



Committee Minutes

Economic Development Advisory Committee December 11, 2015 – 7:30 AM

The Economic Development Advisory Committee met on the above date at Grey County Administration Building with the following members in attendance:

Present: Warden Barfoot; Lynda Bumstead; Ashley Chapman; Councillor Clumpus; Brian Davenport; Karen Ferri; Don Lewis; Marion Lougas; and Councillor McQueen

Regrets: Lance Thurston

Staff Present: Bryan Plumstead, Manager of Economic Development and Tourism; Meredith Bowers, Economic Development Officer; Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer; Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Sharon Vokes, County Clerk/Director of Council Services; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning; Geoff Hogan, Director of Information Technology; and Mary Jane Hills, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Sharon Vokes called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

Mrs. Vokes called for nominations for Chair of the Economic Development Advisory Committee for 2016.

Moved by: Councillor Clumpus

Seconded by: Councillor McQueen

THAT Don Lewis be nominated Chair of the Economic Development Advisory Committee for 2016.

On motion by Brian Davenport, nominations closed.

Don Lewis accepted the nomination for Chair.

Don Lewis was acclaimed Chair of the Committee for 2016.

Mrs. Vokes then called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Economic Development Advisory Committee for 2016.

Moved by: Don Lewis

Seconded by: Warden Barfoot

THAT Brian Davenport be nominated Vice Chair of the Economic Development Advisory Committee for 2016.

On motion by Councillor Clumpus, nominations closed.

Brian Davenport accepted the nomination.

Brian Davenport was acclaimed Vice Chair for 2016.

Don Lewis then assumed the Chair.

Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by: Brian Davenport

Seconded by: Warden Barfoot

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee agenda dated December 11, 2015 be adopted as presented.

Carried

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There was none.

Business Arising from the Minutes

Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee minutes dated September 25, 2015

These minutes are for information only as they were adopted by Grey County Council on October 6, 2015.

SouthWestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) Project Update

Geoff Hogan spoke to the group about the different projects underway to bring true high speed internet connectivity to Grey County residents and businesses. The SWIFT project is moving forward with more regions recently joining the effort. More partners translates into more leverage when requesting provincial funding. This project started in May 2011 and signs are pointing to funding announcements being made very soon.

It is the desire of the organization to have private business run this open fibre network. Once it is up and running residuals would be paid by the users, and these residuals would help fund more of the project. The service providers involved in the project need to make

profits so that they can replace the fibre when that time comes. It is the last mile of service that will be challenging to complete. In the current marketplace, internet provider's sharing infrastructure is extremely rare so this initiative is a whole new way of doing business.

Geoff also discussed the Grey Area Telecom (GREAT) Network and Connected County which will tie into the SWIFT project.

Staff Updates

Bryan Plumstead advised the group of recent budget approvals for 2016 that includes changes to some current staff time allocations, and a new staffing position for special projects that will be shared with the Tourism budget.

Meredith Bowers provided updates on recently completed projects and new ones underway including a very successful Career Fair held in Hanover, ongoing business tours that have been well received, and the new Launch Pad initiative that recently opened in Hanover where Grey County provided funding that will support the welding shop and commercial kitchen.

Meredith worked the Zoomer Trade Show in Toronto, participated in the Bridges to Better Business session in Owen Sound and is pleased to have completed the Grey County Economic Profile. The profile took a lot of energy to compile and complete in a uniform manner. Now that a new standard is in place, it will be updated annually, and will be much easier to coordinate than the initial effort. Meredith has also participated in an area Real Estate Trade Show, has attended training sessions, and is supporting Chamber of Commerce events held throughout the County.

Philly Markowitz was pleased to advise the Committee of the completion of the Grey County On Farm Business Policy Review that was recently presented to the Planning and Community Development Committee. The review was undertaken by graduate Planning students of the University of Waterloo working in tandem with Grey County's Planning department. Over 500 hours of work went into the project at an estimated value of \$25,000. Next steps will be to bring some of the recommendations forward in policy format to Committee and Council. The document will be emailed to Committee members for review.

Grey County Economic Development and Planning Departments, and Grey Agriculture Services are working together on some joint projects in 2016.

Philly provided an update on the Saints and Sinners project with plans lined up for 2016 to make further inroads in that growing market. Regional Tourism Organization 7 is assisting the initiative with shared funding opportunities.

Plans are also in the works for further partnering with Georgian College under their Food Entrepreneur program, applications are underway for Rural Economic Development (RED) funding, and a local food and beverage annex is being planned for the Owen Sound Home Show this Spring.

2016 Workplan Review

Bryan Plumstead, Meredith Bowers and Philly Markowitz presented an overview of actions, timelines and budget allocation to be undertaken by staff in 2016 to align work efforts with the Made in Grey Economic Development Strategy.

Discussions took place about some of the initiatives planned.

Following up on a request made at the last meeting, Meredith priced out the cost for Grey County to become a member of all the Chamber of Commerce groups within Grey County. There are six of these, and it would cost between \$1,500 and \$2,000 to join these chambers annually. It was discussed how joining the local Chambers would send a strong message that the County values their work. It was discussed how this would be a newsworthy initiative by the County.

Moved by: Ashley Chapman

Seconded by: Councillor Clumpus

WHEREAS Expanding the Prosperity Base is the number one goal of Grey County's Strategic Plan;

AND WHEREAS supporting local Chambers of Commerce is an excellent way to connect with and support local businesses;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Grey County become a member of each local Chamber of Commerce within Grey County in order to support local business initiatives.

Carried

Discussions took place on how success of the Made in Grey Economic Development Strategy will be measured.

It was suggested that Grey County look at leaders in this area such as Halton Region to review its best practices and benchmark Grey's practices to that. It was also suggested that one-on-one conversation is needed with area business owners to understand their needs from local government. It was stated that success is a feeling, not a statistical measurement.

It is paramount to have all county and municipal staff work together to support and assist local economic growth.

Other Business

School Accommodations Review

Randy Scherzer advised that the Planning Department has commented on the School Accommodations Review on behalf of the County. This document will be sent out to Committee members for review.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 23, 2016 at 7:30 a.m. at the Grey County Administration Building in Owen Sound.

On motion by Bryan Davenport, the meeting adjourned at 9:34 AM.

Don Lewis, Chair