

# OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Christa Lowry



## ROMA Board Meeting October 20, 2020

The Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Board met via Zoom on October 2, 2020. The Board of Directors consists of 10 Zone Representatives and the 4 Rural Caucus Members from AMO.

Matters of note from the October 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting include:

### Strategic Plan

ROMA is undertaking a strategic plan that will focus on three areas:

- 1) Communication/Social Media with ROMA members
- 2) Review of Rules and Procedures (Governance)
- 3) Review of Zone Configurations

A workplan and timeline has been set with proposed amendments coming forward to the 2022 AGM for voting followed by the 2023 Election in 2023.

### 2021 ROMA Conference

Building from AMO's successful online Conference in August, ROMA has decided to move forward with a virtual conference in 2021 using the same platform and working with TVO as well. *ROMA: Connecting Rural Ontario*, the virtual conference will take place on January 25-26. The Board decided to use a condensed, 2 day conference with a lower registration fee. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has already committed to partnering and the Board is expecting good media coverage again, as the virtual format provides easier access to media. An emphasis on networking opportunities was encouraged by the board as a priority.

Early bird pricing is in place until December 31<sup>st</sup>:

[www.roma.on.ca/Events/2021ROMAConference.aspx](http://www.roma.on.ca/Events/2021ROMAConference.aspx)

### Resource Guide on Broadband Connectivity

The Board endorsed the creation of a Resource Guide on Broadband Connectivity. To assist local leadership, this Resource Guide on Broadband Connectivity is being created for municipal elected officials.

Because municipalities have a limited sphere of influence in this policy area, as telecommunications falls under federal jurisdiction, the guide is intended to help standardize knowledge and understanding of important terms and issues when

considering how to achieve improved connectivity. In turn, this Guide will help communities to advocate for sustainable solutions to connectivity challenges and work with industry and other governments for progress. The Guide is proposed to include the following sections/concepts:

- Importance of Rural Broadband
- Telecommunications 101
- 7 Tangible Steps for Councils to Consider
- How Other Levels of Government Can Help
- How Industry Can Help

Staff anticipate having the guide finished and presented at the ROMA Board meeting on November 13 for approval.

### **Communications Plan**

Redbrick Communications provides support for communication to ROMA - the voice for rural municipal governments in Ontario. ROMA works closely with AMO and other peers in the municipal community, providing a rural lens on policy priorities. This collaboration provides an effective, unified voice to advance municipal interests.

Communication to members, stakeholders, up levels of government and other municipal associations will be made through:

- Social media - Facebook, Twitter
- ROMA Insider Newsletter - Board content and conference promo
- Website update - brief advocacy content around a few of key files.
- Conference promotion - Promo video

### **Working Groups**

The Board created a Communications Working Group and 2021 Conference Working Group. I have been appointed to serve on both.



Christa Lowry  
Mayor of Mississippi Mills