

Bridgewater and Area Chamber of Commerce

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 13 2020

HB Studios Sports Centre

REGRETS

Regrets from Jim Brown, Blair Lipsett, Liam Finney, Stacey Mailman and Lee Wallet (sick)

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting started at 8:31 a.m.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

- 1) Welcoming new board members. The Chamber would like to welcome Cheryl Fougere, who was re-elected in the Town of Bridgewater, and Leitha Haysom from the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) as representatives to the board. Cheryl's background is in financial services and she is currently taking her appraisal designation; Leitha currently does administration work for for a boat building company. To note, representatives from the municipal units are full voting members.

CORRESPONDENCE

- 1) Request from Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education. As a summary, the board currently has an agreement with the provincial government where we receive a \$1,000 administration fee for every workshop program we put on. Judith Purcell, our contact with the department, has asked that we host a Welcoming Workplaces virtual employer engagement session in the Southwest Nova Scotia region. The hope, she said, is to attract people from diverse communities to participate in the program. As the host organization, the expectation is that we would set up the registration process,, help identify some employers and advertise the program. The department would take care of the rest. After some discussion from the board, it was decided that the Chamber would move forward with the request to host.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Oct 16 2020 Board Meeting Minutes approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Educational

-Brooke and Blair did not meet. Lunch and Series is booked until March of next year. Brooke noted she is currently talking with one Mark Power, a small business consultant relocating to the area from Ontario,

who would like to put on a longer educational series. Early discussions indicate it could be around four or five parts. It was decided that Dan would reach out to Mark.

Government Involvement

-Jayme and Shawn have not yet met but Dan has reached out to mayors to discuss a meet the mayors event. Given the rising number of COVID cases in the provinces, the initial thought is to host the event as either a podcast or Facebook Live event. Potential dates include the first week of December. The committee is going to follow up to confirm the mayors for that date while also putting out a request to membership for their concerns regarding the budget process for both municipal units.

Community Involvement

-The committee met on October 14 and had a very constructive meeting. The new initiatives from the committee include morning networking opportunities, Facebook Live / written pieces highlighting Chamber members and compiling a comprehensive calendar list of events for the new website. There was a discussion around the idea of producing a Bridgewater and Area Excellence Awards to help highlight businesses in the area. Committee will discuss this idea at their next meeting, which is scheduled for November 20th, at the Michelin Social Club.

Nominations

-See Additions to Agenda for information on the municipality's new representatives.

Financial

- Although Lee was absent due to illness, he did send Dan a summary of the Chamber's financial situation. See below for Lee's note:

Sherry will be updating the budget line items for the Province of Nova Scotia workplace education initiative and the Province of Nova Scotia grant expense; she just has these two amounts reversed.

Membership dues continue to roll in, balance sheet notes \$6,871 of accounts receivable. Insurance rebates are trending to be slightly over budget which is great (budget has a 15 per cent contingency built in comparison to last year for COVID 19 potential contingencies).

Strong cash position, balance sheet notes \$76,988 on deposit.

Income statement expenses note a miscellaneous item of \$250 which I've brought to Dan and Sherry's attention to see what the status of this is, notes bank error. Not BMO banking or I could help.

Overall no material concerns, moving right along; following up on membership renewals will key and I know Dan is all over it.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Online programs update. Customer service ended up having five people, which was an underwhelming turnout. Chamber has continued on to launch two social media programs; the first starts on November 17 and the second begins on November 18. Overall, the Chamber is developing a very significant list of participants / contacts through the programs.
- 2) New website. Things are on schedule; Rae said the Chamber's site is positioned to launch in January. However, there is a new of material, including new photos and bios from the board. Rae has asked that all board members submit to her a short bio, around 100 words, to her by December 1. Josh is also looking to find two dates so that board members can come by the Chronicle Herald office for updated headshots. Will confirm dates later. There was also some discussion about back linking between the Chamber's new site and the municipality's web platforms. Cheryl noted that the Town of Bridgewater has a new app that everyone should download; by supporting each other's endeavours, we build a stronger community.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Meet the Mayor event. Previous discussed under Government Involvement. See for details.
- 2) Newsletter. A huge shoutout to Rae and Stonecourt Studios for putting together a fantastic newsletter. Multiple board members said they had heard great reviews from membership. There was a discussion about re-using some of the business profiles for the Chamber's social platforms to add more content.
- 3) Strategic Planning session with AVCC presentation. Judy Rafuse of Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce is coming on November 26 for a strategic planning session. AVCC is a great organization and the Chamber is hoping to learn about some of their initiatives as we discuss a potential rebrand / new direction for BACC. Dan said it would be appreciated if the majority of the board would be available for this meeting, which runs from 10 a.m. until noon.
- 4) Holiday Store Front contest. Dan sent out the contest details on November 12. Hoping for more participation than last year.
- 5) Communication from Mark Strickland, new Business Development Officer for MODL. Mark Strickland sent the Chamber a note to say he was interested in working with BACC. His history includes time with the Municipality of Kings and that he worked a lot with the local Chamber. It was decided that Dan would reach out and invite him to our December meeting with some ideas on how he can get involved.

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER UPDATE

Cheryl updated the board on several projects, including the Christmas on the LaHave committee's work preparing the town for the holiday season. Given that this year's parade was cancelled due to COVID restrictions, the committee has come up with many different initiatives to celebrate the holiday season. This includes a potential Santa event at the Desbrisay Museum, tire snowmen and more.

There's also been a lot of development across town, including construction on apartment buildings and work around Exit 12A. There were some questions around Energize Bridgewater and Cheryl said it could be a good time to have Leon de Vreede or Colleen O'Neill update the Chamber on the program.

MODL UPDATE

Leitha said that there's been a lot of turn over at the municipality given that there are only three returning councilors and that they've moved to their new building. Having said that, this past election saw a record setting number of women elected in the municipality with nine women on council.

Leitha added that the new councilors are currently going through a lengthy training program but she hopes to bring more information to the board once she's up to speed.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Strategic Planning Meeting November 26th.

Board Meeting December 11th at Michelin Social Club.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 9: 49 a.m.