



## Economic Development and Planning Committee Minutes

Thursday, September 5, 2024

3:00 p.m.

LaunchIt Minto

**Members Present:** Chair Glen Hall, Cameron Green, Amy Heinmiller, Councillor Geoff Gunson, Charlene Hofbauer, Councillor Judy Dirksen, George Bridge, Brian Currie, Sadia Batool, Kelly Schafer, and guests Christina Mann, Manager of Economic Development at the County of Wellington, and Dave Anderson, VP Operations at Wightman

**Staff Present:** Belinda Wick-Graham, Director of Economic & Community Development, Erin Raftis, Marketing & Community Development, Caitlyn Turton, Business Development Coordinator, Wesley Graham, Building Inspector, Gordon Duff, Treasurer, and CAO Gregg Furtney.

**Regrets:** Mike Hallam, Shirley Borges, Jamie Doherty, Rob McLaughlin, and Mary Lou Colwell,

### 1. Call to Order at 3:07 p.m. by Chair Glen Hall

Chair Hall thanked VP of TG Minto Mike Hallam for an informative tour and meeting. The Committee was impressed by the diversity of the workforce as well as the technology advancements being made.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- a. Minutes of June 6, 2024, Economic Development & Planning Committee Meeting

**MOTION:**

**Moved By: Amy Heinmiller Seconded By: Councillor Geoff Gunson**

**THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee Minutes of the June 6, 2024, Economic Development & Planning Committee meeting be approved.**

**CARRIED**

### 3. Committee Minutes for Approval

No minutes were presented for approval.

### 4. Roundtable Discussion

a. Upcoming Wightman Capital Projects

Cameron Green introduced Wightman Telecom's Vice President Operations, Dave Anderson, who presented on the fibre optic internet plan for the Town of Minto.

b. January - August 2024 Building & Planning Update

Building Inspector, Wes Graham, provided an update on the Town of Minto building statistics, noting an overall decrease in 2024. He highlighted the following:

- A decrease in single family dwelling units (14 in Q1, 5 in Q2)
- No multi-family dwelling units
- A significant decline in additional dwelling units with only 1 in 2024 Q2 so far
- 1 change of use from residential to commercial in Q1
- 9 commercial permits in Q1 & Q2

Amy Heinmiller provided an update on the local real estate market, broken down between the three communities in Minto.

- Palmerston: 16 active listings, 3 conditional, 4 pending, 19 closed, average selling price of \$475,000
- Harriston: 20 active, 3 conditional, 5 pending, 18 closed, average selling price of \$544,000
- Clifford: 16 active, 4 pending, 9 closed, average selling price of \$524,000

c. Local Labour Market Update + Upcoming Job Fairs 2024/2025

Charlene Hofbauer presented on the local labour market, touching on various statistics fluctuations in the past six months, such as unemployment rates (down in our area, but up provincially), participation rates (down, indicating more people have exited the workforce), and job postings (approximately 97 job postings in 40 companies, with a reduction in job openings in the manufacturing sector).

Hofbauer highlighted the following upcoming events:

- October 17<sup>th</sup>: Is Your Wage Competitive, Kitchener, ON
- November 5: Hiring & Keeping Apprentices, Listowel, ON
- November 15: Not for Profit & Caring Sector Engagement, Kitchener & Elora, ON
- November 21 & 22: Growing your Workforce 2024 Conference
- December: Youth & Labour Market

Sadia Batool and Kelly Schafer from the Career Education Council added that on October 22<sup>nd</sup> in Arthur, ON, from 9:00 am-11:30 am, there will be an upcoming Northern Wellington Resource & Speed Networking event to help local employers make connections and find resources. They noted that North Wellington Works will return to Norwell in March of 2025.

Finally, they shared that 2025's Trade Tracks, an event started by the Lions of South Wellington to engage youth in the trades, will be on April 25 & 26<sup>th</sup> in Fergus.

d. Economic Development Master Plan 2025 Implementation Plans

The Committee reviewed the Economic Development Master Plan and made recommendations on priorities out of short- and long-term goals.

e. Committee Member Updates

Caitlyn Turton shared that Launchit has some exciting training sessions, including Blogging 101 on Sept 17<sup>th</sup>, In-Store Events to Boost Sales on Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>, and Social Media Success, a hands-on workshop, on October 24<sup>th</sup>. She highlighted the Try-It Retail program, which offers local businesses the chance to "test-drive" a retail space at our Harriston location. Turton encourages everyone to check out the space, which is currently occupied by Stonehouse Designs until the end of September, and starting in October, they will welcome Homestead Boutique through the end of December. Turton also announced that Launchit will be moving from their current space to the Old Post Building in February 2025.

CAO, Gregg Furtney, summarized ongoingings at the Town of Minto, noting it is budget season, and that they are currently working on bylaws for the new year, a new HR policy, and have hired a Financial Analyst.

Kelly Schafer added their fiscal year began on September 1<sup>st</sup> and the Career Education Council did not receive a renewal for their youth engagement plan. They will continue to plan and program events and projects with their "organic" budget.

Christina Mann, Manager of the Economic Development Department at the County of Wellington, noted a busy summer, including the final Market Box delivery in the upcoming week in Mapleton, and added that the Minto Market Box was a success. Mann noted that the Fall Rural Romp is on September 28<sup>th</sup> in the southern end of the County, and that cycling routes were soft launched in the County of Wellington, while businesses continue to register as bike friendly. The fall communications campaign will be "Weird and Wonderful Wellington County". Finally, Mann added that Boundless Accelerator will be hosting an Agri-Food and Finance event will be hosted in November.

Gordon Duff reported on the recent Associations of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference, noting multiple grant applications released for fire, recreations, labour force, and housing.

Amy Heinmiller indicated an increase in questions regarding support and recreation opportunities for seniors in our area. Mann added that a survey by the Guelph Wellington Seniors Association to assess whether the needs of older adults are being met is now live.

Councillor Gunson reminded the Committee it is the Harriston-Minto Fall Fair Sept 13-15, and noted that the cement for the sports pad at the fairgrounds would likely be poured prior

to the event. George Bridge added he will be volunteering in the parade and at the tractor pull.

Councillor Dirkson shared that the busy summer for the agricultural community will continue into fall as farmers continue their harvest.

Brian Currie added that the Pharmacy will be switching their rewards program to Air Miles.

Glen Hall noted continued success at his business with a desire for the internet to be updated to fibre in his area.

Erin Raftis reminded everyone to view the events calendar on the Town of Minto website. She added there are over 12 different events for Culture Days from mid-September to mid-October and encouraged everyone to purchase tickets for the upcoming Indigenous Celebration on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Belinda Wick-Graham shared that there will be a breakfast meeting to discuss Palmerston's Big Dig on October 30<sup>th</sup> for businesses. She shared her duties as president of the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) will keep her busy at various conferences and events this fall.

## 5. Reports

- a. Ratification of Community Improvement Grant Approved by Committee via Email August 20, 2024

**Moved By: George Bridge Seconded By: Councillor Judy Dirkson  
THAT the Economic Development and Planning Committee ratify the Community Improvement Grant approved by email on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024.  
CARRIED**

- b. Approval of Storefront Accessory Grant H05

May's Café at the Old Post has submitted an application to receive a grant for \$151.90 for a bike rack to become a certified Bike Friendly location.

**MOTION:**

**Moved By: Brian Currie Seconded By: Councillor Geoff Gunson  
THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee approves Storefront Accessory Grant #H05 submitted by May's Café at the Old Post for \$151.90.  
CARRIED**

- c. Approval of Storefront Accessory Grant H06

The Magic Ice Cream Shop has applied to receive a grant for a bike rack to become a certified Bike Friendly location. The applicant was awaiting quotes but in order to speed up the process the Committee made the following motion.

**MOTION:**

**Moved By: Amy Heinmiller Seconded By: George Bridge**

**THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee approves Storefront Accessory Grant #H06 submitted by the Magic Ice Cream shop for matching up to \$500.**

**CARRIED**

**6. Adjournment at 5:01 p.m.**

Next meeting on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Corporate Call to Trusscore at 1:30 pm Meeting to follow at 3:00 pm