

# **LEADERSHIP IN BUILDING REGULATION**

A Strategic Forum for the Management of Building Regulation in Municipalities

Topic:       **The Silver Tsunami and Talent Management Challenges in Municipal Building Departments**

## ***PROGRAM***

8:30   **Welcome**                   **Aubrey LeBlanc, CAO, OBOA**

- Focus on practical tools for recruitment and retention

8:35   **The Challenge**       **Matt Farrell, CBO, Huron-Kinloss, VP OBOA**  
**Joyanne Beckett, Certification/Continuing Education Chair, OBOA**

- Demographics from report commissioned by ICC (should be similar for Canada)
  - 50% of building officials are between 55-64 yr of age
  - work for local municipalities of population less than 70,000
  - building department of 1 – 9 people
  - have 26 – 35 yr experience of which 5 – 15 as building official (expect that would be higher for Ontario)
  - most entered the profession in their 30's
  - Expect to leave profession in 5 – 15 years
- Issues attracting young people to the building official industry
- Current tools – college outreach, internship, certification
- Future tools? - co-op college students, university internship programs, high school co-op programs
- Should OBOA be preparing a standard handout that could be used for promotion at high schools.
- During BSM, take a student to work day to introduce them to the profession.
- Work with colleges to develop a full time program for building official profession.
- Arrange for class to visit a work site.
- Potential to create a sub-committee to work on bringing individuals into the profession.
- Challenge for current OBOA internship program
  - required combination of experience and education restricts participation by recent graduates,
  - legal exam a challenge for new participants (Part 10/11 section),

- need tools to assist rural areas where mentor may not be close,
- perhaps entry level of legal required.
- Challenge for current OBOA Certification Program
  - OBOA streamed certification varies from other Provincial association that use levels
  - 1800 OBOA members, ½ are certified
  - Many job postings require or ask for CBCO (except for GTA)
  - Lack of appreciation of the benefits of CBCO being education and experience to compliment the exams
  - Mixed reaction between specialized and generalist, or progressive CBCO requirements
- City of Hamilton stats
  - 75 building officials and 4 co-op students
  - In past year 3 retired, 3 left for other municipalities
  - 5 eligible to retire in next year
  - 18 of 36 inspectors eligible to retire in next 5-10 years
  - 10% of inside staff eligible to retire in next 5-10 years

**9:30 Human Capital     Sandra McKenzie, Manager of Human Resources, Aurora**

- “Circle of Influence” – what can you control
- Need to create a plan: where you are – circle of influence – where you will be in 5 years
- Often challenges with corporate policies on hiring vs. workload and ability to hire
- Need to be able to prove effectiveness with current compliment of staffing before hiring additional staff
- How can you mine the retired building officials as a resource (either part time or contract) need flexibility in workforce
- Need to plan more than 1 year out, look at service level expectation, prove the numbers
- Opportunities to “sell” the profession like the firefighters do: open houses, marketing,
- Challenge is that municipalities are all fishing for the same fish
- Need to flexible in the experience “ask”
- HR staff are your partners
- Find out how to “stand out”
- Some reasons people stay in the position:
  - Challenges
  - Interesting

- Job security
- Lifestyle improvements
- Family time
- Good money
- Create message in language to attract people (no one knows what a building official is)
- How would you message at attract:
  - “Help stop stupid everyday”
  - “Do you want to know more than Mike Holmes”
  - “Beautiful area to live, work and play”
  - “Come work for the rooftop of ontario”
  - “How do you build a world in seven days”
- Key message takeaways
  - Is your pond right
  - What are you looking for, is your pond too small
  - How do you get attention
- 40-70% of people misrepresent their resumes (always verify information)
- what is “fit”:
  - body language, personality, responses, tone of voice, interpersonal skills, attitude
  - does the candidate ask questions of the interviewers at the end shows interest
- What types of things have municipalities done to develop people in this industry?
  - Internal mentorship for management
  - Job shadowing for technical people
  - Training plan
  - Regular check-in by management
  - Introduction from HR to municipal team
  - Make sure learning is just not creating a “vinyl graveyard”
  - Things that do not work – not welcoming new staff (ignoring), not making them feel like there are opportunities, not coaching,
- Retention strategies
  - Secondments of staff with other municipalities to gain experience
  - How to manage the musical chairs
  - Partnering with other municipalities for such things as benefits, insurance, etc.
  - Sharing interns across a number of municipalities
  - Articulate clear expectations, provide feedback, check-in

- Strong Foundation:
  - Have the real conversations
  - Be professional and respectful
  - Have trust
  - Deal with conflict and difficult situations

**1:00 Education Grant Brouwer, CBO, Town of St. Marys, VP OBOA  
Joe Sirianni, Chair, Technology/Trades, George Brown College  
Andrew Pariser, VP, RESCON**

- Partnership of the GBC/OBOA training platforms
- First course (blended Small Buildings) has started at GBC, and OBOA will commence in June
- Development of Building Official certificate program under the continuing education platform (making a student market ready)
  - Core courses (Legal, Building Official and the Law, Part 9 H&S, Part 9 Bldg Env)
  - Building sciences
  - Building official skills
  - Communication skills
  - Legal and House exams
- Potential for development of future full time degree program
- RESCON developed 28 week program with GBC as a post diploma program in construction management (14 week in class, 14 week on site)
- Placements in RESCON program are with builders, pay \$400/week for 14 weeks
- Meaningful work but does not have to be totally productive, could be learning driven work.
- 15 students per year in program based on money for scholarships and placement opportunities
- RESCON – right/wrong? Correctly identified the need and had high engagement from the builders for placements, need champions. Challenge was timing and competition with other programs, need significant involvement in moving forward.

**1:45 Internship Frank Bidin, CBO, Ottawa  
Richard Ashe, Manager, Permit Approvals, Ottawa**

- Recruitment challenges, significant growth and resourcing needs
- Introduced entry level building official position
- Succession management tool

- Program includes, training and development, ongoing evaluation, and successful completion of qualification exams
- Interns are temporary employees and upon completion can apply for posted vacancies
- Mentor assigned to every intern to champion corporate culture and code of conduct (important to pick right individual)
- Program deliverables are documented
- Intern must have legal exam and not less than 5 years experience or equivalency in post-secondary education and experience in area of practice
- Progressive program

**3:15 Wrap-Up Panel**     **Brenda Lewis, Chief Building Official for Ontario**  
**Alan Shaw, President, OBOA, CBO Sarnia**  
**Sandra Burrows, Executive, LMCBO, CBO St. Catharines**  
**Moderator: Mike Leonard, CBO, Oshawa**

**Take Aways:**

- Brenda Lewis – will review internship program, will look at means to support GBC/OBOA partnership in training, municipalities should look at HR policies.
- Sandy Burrows – we need to market ourselves better, work better together, regional networks, standardize training and competency requirements, standardized remunerations, work together.
- Alan Shaw – all need to make commitment to invest in people, young people coming out of school (not just as summer fill-ins, but to develop into profession), need to educate people on what we do and who we are.
- Mike Leonard – Promote through Building Safety Month, self promotion similar to fire department, work together regionally to promote uniformity.
- Aubrey LeBlanc - multiple solutions possible, recognition and valuation of profession in the larger playing field, role for OBOA, LMCBO and Ministry as partners.

**Suggestions from Participants:**

- Ministry could create service level guidelines (ie. Staffing per permits, etc, to assist with hiring)
- Ministry could create guideline on direct vs. indirect costs

**4:30 Close**                      **Aubrey LeBlanc**