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## Tourism Advisory Committee

### March 15, 2019 – 9:00 AM

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

Present: Andrew Siegwart; Jim Halliday; Joel Dawson; and Councillors Shirley Keaveney and Sue Carleton

Regrets: Andrea O'Reilly and Jim Diebel

#### Staff

Present: Bryan Plumstead, Tourism Manager; Heather Morrison, Clerk; Heather Aljoe, Tourism Marketing and Communications Specialist; Alison Theodore, Tourism Partner and Media Relations Specialist; and Jacquelyn Morrison, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator

## Call to Order

The Clerk called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

## Election of the Chair and Vice Chair

The Clerk called for nominations for Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee for 2019.

*TAC01-19* Moved by: Shirley Keaveney                      Seconded by: Jim Halliday

**That Andrew Siegwart be nominated as Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee for 2019.**

*TAC02-19* Moved by: Sue Carleton                      Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

**That the nominations be closed.**

Carried

Andrew Siegwart accepted the nomination and was declared Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee for 2019.

The Clerk called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee for 2019.

TAC03-19 Moved by: Sue Carleton

Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

**That Jim Halliday be nominated as Vice Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee for 2019**

TAC04-19 Moved by: Andrew Siegwart

Seconded by: Shirley Keaveney

**That the nominations be closed.**

Carried

Jim Halliday accepted the nomination and was declared Vice Chair of the Tourism Advisory Committee for 2019.

Andrew Siegwart assumed the Chair.

The Clerk left the meeting.

## Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

## Destination Development Action Plan (DDAP) – 2019 Quarter 1 Scorecard

Alison Theodore noted that the Destination Development Action Plan (DDAP) scorecard will be brought to each meeting. The DDAP was passed by County Council in July 2016 and it is a 3-5 year plan. Bryan Plumstead advised that the DDAP is scheduled for review in 2021.

Ms. Theodore reviewed Pillar 1, Community Engagement. She highlighted the number of stakeholder listings in the database. She confirmed that email reminders for industry members to update their listings are sent out through the newsletter. Ms. Theodore discussed the newsletter subscriptions, click through rates, and bounce rates. She highlighted the industry page, [www.visitgrey.ca/industry](http://www.visitgrey.ca/industry). Andrew Siegwart suggested sending out automatic emails that are more personal to industry members. Ms. Theodore discussed the events held by tourism, being Let's Talk Tourism and the Tourism Mini Conference.

Heather Aljoe reviewed Pillar 2, Destination Management. The 2019 Marketing Strategy is being finalized and will be sent out to stakeholders shortly. She highlighted the three trade shows in Quarter 1. Discussion occurred on the Canadian International Autoshow and real estate opportunities. Mr. Plumstead discussed the creation of packages/ itineraries, specifically relating to cycling. Discussion occurred on the Cycling and Trails Master Plan, the draft plan should be complete in late May. Ms. Aljoe discussed the social media, website, and newsletter metrics. Ms. Theodore discussed

media relations and shared content created by Kimberley Marquis on her blog, Chic Confidential.

Tim Lanthier from Grey Sauble Conservation Authority joined the meeting.

Bryan Plumstead reviewed Pillar 3, Market Research and Tracking. He highlighted DDAP tracking and quantitative and qualitative metrics. Mr. Plumstead reviewed Pillar 4, Resource Allocation, noting professional development sessions.

Scott Taylor, Senior Planner, and Kim Wingrove, CAO, joined the meeting.

## Discussion on Sustainable Tourism in Grey County

Mr. Plumstead introduced Scott Taylor, Kim Wingrove, and Tim Lanthier.

Ms. Wingrove noted that the *Conservation Authorities Act* is being reviewed by the Provincial government. The commenting period is open until May 20, 2019. Comments are encouraged and can be made [online](#) or through Grey Sauble Conservation Authority.

Mr. Plumstead framed the discussion on sustainable tourism, noting the first task is for the Committee to consider the scope for consideration and resources.

Tim Lanthier, Lands and Habitats Coordinator for Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (“GSCA”), provided an overview of GSCA and his role. He noted that GSCA owns and manages 29,000 acres of land. A large portion of property is within the Niagara Escarpment. He discussed revenue sources for GSCA. He provided an overview of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board.

Mr. Lanthier noted 24 properties that are highlighted for use in the GSCA brochure. He advised that over 200,000 people per year visit the properties. He discussed eco-tourism. Visitor information has been used as a guide for managing resources, such as constructing a gate house and safety fencing at Eugenia Falls. The Committee discussed the sustainability of safety and hiking the falls. Mr. Lanthier noted that visitor patterns follow Highways 6&10 up the Bruce Peninsula. He is meeting with groups and tourism representatives to discuss how to steer people to communities.

Mr. Lanthier noted that the sustainability concerns for GSCA properties differ depending on the property. Waterfall properties and cliff properties raise concerns of safety and environmental degradation. GSCA is reviewing and creating management plans for each property, starting with Inglis Falls. One property per year will be reviewed. As part of the plan, stakeholders will be contacted. GSCA hopes that sustainable tourism will come out of the management plans.

Mr. Lanthier noted that GSCA hopes to educate visitors about sustainable property use and target where people visit. Discussion occurred on tracking demographics of visitors.

Discussion occurred on access to the properties in the winter. Mr. Lanthier advised that a large amount of the Bruce Trail is on GSCA property. He noted that most properties have interpretive signage on them.

Mr. Taylor discussed County forests, which total approximately 8,500 acres. There are 46 properties throughout the County. Mr. Taylor discussed the management of County forests and trails. The forests are harvested approximately every 15 years. Mr. Taylor discussed forest use, including hiking and hunting. Mr. Taylor also noted the CP Rail Trail, which is used for recreational purposes. Mr. Taylor noted that the County is currently working to finalize the Recreational Trails Master Plan and will be seeking public comments.

Mr. Plumstead noted that the Committee could start by considering the sustainability of tourism in natural areas. He noted that RT07 is involved in considering the sustainability of tourism on the Bruce Peninsula. Ms. Wingrove suggested developing an understanding of how people are using the area and what the expectation is to protect the natural environment. Mr. Plumstead will complete an inventory of assets the County has and will consider potential opportunities.

Mr. Lanthier advised that GSCA hopes to be a local organization that helps the local community. He noted that they are a platform to communicate with visitors. Mr. Lanthier provided the example of the Water Front Trail which brings cyclists in close proximity to many GSCA properties.

Mr. Plumstead noted that the provincial budget been released. He provided information on the budget as it relates to tourism. Discussion occurred on the effect of the budget. Discussion occurred on the Municipal Administration Tax.

Ms. Wingrove, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Lanthier left the meeting.

## Staff Updates

Ms. Theodore highlighted the following upcoming events:

- Brochure swap - May 8
- Summer Industry Familiarization Tour - June 4 & 6
- Experience Development 101 – June 19

Ms. Theodore provided information on upcoming social media influencers.

Mr. Plumstead discussed cycling plans/routes that are being developed. He noted that themed packages already in existence will be promoted more, including the Apple Pie Trail and Saints and Sinners. Cycling, outdoors, and culinary are upcoming opportunities for new itinerary packages.

Ms. Aljoe noted that the website switched to the spring layout and she is working on creating marketing for the year, specifically content creation.

## Other Business

Jim Halliday noted that the Grey Highlands Chamber of Commerce is considering the development of land to create small units for “pocket neighborhoods”. He also discussed developing the Beaver Valley driving route into an experience for residents and visitors.

Andrew Siegwart provided an update on the South Georgian Bay Tourism Labour Supply Task Force attainable housing initiative. The Town of the Blue Mountains has redeveloped the Attainable Housing Corporation and has just retained a consultant for the project. The goal is to have a project identified by the end of the year. He discussed going beyond providing attainable housing for the workforce and ensuring that all those who are at risk are assisted.

Andrew Siegwart discussed the Sea Otter Festival, which will be a cycling event at Blue Mountain Resort in July.

## Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held on July 24, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

On motion by Councillors Carleton and Keaveney, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 AM.

Andrew Siegwart, Chair