



**Township of Southgate  
Conference, Workshop/Seminar & Training Policy #2**

**Council and Staff Education Evaluation Report  
Council, Training, Seminars & Professional Development/Self Study**

**Participant's Name:** Councillor Barbara Dobreen

<b>Course/Workshop/Conference:</b>	<b>Overall Evaluation:</b>				
(Virtual) Annual Politicians Meeting - 2021	Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Average
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Association/Institution Provider:</b>	<b>Name of Instructor:</b>
Bruce Grey Federations of Agriculture	Hosted by Grey and Bruce OFA Presidents

**Dates Attended: (if online, indicate online)** Wednesday, March 24th, 2021 - 9 a.m. to Noon

**Purpose of Attending:**  
To hear directly from the various agricultural sectors, their wins and the issues that continue to challenge them.

**Please summarize the contents and the main points of the course: (Attach additional pages if necessary)**  
Just some highlights/take-aways:  
Access to natural gas and broadband continue to be a priority and appreciation was expressed for the progress and funding being made in these areas.  
The lack of capacity of local meat processing facilities. There is also no formal training program for those wishing to become processors/butchers. Grocery/Retail is concentrated on a few large players that dictate the rules of the game, influence the supply chain, imposing fees on processors solely to their advantage.  
Stewardship programs and the need for continued education of the public with factual information. Activism through social media continues to disregard factual data and common sense.  
Importance of Seasonal and Temporary Farm Workers. There continues to be a labour shortage. Canadians don't want to work in the barns. This makes farming all the more reliant on these workers. Covid protocols continue to be followed but delay access to those workers.  
Educators are not teaching both sides of the story and children are receiving a negative impression of farms. The Boards of Education need to be encouraged to include agriculture in their curriculum in a fair and balanced way. MPP Lisa Thompson committed to bringing the message back to the Minister of Education in this regard.  
Farmers continue to be good stewards of their land as it is in their best interest to do so.  
ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) is a program to work with property owners to take out marginal land and provide financial support for those lands.

**Will you use this information in your role? If yes, explain how:**  
Yes. Staying informed about the largest employer and economic driver in our region and the issues and concerns related to agriculture throughout all sectors allows us to advocate for education, processing and risk mitigation/protection.

**Do you recommend that other Council Members/Staff attend this course? If so, who and why?:**  
Yes. It is an excellent vehicle to understand the broad issues of the agricultural industry, the contribution this sector makes to our economy and the environment and the employment opportunities. It's also nice to hear from our Provincial and Federal representatives.

**Should similar course material be presented in house? If yes, by whom?**  
The OFA continues to reach out to member municipalities throughout the year.

<b>Signature:</b> <i>Barbara Dobreen</i>	<b>Date:</b> March 26th, 2021
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