

LaunchIt Minto
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The LaunchIt Minto Board held a meeting on Tuesday May 10, 2016 at LaunchIt Minto. Board Members present for the meeting were Mayor George Bridge, Councillor Mary-Lou Colwell, Chair Glen Hall, Irmgard Kuersten-Kirkorian, John Mock, Bernice Weber, Justin MacIntosh and Manager of Economic Development Belinda Wick-Graham.

Members of staff present; Business Development Coordinator, Somer Gerber
Regrets were received from Hope Reidt

Chair Glen Hall opened the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Wick-Graham discussed with the Board options for improving and utilizing the retail space in Unit #3. It was decided that the space will be made available to the Renew program as well as offered to the IPM for a second information/souvenir location. Efforts have and will continue to be made to find a long term tenant for this unit. It should be noted that it is because LaunchIt has been successful in growing two businesses in Minto and seeing them expand to new locations in the community that we are currently looking for new tenants. McLaughlin Financial will not be renewing their lease for another term.

The Board reviewed the April financials and 2016 Budget. The 2016 Budget allocates \$5,000 to advertising. The marketing committee will need to meet to determine how these funds will be used. The 2016 budget does not include sponsorship revenue due to the IPM, we feel that local businesses will not be able to support both. Wick-Graham noted that LaunchIt will be transferring \$7,600 from reserve funds.

MOTION

Moved by: Belinda Wick-Graham and Seconded by: Glen Hall

THAT:

The Board approves the April Finances and 2016 Budget

CARRIED

Gerber informed the Board about the success with the "Save Your Energy" Lunch & Learn with Westario Power held at LaunchIt on Tuesday, April 26th. CarStar and Minto Auto attended this event and are happy to report that because of it, CarStar was able to find the source of their problem resulting in a \$300 per month savings! Upcoming LaunchIt events include: The Chamber Plan Lunch & Learn on Wednesday May 18th from 12-1pm and Conestoga College will be condensing the 3-part series on Entrepreneurship into a 3 hour evening event on June 7th 6:30 - 9:30pm. Anyone who is thinking of starting their own business is encouraged to attend. This is a FREE opportunity to learn what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur.

Gerber informed the Board of the new Business Flight Program (BFP) applicant, Greg Troyer of GNT Sports. His application was approved by the LaunchIt Board pending approval from Renew Northern Wellington. Gerber said that she has

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had many businesses interested in the program recently and expects to have several applications submitted over the next few months. When meeting with interested businesses it is stressed to them that while this service is free to Chamber members, it is a time commitment on their part. Attendance at seminars, lunch & learn events and regular meetings with their mentors are mandatory while enrolled in the BFP program.

Gerber also noted that LaunchIt is becoming a “go to” for local businesses to get assistance with specific challenges. Gerber was able to connect a local business with Michael Snyders of Future Focus to assist them with developing a succession plan for their business.

Wick-Graham advised the Board that the PitchIt competition received six applications and has five finalists that will be “Pitching” their business on June 6th. Finalists include: Teeny Tiny Tots, Eagle Eyes Photography, Glass on a Wire, Stay Tuned and Old Post Artist Gallery Co-Op.

Wick-Graham and Gerber report to the Board regarding the University of Waterloo Year One Economic Development student’s tour of LaunchIt. Wick-Graham, Hall and Gerber attended at the presentation at the University on Thursday May 5th to hear their first impressions (see attached). The students had many positive things to say about the programming and space. Areas that needed improvement included; retail space unit #3. Students suggested using the windows as an opportunity to advertise our success stories. Kuersten-Kirkorian will have Innovative Print quote on window posters. Social media was a key topic, LaunchIt needs to build their presence and make some website improvements. The Board reviewed and discussed the presentation and is working on implementing several of the no to low cost suggestions.

Gerber advised the Board that she was a guest at 88.7 The River – Wellington North Today and discussed LaunchIt. It will be aired for the month of May. The River has been very active in promoting LaunchIt coming events at no cost.

The Board discussed several ways to promote LaunchIt rental space and services. Some ideas put forward include: Secondary and Post-Secondary outreach, Gerber will try to connect with these institutions to see if we can build a presence or be involved. Weber asked for information on high school presentations and will follow up with the high school in Listowel to connect Gerber and Harold DeVries from GWBEC with the business faculty. The IPM is hosting a Career & Ag day; LaunchIt will explore this opportunity and try to get involved.

LaunchIt will welcome a new occasional tenant starting Friday, May 20th. Christine Newman, Registered Massage Therapist will be offering appointments every other Friday from 10-2 at LaunchIt.

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**Moved by: Councilor Mary Lou Colwell and Seconded by: Irmgard Kuersten-Kirkorian
THAT**

LaunchIt Board Meeting adjourns.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The next LaunchIt Minto meeting is Tuesday, June 14, 2016 4:00 p.m. at LaunchIt Minto.

Somer Gerber
Business Development Coordinator