewed an ApexPro Consulting Inc. report which investigated alternate paramedic station locations in the south / central coverage area.

Following extensive discussion, the committee has directed staff to bring back a report addressing the inequities in ambulance / paramedic response time in Leeds and Grenville, and provide options including, but not limited to, paramedic stations and deployment models by December 2020.

The south / central coverage area is currently served by the existing Brockville South (61 Perth Street) and Brockville North (360 Laurier Boulevard) paramedic stations. Both are co-locate with the Brockville Fire Department.

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Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service administration and support services are situated in the United Counties administration building at 25 Central Avenue West. There is no room for service growth at the location. Patient contact volumes are increasing at a rate of over 6.5% a year.

There are four other paramedic stations located throughout the United Counties: Johnstown, Kemptonville, Elgin and Gananoque. The Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service employs 146 staff, including 12 management / administrative positions and 134 full-time and part-time paramedics. The fleet consists of 17 ambulances, three Emergency Response Units, two administrative vehicles and an Emergency Support Unit. For more information contact Counties CAO Andy Brown at 613-342-3840, ext. 2301.

Maple View Lodge Administrator earns provincial award: Tracy Jordan, administrator of the Counties long-term care facility in Athens, is the recipient of the AdvantAge Ontario Donna Rubin Administrator Leadership Award.

"I commend and recognize Tracy for this significant achievement. Each year, many current and future Administrators enroll in this program and Tracy, through her commitment and tremendous effort, has been honoured with this award and can be considered one of the top leaders in Ontario – congratulations", said Andy Brown, Chief Administrative Officer.

AdvantAge Ontario – Advancing Senior Care represents and supports members in providing a continuum of quality, not-for-profit long term care, seniors' community services and housing.

Process adjustments for Election of new Warden: Counties Council has passed a motion adjusting how council can vote for a new warden for 2021 /2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes recently made to Council's Procedural By-law.

Counties Council can meet fully electronically, or by using a hybrid solution where some members participate in-person and some electronically. The rules for the election of Warden by secret ballot currently do not consider how a member would vote if they

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needed to participate electronically at the Inaugural Session. Public health rules may prohibit a member from participating in person. In consultation with other counties, staff have outlined a proposed solution to ensure all members have the capability to vote for Warden.

The current process will be put aside and for Members wishing to put their name forward for the position of Warden, will self nominate themselves at the Tuesday, November 3rd meeting of the Committee of the Whole and be given the opportunity to speak to the Committee regarding their nomination. If only one member puts their name forward, the nominations will be declared closed and the new Warden will be sworn in on Wednesday, December 9th.

If more than one member puts their name forward, staff have developed a voting process which will enable members to vote for the new Warden even if they are not able to participate in person.

The Council of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville elects a Warden every two years through the process outlined in its Procedural By-law. The election is conducted by secret ballot as allowed by the Municipal Act. The current term for the position of Warden ends when a new Warden is elected at the December 9, 2020 Inaugural Session of Council. For more information contact County Clerk Lesley Todd at 613-342-3840, ext. 2454.

Upcoming meetings: The Committee of the Whole meeting is on Tuesday, November 3rd; the Joint Services Committee on Wednesday, November 4th; Housing Affordability Task Force on Wednesday, November 18th and the regular Counties Council on Thursday, November 19th. All regular meetings begin at 9 a.m. in the Council Chambers at 25 Central Avenue, Brockville. The Inaugural Counties Council meeting is Wednesday, December 9th, 10 a.m. Currently, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Council Chambers are not open to the public and all meetings are livestreamed and can be viewed on the Counties website. For more information, contact County Clerk Lesley Todd at 613-342-3840, ext. 2454.

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Media inquiries:

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