
SUBJECT: Cabot Head Lighthouse

FROM: Bill Jones, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 10, 2020

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receives CAO report No. 20-06 in regards to the Cabot Head Lighthouse, as information;

AND THAT Council provides direction to staff regarding the Cabot Head Lighthouse.

BACKGROUND:

The Cabot Head Lighthouse has been closed since 2017 due to remediation work carried out on site. Since then, the site has received little maintenance. Council attended the site in 2019 to familiarize themselves with the property and gain an understanding of Friends of Cabot Head's (FOCH) concerns.

Current issues facing the Cabot Head Lighthouse include:

- lease renewal with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO);
- sublease consideration with FOCH;
- road damage to Cabot Head Road; and
- traffic concerns of Dyers Bay residents.

The first order of business is to confirm if the Municipality has an interest in renewing the lease agreement with the DFO (expires April 30, 2020). If the Municipality does not wish to sign the lease agreement NBP would have further responsibilities regarding the Cabot Head Lighthouse and property.

FOCH Lease

Secondly, the Municipality must consider the renewal of a sublease with FOCH. Currently, FOCH has proposed alternatives for Council's consideration. Option #1 is status quo wherein FOCH operates its existing programming including a lighthouse keeper assistant, gift shop and museum. Option #2 includes FOCH managing museum programming only and contracting out additional visitor experiences, such as astronomy, kayaking, hiking, etc. Option #2 also dramatically reduces traffic volumes as the site only plans on operating 2 days a week.

When Council considers the above options from FOCH, they must also consider that FOCH has stated that they no longer wish to be responsible for grounds maintenance.

Municipal Impacts

If the Municipality decides to renew its lease with DFO and sublease to FOCH, the following financial impacts should be considered:

- Grounds maintenance-
Grass cutting, building repairs, washrooms, sidewalks, walkways, etc. Using Municipal staff for these maintenance activities would be around \$5,000-10,000 annually.
- Hydro-
The current hydro line is old, unreliable and susceptible to tree fall. The only practical long-term solution is a solar/generator set up at an estimated value of \$30,000-40,000.

Road Issues

Cabot Head Road is/has always been a maintenance dilemma. It is partially on private land and Provincial land. The Municipality maintains the "travelled track" only and nothing else. The road is narrow, rough and difficult to grade. Recently, the road sustained substantial damage due to winds and high water. The Public Works Manager has advised Council of the extent of the damage, however an estimate for repairs has not yet been provided. The road provides access to Provincial parkland, a bird observatory and Cabot Head Lighthouse. The road is also a popular biking and hiking trail. Regardless of the future use of the Lighthouse, there are reasons to keep Cabot Head Road open.

Traffic Concerns

The residents of Dyers Bay have stated concerns with the volume of traffic created by visitors to the Cabot Head Lighthouse. In its last year of operation, the Lighthouse saw approximately 16,000-18,000 visitors. If Council does extend a lease offer to FOCH, the CAO would recommend that Option #2 be considered, as it will dramatically reduce vehicle traffic to the site. Secondly, a lease renewal could be on an annual basis in order to review and gauge the success of proposed Lighthouse programming alternatives.

Summary

There are many issues to consider regarding the Cabot Head Lighthouse and its possible future direction. If Council decides to renew its lease of the Lighthouse with DFO, the first order of business will be the consideration of a sublease with FOCH. Staff would recommend Option #2 and let FOCH explore scaled down, higher end, visitor experience opportunities for the site, thus providing much needed revenue while dramatically reducing traffic volume concerns from Dyers Bay residents. The current road related issues will have to be addressed prior to the Lighthouse reopening and depending on costs and additional permits, if applicable, the Lighthouse may not be repaired in time for the beginning of the 2020 tourist season. This report provides several options and lists current issues related to the Cabot Head Lighthouse. There is ample information for Council to consider and based on

discussion from Council, staff will narrow down options and issues and come back to Council in the near future with further details.

ATTACHMENTS:

- FOCH Delegation Presentation from January 27, 2020 Council Meeting

MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating strategic objectives, it can be assured that the actions taken by the Municipality create value across all strategic priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. In doing so, the Municipality moves closer to its vision of providing a safe, progressive municipality that is committed to managing growth and providing a welcoming, diverse and environmentally sustainable community that enhances the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

Strategic Priority	Yes	No
Well managed and fiscally responsible municipal government is enhanced	☒	☐
Conservation and protection of unique natural environment including the encouragement of well managed growth is enhanced	☒	☐
Health, safety and education of the community are enhanced.	☒	☐
Development/promotion of cultural and recreational opportunities is enhanced.	☒	☐
Citizen involvement is enhanced.	☒	☐
Economic development strategies are enhanced.	☐	☐
Does the option(s) recommended create value across all strategic priorities?	☐	☐
Does the option(s) recommended make Northern Bruce Peninsula a municipality of choice for high performance public servants?	☐	☐



Bill Jones, Chief Administrative Officer

Friends of Cabot Head

2020 Business Plan



0

Table of Contents

1. Context & Challenges
2. Proposed Path Forward
3. 2020 Business Plan
4. Requests of Council

Appendix – Additional Details

1

1

1 | Context & Challenges

2

Friends of Cabot Head (FOCH) Overview

- Lighthouse originally established in 1896 to guide ships rounding Cabot Head
- Friends of Cabot Head established as a non-profit in August 1994 to preserve the site given its historical significance
- FOCH maintains numerous amenities as part of the site, including:
 - Museum covering history of peninsula lighthouses, shipwrecks, and Wingfield Basin
 - Meneray Fishing Camp diorama
 - Self-guided walking tour & picnicking area
 - Souvenir gift shop
- Importantly, FOCH is powered by volunteers, as well as a small contingent of paid seasonal staff¹



¹. As of 2016, this included a full-time site manager (6 months), a part time business manager (12 months), a co-op student, and a bookkeeper.

3

3

Recent Challenges Recap

Summary

- Starting prior to the visiting season in 2017 the site has been closed to the public due to remediations required by the Department of Fisheries & Oceans and Coast Guard
- Many of these remediations have been delayed in completion: though the closure began in 2017, the majority of the work was not completed until mid-late 2019
- In several instances, the work has been of poor quality, creating the need for future remediations as well
 - Potential damage to artefacts in storage
 - Leaks from repaired windows / exterior causing mold
 - Poor seals and painting in several instances
- While FOCH is keen to see the site once again open to the public, many of these issues will need to be addressed prior to reopening to ensure a safe and inviting environment for all visitors

Timeline of Events

- Apr 17 – Suspension of Lease Agreement with MNP
- May 17 – New skeleton FOCH board elected
- June 17 – MNP notified by DFO to cease using lighthouse for short-term residence due to health risks
- July to Oct 17 – FOCH redrafts business plan for reopening
- Aug to Oct 17 – AMEC Foster Wheeler on-site for environmental testing; identify asbestos, lead, mercury
- Full year 18 – Planning by DFO and PWGSC of proposed remediations, tenders, archaeological, environmental)
- Sept 18 – packing and storage of items by a few volunteers and FOCH board members
- Jan to March 19 – interior work on buildings
- June to July 19 – Exterior painting, pump house replacement, fencing, soil abatement
- July 19 – site meetings with MNP, DFO, FOCH
- Sept 19 – replacement of light tower by coast guard

See appendix for images documenting the current condition of the site

4

4

Other Challenges Several longstanding issues for FOCH

Challenge	Description
Funding	- Historically, FOCH was financially sound with a strong reserve fund, but was reliant on funding tied to operations (i.e., visitor tips, gift shop, Assistant Lighthouse Keeper program) - Membership base is small which created some financial risks in the event seasons were slow or there were disruptions to open hours (as has been the case – see next page)
Resourcing	- FOCH has relied heavily on its volunteer Board of Directors in order to complete key tasks related to the site's operations (e.g., bookkeeping, promotion, curation, etc.) - Increasing volume of visitors July-August as well as the aging of key members and volunteers has made the previous model unsustainable
Traffic	- For years, Dyers Bay residents have expressed concerns regarding the nuisance and safety issues caused by growing traffic coming to the site (see appendix for additional details) - The road itself is in relatively poor condition and is exposed to erosion / debris from and rough or seasonal weather – reopening to public would require significant improvements to be made to the road

These challenges pre-date the recent closures and would have needed to be addressed by FOCH regardless

5

5

2 | Proposed Path Forward

6

Our Objective
Based on feedback from the 2019 FOCH AGM

Maintain public access to the Cabot Head Lighthouse, Museum & surrounding grounds as an **interactive and informative experience** that showcases the unique history of the area and marine activity during the operational period to today.

7

7

Our Objective (with Implications) Based on feedback from the 2019 FOCH AGM

Even as we think about other uses / partnerships, ensuring public access continues remains paramount; requires us to prioritize addressing previous access issues (i.e., road)

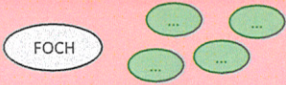
Maintain public access to the Cabot Head Lighthouse, Museum & surrounding grounds as an **interactive and informative experience** that showcases the unique history of the area and marine activity during the operational period to today.

Implies a relatively unrestricted view on programming at the site, as long as they show some alignment to the historical and modern uses

8

8

Strategic Options Several potential routes considered to achieve this objective

OPTION #1 Continue current model	OPTION #2 Pursue partnership model	
 FOCH continues to run its existing programming (e.g., Assistant Lighthouse Keeper, Gift Shop, Museum) with requisite hiring of paid staff and ongoing hands-on support from the Board of Directors + Familiar model; team has experience / expertise in running this way + Greatest potential financial upside available for FOCH + Maintain significant control over site programming to maintain heritage link - Significant effort required to prep for season; likely too late for 2020 - FOCH still in a position to fund upkeep, which is difficult / unlikely - Board / volunteer base unlikely to be able to support at required level	 FOCH continues to run / manage core pieces of its programming (e.g., museum) but works other local firms to create programming for the site (see following slide for some potential examples) + Significantly lower operational burden for FOCH; focus on just its core + Likely more sustainable going forward and less volunteer / board reliant + Brings greater diversity of programming to the area - Potential to dilute / lose original heritage purpose of the site - May exacerbate some of the previous access issues with Dyers Bay - May be difficult to guarantee FOCH maintains a role in the future	Option #2 is preferred as we believe it is the most sustainable way to achieve FOCH's objectives

9

9

Option #2: Pursue Partnership Model Illustrative Examples

DAYTIME – Kayaking Trip



A Local outfitter runs day-trips kayaking to the shipwreck in Dyers Bay for a group of 10, transported by van from a local inn. They use the cooking facilities in the cottage to prepare a pre-planned lunch, provide a tour of the lighthouse to their group, and have the ability to take a break in the cottage or picnic area. A portion of the days revenue is donated directly to FOCH.

Ecological Impact: Low
Traffic Impact: Low-Medium
Heritage Adherence: High

OVERNIGHT – “Photo Safari”



An area photographer hosts a Photo Safari in support of FOCH initiatives. The group is able to use the overnight facilities to conduct a unique and exclusive experience on an overnight weekend in June enabling unique Astrophotography opportunities, with portions of the weekends revenue directed to the FOCH.

Ecological Impact: Low
Traffic Impact: Low
Heritage Adherence: High

10

10

Potential Partners Illustrative Examples

Explorer's Tread

- Locally owned (Zane Davis)
- Offers summer programming for canoeing / kayaking trips as well as lessons → *fits well with desired outdoor uses for the site*
- Also offers winter programs for snowshoeing and skiing trips → *interesting way to expand use of the site, but would require addition maintenance / grounds work (e.g., road access)*

Fathom Five

- Locally owned (Scott Parent)
- Offers a wide range of lessons for paddle boarding, kayaking, and canoeing → *also fits with outdoor use cases for site*
- Additionally offers guided tours and self-rentals → *potential to serve heritage preservation aims as well (i.e., guided tours of Wingfield Basin history)*

Bird Observatory

- Government-run
- Adjacency gives familiarity with operating in the Basin → *seems logical to pursue some greater integration; also, are already familiar / partner in many of the access issues for the current site*
- Provides a variety of tours and self-guided searches → *serves need for environmental oriented programming on the existing site*

Additional potential partners include Georgian Bay Regatta, Parks Canada / Ontario, and other local clubs (e.g., stargazing, bike tours)

11

11

Partnership Structure Key Considerations

The partnership model will be new to FOCH and so we expected 2020 will be a testing & learning year for the organization. There are several characteristics of the partnership model we will explore and refine over the course of 2020.

- **Number of Partners** – FOCH has begun preliminary conversations with several potential partners and it is possible that at maturity there are multiple organizations using the site on pre-determined dates; striking the right balance will be key (i.e., enough partners to fill dates; not so many that it becomes difficult to manage)
- **Revenue Models** – Under most envisioned partnership models, FOCH would limit its scope (focusing primarily on the museum and related activities); however, even as commercial operators move-in FOCH would look for some contributions to help sustain its operations (e.g., revenue share, sub-lease, or other)
- **Lease Arrangements** – FOCH remains the primary leaseholder but it is not yet clear whether another arrangement (e.g., sublease) would be beneficial in order to mitigate risk and minimize costs (e.g., insurance); for the time being, we would envision FOCH remains the primary lease-holder

Finalizing this arrangement will be a key focus of 2020 - we will continue to keep the municipality informed of our progress

12

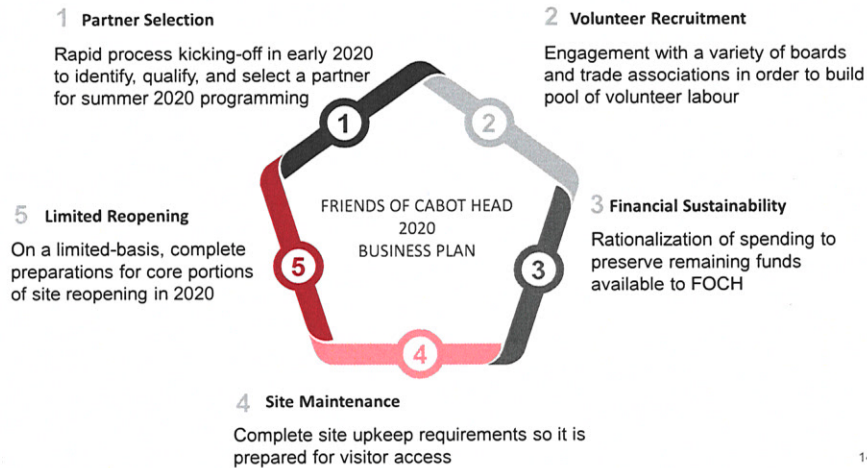
12

3 | 2020 Business Plan

13

Executive Summary A Year of Transition

Our 2020 business plan anticipates a transition year, as we look to once again make the site available to the public but establish a new, more sustainable model for the future of FOCH. The Plan consists of five core components:



14

14

1 Partner Selection

Selecting a proper slate of partners is the highest priority item within our 2020 business plan; we envision two partner “types”

	HOSTED ACTIVITIES Recurring activities hosted over the course of a season on-site	EVENTS & FUNDRAISER One-off events
Examples Activities	- Guided activities on the surrounding land - Activities in the light house, - Activities in the Cottage, - Offsite activities based from the property	- FOCH produces food & a rest station for a bicycle race passing by the site - Specific days are published & promoted as open-house access to the ground staffed by volunteers & FOCH members
Example Partners	- Photographers - Kayaks & other recreational activities / lessons - Historic Natural Societies - Arts & Entertainment Groups - Educational Non-Profits	- Local fundraisers - Local Hospital Initiatives - Georgian Bay Regatta - Bicycle Tours - BPEG

A first step in 2020 will be establishing the criteria by which these partners are selected and the “rules of the road” for how they will work with FOCH

15

15

2 Volunteer Development

Two primary areas where volunteers are needed beyond the the Assistant Lighthouse Keeper Program (ALK)

Area of Need	Museum Setup	Grounds & Maintenance	Assistant Lighthouse Keepers
Description of Activities	Organization, documentation, and preparation of the museum	Ensure safe & welcoming nature of the site; focus on maintenance beyond what ALKs provide	Customer service and visitor greeting at the site as well as basic groundskeeping
Frequency of Support	- One-time project to prepare for reopening of museum - Likely spans over multiple days / weeks	- Weekly / bi-weekly for regular maintenance items - Ad hoc support for bigger projects (e.g., electrical)	- Weekly bookings Monday – Sunday - Program runs for ~25 weeks (from May – October)
# of Volunteers / Hours Needed	To be determined (likely 100+ hours in aggregate)	Historically 5-10 hours per week (minimum)	Half-time daily (i.e., 4-5 hours per for entire season)
Potential Strategies	Secondary: potential to turn museum curation exercise into learning activity for students → target Bluewater District School Board for potential inclusion in history coursework or as field trip Post-Secondary: ideal candidate for extracurricular / Spring co-op students → target Georgian College (Barrie) Hospitality students	Secondary: potential opportunity to include volunteer grounds-keeping as part of community service hours required to graduate → target school boards to reach students Trades: will likely need support from skilled trades for specific maintenance needs → create listing of supporter vendors willing to do work for free (potentially in exchange for ads) Partner: potential future responsibility of private partner	Continued Advertising: historically had ample interest in the program; would renew simple advertising and outreach Note – FOCH will need to determine the feasibility of the program if private sector partner is retained (i.e., will all the facilities needed by the ALKs still be available for use?)

16

16

3 Financial Sustainability

To preserve funds during this transition, we are curtailing all unnecessary expenditures until operations resume

- As previously mentioned, while the Cabot Head site has not been in operation, some costs have continued
- The result has been a gradual elimination of the previous operating surpluses and financial “cushion” that FOCH had built
- At the 2019 AGM, it was agreed that the new Board would review all expenses and seek to curtail all non-essentials
- This review will take place in Q1 2019

Cost Category	2018A	2019A	2020F
Purchases (Store, Books)	\$51	\$ -	TBD
POS + Paypal	\$ 633	\$ 624	TBD
Employee Benefits (EI, CPP, etv)	\$93	\$101	TBD
Insurance	\$5,575	\$4,167	TBD
Hydro	\$459	\$455	TBD
Communications	\$343	\$108	TBD
Office Supplies	\$40	\$40	TBD
Post & Courier	\$88	\$176	TBD
Advertise & Signs	\$ -	\$300	TBD
Bank Charges	\$387	\$266	TBD
Book Keeping	\$1,158	\$537	TBD
Accounting	\$293	\$382	TBD
Memberships	\$125	\$145	TBD
Total Costs	\$9,450	\$7,291	TBD

As the partnership discussions unfold early in 2020, concurrently we will design a forecasted budget for the “new” FOCH model

17

17

4 Site Maintenance

Despite the work completed over the past year, several portions of the site remain in poor condition and require remediation

Item	Description	Estimated Cost	Proposed Owner
Outdoor Washrooms	Minor repairs required in order to support continued stream of visitors; would be focus area for FOCH	TBD	FOCH
Grounds Repairs	DFO required to complete its external work in order for the site to be accessible for visitors / users	TBD	DFO
Internal Repairs	DFO will be asked to repair damage caused by their contractors; other cosmetic updates to be completed by FOCH (e.g., interior painting)	TBD	FOCH / DFO
Road Repairs	Need to ensure proper clearance and that road is usable for visitors; need to ensure erosion / weather proofing as well that is not currently available	TBD	Municipality
Electricity Access	Site has had intermittent access issues historically; will need to be remediated in order to support private sector partner	TBD	Municipality
Water Access	Need to a new water line in order to support facilities on-site; municipality support needed to address access issues	TBD	Municipality

We are working to obtain estimates for all the remaining work required to make the site accessible

18

18

5 Limited Re-Opening

While the partnership model is determined, there are several steps we will take to prepare the museum for reopening

- As the site access is returned to FOCH, there is an ambition amongst the Board to reopen to the public
- Due to the constraints outlined earlier, this would be a limited reopening, likely focused solely on the museum
- Even doing so represents a large task, as there is a backlog of curation / clean-up activities needed to prep for open
- With volunteering, completing this prep remains another goal for early 2020

Activity	Description
Museum Curation	Museum artefacts need proper cataloging and documentation in order to ensure easier management and assembly <i>Note: this has long been a to do for FOCH and will be something completed regardless of whether the site is reopened (assuming we can find volunteer capacity)</i>
Layout Redesign	With clarity around potential uses of partners, FOCH will be able to determine what space it can use and how
Museum Setup	Time required to arrange items within museum to once again prepare for opening

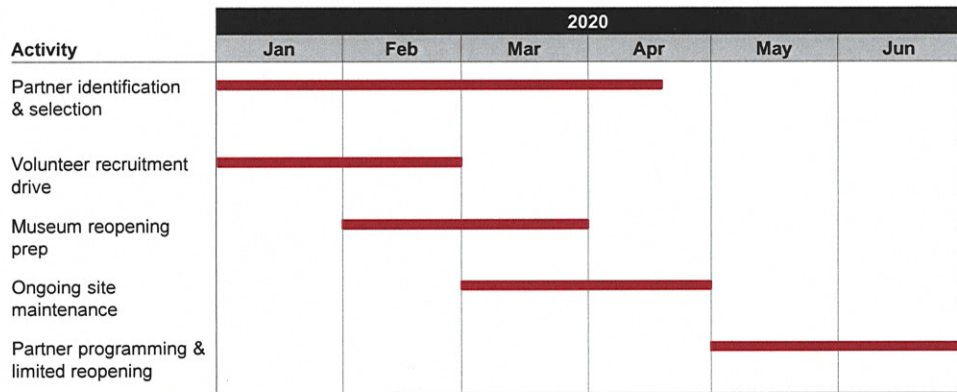
A "go / no-go" decision regarding this limited reopening will be made in early spring based on progress to date

19

19

Expected Timeline

The known work at this time is front-loaded, aiming to complete prep and make key decisions prior to March



We believe that while this timeline is ambitious given our starting point it remains achievable for a limited scope opening /partnership in 2020

20

20

4 | Requests of Council

21

Areas Requiring Council Support For Discussion



22

22

Appendix Site Condition

23

Exhibit A – Water Damage (Nov 2019)
Likely due to poor sealing around windows and hatch

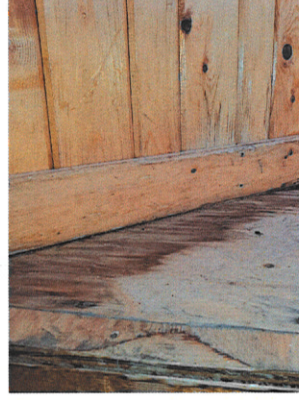
Ceiling Mold



Collapsed Drywall



Floor Water Damage



24

24

Exhibit B – Road Condition (Nov 2019)
Frequent challenges as a result of inclement weather

Debris leaving road impassible



25

25