



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Administration, Finance and Human Resources Committee
From: Susan Farrelly – Director of Human Resources
Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2022
Subject: County Culture Project

Background

The County of Wellington Strategic Action Plan guiding the work for the remaining term of Council indicates under the section “People as the Main Priority of Wellington County” that although the County has a strong positive corporate culture, this corporate culture is not documented anywhere. It became clear through the information-gathering of the Strategic Planning exercise, as well as observed during the various working sessions, that the County Culture is indeed something that is very special, but there isn’t a tangible document or outline defining this. As a Strategic Action in the Plan, the need to identify, define, document and instill the Wellington County Corporate Culture is outlined.

In order to understand why the County Culture is the way that it is today, we must seek to understand the legacy and impact of those who have served before us. The intent is to capture the legacy individuals have left for others, the impact they have had on the County Culture, and the special way they had served during their time for the County of Wellington to pave the way for the County Culture as it is today. By understanding the past, we can understand the culture of the present, and the culture that will best serve the County of Wellington into the future.

County Culture Project

The vision for the project started shortly after the Strategic Action Plan was created in June 2019 in an exciting partnership between Human Resources, Communications and the Museum and Archives under the leadership of Andrea Ravensdale – Communications Manager, Jana Burns – Museum and Wellington Place Administrator, Molly Wright – Manager of Human Resources and myself. Although the project was delayed initially due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the following summer students were hired to start working on this project in 2021:

- Gabrielle Andres (Human Resources)
- Natalie Beilhartz (Museum and Archives)
- Jaimee Courts (Graphic Design)

The hiring of summer students for this project also helped to meet the priority as identified in the Strategic Action plan to engage young professionals. For the following summer in 2022, Gabrielle (Gabby) Andres returned to be the sole student to fully work on this project in its final stages.

As part of their duties, the students were tasked with capturing the stories and gathering photos of individuals who have been identified as being instrumental in forming the County’s Culture and whose stories needed to be shared. These individuals include Elected Officials and employees from the past

and present, as well as retirees and individuals who have passed. In the book we also included vignettes on individuals from a cross-section of our current employee base as well as individuals who provided feedback on County Culture surveys that we received back at the beginning of the project.

The goal of the project is to create a book that would be printed to capture this history, highlighting various people, initiatives and key components of the County Culture. The intent is this would be shared for onboarding of new County employees and Elected Officials. The vision for the creation of a series of videos became a challenge due to the ongoing COVID pandemic; although this is being considered as part of a future County Orientation video project.

We are also looking at the feasibility of planting a “County Culture” 25-year time capsule next year to ensure the preservation and sharing of the County Culture can be shared with the next generation.

I am pleased to let you know that this project is now in its final stages. We are working closely with Chris Piccinetti – Graphic Designer on the design of the book. Suffice it to say, Gabby’s emerging leadership on this project was exceptional and it is her hard work that has brought the project to fruition along with the expertise of Chris Piccinetti. We anticipate the County Culture books to be available in the New Year and a copy will be provided to all Council members of the current term as a thank you for having the vision and leadership to focus on such a worthwhile and heartfelt project for the remainder of the Council term.

The book will provide a lasting legacy of the existing Council in “identifying, defining, documenting and instilling the Wellington County Corporate Culture” as identified in the Strategic Plan.

Recommendations:

THAT the report titled “County Culture Project” be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Farrelly', with a stylized, flowing script.

Susan Farrelly
Director of Human Resources