

Minutes of May 12, 2016
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE
Town of Minto Administration Office 3:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor George Bridge, CAO/Clerk Bill White, Kirk Brownell, Councillor Jean Anderson, Councillor Mary Lou Colwell, Economic Development Manager Belinda Wick-Graham, Treasurer Gordon Duff, Harold DeVries, Gerry Horst, and Hope Reidt.

Regrets were received from Councillor Ron Elliott, Chair John Mock, Jonathan Zettler, Kelly Schafer and Alison Armstrong.

Wick-Graham opened the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

The Committee reviewed the previous meeting minutes.

MOTION:

Moved by: Hope Reidt and Seconded by: Harold DeVries

That the Economic Development and Planning Committee approve the minutes of the April 14, 2016 meeting.

CARRIED

Downtown Revitalization Update

The Committee reviewed the Harriston Downtown Revitalization minutes from May 2, 2016 where the Committee reviewed concept drawings for the public space at the Old Post.

The Committee also reviewed the Palmerston Downtown Revitalization minutes from April 18, 2016 where the committee discussed lighting the Palmerston Pedestrian Bridge using a lighting system similar to the award winning Welland Bridge 13 project. The Committee also discussed a summer sidewalk sale on June 11th in conjunction with the Splash Bash. Finally, after speaking to previous IPM host communities it was decided not to plan a shuttle bus from the IPM to the downtown.

Wick-Graham reported that a new business will be opening in the Renew Program in Mount Forest - Tina's Sugar Shoppe. An application has also been received for a new business in Palmerston. A property owner in Harriston is now considering joining the Renew Program.

Wick-Graham reported that 315 resident surveys were completed. The Committee reviewed the raw data from the surveys. A summary report and presentation will be drafted and presented at a future meeting.

TG Minto Employee Survey

99 employees completed the employee survey, approximately 12% of employees. The Committee reviewed the raw data. A summary report will be drafted and presented at a later date. This information will assist us in providing information to developers as well as for our own programming.

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Spring Rural Romp

Wick-Graham noted that the Spring Rural Romp would once again be taking place throughout the northern portion of Wellington County on May 28th. Twelve farms will be taking place in this year's Romp. Highlights include "Felfie" take a farm selfie to win and "Must Taste" items. Local restaurants and food suppliers will have special treats at the participating romp locations.

Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E)

The Committee reviewed the raw data from the BR+E surveys. Wick-Graham asked the Committee to take the data home and review it with an eye towards: Strengths (positives about the community), Weaknesses (negatives about the community), what opportunities are there for us to make changes and what are areas we need to focus on and promote. The next meeting will focus on developing the BR+E Actions Plans.

Alumni Attraction – Come Home to Minto

Wick-Graham stated that this year she is working with YFactor on the Resident Prospectus piece which is similar to a community profile but with a focus on resident attraction geared towards alumni. She is also working with OSIM to produce four videos featuring local employers and some of the employment opportunities available within their companies that people might not be aware of. Local employees will be featured in the videos. North Wellington Co-Op, Wightman Telecom and TG Minto will be the employers featured this year. The Old Post will also be participating to allow the opportunity to showcase this significant rehabilitation project and the opportunity that exists there for creative people.

Chamber of Commerce Update

Councillor Mary Lou Colwell reported that the Chamber Summer BBQ will be held August 4 once again at John Cox's farm. The Chamber has begun implementing the Strategic Plan and as a result will have a fun page "newsletter" in each edition of the Rural Route to highlight their initiatives. This page will also offer businesses the opportunity to advertise for an affordable price and also off-set the cost to the Chamber.

LaunchIt Update

Wick-Graham reported that the University of Waterloo Economic Development Program Year 1 participants visited LaunchIt May 5th. The group then presented later that night on their first impressions of the space and marketing materials as well as recommendations for improvements. Overall the group was impressed with the program but put forth some quick and affordable recommendations that the Board is interested in implementing quickly.

McLaughlin Financial will not be renewing their lease and staff continues to look for tenants to fill the spaces. IPM has been approached to have a satellite or downtown information/souvenir space and the Board accepted the idea to utilize the Renew Program to assist in filling spaces.

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There is a lot of interest in the Business Flight Program and staff continues to assist businesses with inquires.

IPM Update

Gordon Duff reported that the RV Park is half sold. Ross Wilkie is doing a great job of sponsorships and is currently looking for corporate sponsors. John Burgess and Wendy Lockwood are acting as the Chairs of Volunteers and are looking for community leaders in Centre and Southern Wellington to assist recruiting people in those communities. Plow Day is being held May 13th in Elora at the County Museum & Archives.

Other Business

Hope Reidt reported that Wightman is a proud sponsor of the IPM and that fibre construction is continuing in Fergus.

Harold DeVries reported that Summer Company received eight applications from rural students and that Starter Company will be having another in-take in September.

Mayor Bridge reported that the Farmers' Markets will be working with County Social Services to provide those on social assistance "market bucks" that can be redeemed at the Farmers' Markets.

MOTION:

**Moved by: Hope Reidt and Seconded by: Kirk Brownell
That the meeting be adjourned.**

CARRIED

Adjournment at 4:18 pm

Next Meeting: June 9, 2016 at 3:00 pm at Town of Minto Council Chambers

Belinda Wick-Graham
Manager of Economic Development