



Clifford Connects Committee Minutes

Monday, December 4, 2023

12:00 a.m.

Clifford Arena

Attendance: Chair Alexis Rock, Craig Thompson, Jennifer Gibson, Randy and Trish Ruetz, and new member, Tracey White.

Staff Present: Erin Raftis, Marketing & Community Development Coordinator

Regrets: Councillor Paul Zimmerman, and Alicia Becker

1. Call to Order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - a. Minutes of September 11, 2023 Steering Committee Meeting

MOTION

Moved by: Craig Thompson Seconded by: Jennifer Gibson

THAT the Clifford Connects Steering Committee Minutes of September 11th, 2023 meeting be approved.

Carried.

3. Roundtable Discussion
 - a. Budget Update

Raftis reviewed the 2023 Budget with the committee noting a total of \$8,674.52 in revenue and reserve. New revenue included candy sales, which were split with the Minto Youth Action Council who agreed to sell Candy at Candy Canes and Cocktails in Harriston, Vendor fees from the Christmas event, and so on. Expenses totalled \$4,613.84 and included payment towards the Christmas event, 150th celebrations and beautification efforts. A total of \$4,061 remains in the operating budget. After Barn Quilt display, donation to the Lions, the quilt, and the stand, there is \$3,330 left in the capital budget.

Raftis noted that a budget of \$200 for 4 different social media paid promotions in 2024 would help boost awareness of our group & events and the committee agreed. Raftis shared that Harriston Rising would be interested in collaborating on downtown flyers, distributed by Grand River Flyers, providing Clifford only pay's for a relative portion of the communications. The committee also discussed limiting the flyer to only events of relevant community groups.

b. Beautification Committee

Jennifer Gibson provided an update in Beautification Chair's, Becker's, absence. She shared that the committee spent two days decorating for Christmas. There was difficulty incorporating the 150th theme, but the decorations looked great in Clifford Rotary Celebration Square in the end.

Chair, Alexis Rock, shared that a request from Brittany Bott who is interested in creating a poppy display in Clifford, similar to one created by the All Aboard Palmerston committee. Raftis shared that we would need an interested member to organize purchase and distribution of yarn to community members who would crochet the poppies. The project would also need a day to create the poppy display and hang it. The group also discussed potential locations, noting no where in cenotaph park but a potential to hang on the gazebo in Celebration Square. The committee agreed to share the project with Becker to determine interest.

Raftis also shared a communication from resident of Minto who suggested lighting up the existing murals in Clifford. The group noted likely issues with solar lights downtown due to the existing streetlights and felt additional lights were not likely necessary. Rock inquired into what would happen with the mural now that ownership has transferred of Gramma Jo's and Raftis noted she would look into this further.

c. Events Committee

Rock reviewed the previous Clifford Christmas in the Street event, noting attendance seemed down from the previous year but everyone in attendance seemed to enjoy the celebrations. Randy & Trish Ruetz noted that Horse & Wagon rides were busy from the beginning, noting people likely remembered the location from the previous year. Rafits shared that Berlin 95 was happy with their sales and would like to come back to the event next year. Rock shared that the Firefighters are considering moving Santa Claus back to the firehall, but the committee agreed this would likely not impact our event as the parade will still cross main street. Raftis shared feedback from vendors & businesses through the surveys sent out. Feedback requested more entertainment on Main Street and Geddes Street to draw those down the street to shop. Gibson suggested popcorn and hot chocolate at the end of the street and potentially an additional musician. She also suggested contacted Safe Communities that may be interested in hosting a booth at the end of Main St. It was discussed that vendors prefer to be kept in one location, rather than be spread out down Main Street, and additional free food may take away from local downtown restaurants. Raftis shared the passport has 20 filled out and potentially more submitted at the Clifford

Country Store and Rooster's Perch. The group also discussed the Glow Artist and felt next year we could consider additional masked characters (similar to Clifford and Sparky) instead.

2024 Dates include the Clifford Carnival Celebration which will be moved to July 13th, 2024 and Christmas will be on November 23rd, 2024. Raftis mentioned that in early 2024, the Town of Minto is hoping to host a Community Calendar Connections meeting to determine all the events in 2024, and identify any potential gaps or collaborations through the year.

Raftis also shared a request from downtown business to add a Car Show on to the Clifford Carnival Celebration in 2024. The committee was in support of the idea and Randy Ruetz agreed to contact potential organizers. However, the group discussed difficulties finding an ideal locations, noting that Main Street is not able to be closed and businesses requested the show so locations closer to Celebration Square and the old Jemstones restaurant would not be ideal.

d. FICE Discussion & Next Steps

The committee reviewed suggestions provided by those from the Town of Caledon during our Community Exchange, presented the past September. Rock asked if it was possible to update Google Images, and White shared that the images have recently been updated. Raftis noted businesses interested in updated their photos can submit on Google directly or contact herself for assistance. The committee noted our work to become bike friendly and showed interested in the idea to bus cyclists to our community, once the initial work is completed.

e. Volunteer Recruitment

Raftis noted that she will make exciting callouts in December or early 2024 to recruit more volunteers on the events & beautification committees.

f. Request from MRI Fundraising Committee

Rock brought forth a request from the MRI committee for a donation to their campaign. The committee noted they were in support of the MRI goal but felt a donation would not align with our committee's mandate. Raftis suggested if interested, we could have an event or use on of our existing events to help fundraise a donation. For instance, donating vendor fees towards the campaign.

4. Adjournment at 8:11 p.m.