



# Norfolk County Office of the Mayor

## AMO MOH MEETING – KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

### 1. Forestry Farm Road Abandoned Gas Wells

- **Background:**
  - Nearly 10 years of unresolved gas/water discharge issues.
  - Original “capping” strategy failed; proved ineffective.
  - New provincial funding (late 2024) → monitoring wells + hydrogeological study.
  - May 2025 report: Multiple discharge points, pressure cannot be fully stopped.
- **New Recommendations:**
  - Install pressure relief well (~\$500K).
  - Air quality improvement + water treatment tech (~\$1M).
  - Ongoing site monitoring (groundwater flow, gas emissions).
  - Decommission nearby wells via Abandoned Works Program.
  - Temporary collection system + vacuum degasser.
  - Prevent erosion at original site.
  - Environmental Assessment for long-term options.
  - Create technical working group (County, MNR, MOE, MOH).
- **Ask from Province:**
  - Multi-Ministry coordinated plan (MNR, MOE, MOH).
  - Additional funding + approvals for equipment and treatment systems.
- **Montrose Environmental Report Findings:**
  - H<sub>2</sub>S levels highest recorded in Ontario.
  - Quarterly monitoring for 1 year; reassess and identify additional groundwater discharge points (thermal infrared).
  - Do not plug FFR discharge without first reducing pressure in bedrock aquifers.



# Norfolk County Office of the Mayor

## 2. Physician Recruitment

- **Local Situation:**
  - Thousands unattached to a family physician.
  - ER overcrowding; clinics understaffed; residents travel for care.
- **County Actions:**
  - \$250K approved for local recruitment efforts.
  - \$100K to Norfolk General Hospital for recruitment activities.
- **Requests to Province:**
  - Incentives to attract physicians to rural areas.
  - Support Rural Clinical Education Hubs (placements + mentorship for med students).
  - Expedite licensing pathways for qualified graduates.
  - Clarify Norfolk's role in Dr. Jane Philpott's Primary Care Action Team and results achieved to date.

## 3. GEPH Merger

- **Progress & Focus:**
  - Strong Ministry partnerships guiding transition.
  - Moved from corporate service integration → program harmonization + future state design.
  - Building internal capacity, improving service delivery, supporting staff through change.
- **Financial Considerations:**
  - Transitional costs (wage harmonization, etc.).
  - Request for future budget adjustments to prevent municipal impact.
  - Merger part of broader goal to strengthen Ontario's public health system.