



Economic Development and Planning Committee Minutes

Thursday, March 7, 2024

3:00 p.m.

LaunchIt Minto

Members Present: George Bridge, Mary Lou Colwell, Brian Currie, Amy Heinmiller, Councillor Judy Dirksen, Councillor Geoff Gunson, Shirley Borges, Mayor David Turton, Charlene Hofbauer, and guests Bill Elliot and Andy Goldie from Sequence and MGA Consulting.

Staff Present: Belinda Wick-Graham, Director of Economic & Community Development, Erin Raftis, Marketing & Community Development, Gordon Duff, Treasurer and Dave Wilson, Deputy Chief Building Official.

Regrets: Chair Glen Hall, Mike Hallam, Cameron Green, Jamie Doherty, Caitlyn Turton, and Rob McLaughlin.

1. **Call to Order at 3:01 p.m. by Belinda Wick-Graham.**
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
 - a. Minutes of November 9, 2023, Economic Development and Planning Committee Meeting

MOTION:

Moved By: Mary Lou Colwell Seconded By: Councillor Geoff Gunson

THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee Minutes of the November 9th, 2023, Economic Development & Planning Committee meeting be approved.

CARRIED

3. **Committee Minutes for Approval**
 - a. Minutes of Clifford Connects December 4, 2023, Meeting
 - b. Minutes of Clifford Connects February 5, 2024, Meeting
 - c. Minutes of Harriston Rising November 23, 2023, Meeting
 - d. Minutes of Harriston Rising February 1, 2024, Meeting
 - e. Minutes of All Aboard Palmerston February 7, 2024, Meeting

Erin Raftis reviewed the minutes from the various Downtown Committees with the Committee. These are attached as Schedule “A”.

MOTION:

Moved By: George Bridge Seconded By: Mayor David Turton

THAT the December 4, 2023, and February 5, 2024, Clifford Connects, November 23, 2023, and February 1, 2024, Harriston Rising, and February 7, 2024, All Aboard Palmerston, minutes be approved.

CARRIED

4. Roundtable Discussion

a. Q4 2023 & Q1 (to date) Building and Planning Update

Deputy Chief Building Official, Dave Wilson, provided an overview of 2023 and an update on the first quarter of 2024 in the Building and Planning Department. Wilson’s presentation is attached as Schedule “B”.

b. Healthcare Update

Shirley Borges provided an update on local healthcare, noting that renovations in the Palmerston and District Hospital are underway to update curtains to sliding glass doors in emergency, install new floors, and update the doctor on-call room. The MRI Campaign is also underway. Borges reported that they are currently meeting with candidates who are ‘practice ready’, with supervision from Dr. Chu, and are looking at a fall recruitment. She also shared that the Minto-Mapleton Family Health Team received funding to hire two additional nurse practitioners and requested help from the Town of Minto in recruiting patients. The Committee suggested advertising through Town of Minto social media accounts, connecting with local public and high schools, reaching out to Nursing Homes, and the Mount Forest Family Health Team.

c. Local Labour Market Update

Charlene Hofbauer noted that the Town of Minto’s local labour market has remained relatively consistent from 2023 -2024 (whereas most communities have seen job posting demand drop). The number of job postings hovers around 50 with 28-30 companies hiring. Unemployment Rate was approximately 5.44% (a drop to 4% in July) and Participation Rate fell slightly to 66.5%.

Hofbauer explained the concept of “Mini Markets, Big Impacts”, stating that our local labour market can not be discussed as one whole, due to the diversity in different communities in our coverage area. Minto is currently seeking skilled labour, whereas other communities are not. Communities will experience the impending slowdown differently. However, despite how areas are all operating differently, we all impact each other. The Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin reviewed the top 25 job postings in 2023, noting that half do not pay a livable wage. Some important issues include childcare and affordable housing.

They are hosting an event on April 18th to discuss the labour market, the impacts on businesses, the latest trends.

Belinda-Wick Graham added that the Employer One survey results are coming out in two weeks. Hofbauer noted that early indications include that employers value diversity, and noted a portion reported that retention issues are a result of no where for employees to go, yet a main portion of our employers train their own employees, creating a juxtaposition between the problem and the solution.

c. Economic + Community Development Master Plan Update

Guests, Bill Elliot, and Andy Goldie, from Sequence and MGA Consulting, joined the meeting to obtain feedback and generate discussion to help build the Economic and Community Development Master Plan. The Committee brainstormed important tasks, values, and issues in our area.

5. Reports

- a. Ratification of Community Improvement Grants - December 2023, January, and February 2024

MOTION:

Moved By: George Bridge Seconded By: Mary Lou Colwell

THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee receives the March 7, 2024, report from the Director of Economic and Community Development and further that they ratify the motion made to approve the Community Improvement Grant Approved by Committee via Email.

CARRIED

6. Adjournment at 5:06 p.m.