



Economic Development and Planning Committee Minutes

Thursday, March 13, 2025

3:00 p.m.

LaunchIt Minto

Members Present: Chair Glen Hall, Cameron Green, Shirley Borges, Jamie Doherty, George Bridge, Mary Lou Colwell, Sadia Bartool, new member Katherine Noble.

Staff Present: Belinda Wick-Graham, Director of Economic & Community Development, Erin Raftis, Marketing & Community Development, Wesley Graham, Building Inspector, Gordon Duff, Treasurer, Raisa Abraham, Business Development Coordinator

Regrets: Alison Armstrong, Mike Hallam, Amy Heinmiller, Charlene Hofbauer, Councillor Geoff Gunson, Brian Currie, Councillor Judy Dirksen

1. Call to Order at 3:04 p.m.

The Committee welcomed new member and agricultural representative, Katherine Noble from the Wellington Federation of Agriculture.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- a. Minutes of December 5, 2024, Economic Development and Planning Committee

MOTION:

Moved by: Mary Lou Colwell Seconded by: Cameron Green

THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee minutes of the December 5, 2024, meeting be approved.

CARRIED.

3. Committee Minutes for Approval

- a. Minutes of December 5, 2024 Clifford Connects Steering Committee
- b. Minutes of December 9, 2024 Harriston Rising Steering Committee
- c. Minutes of January 8, 2025 Harriston Rising Steering Committee
- d. Minutes of December 17, 2024 All Aboard Palmerston Steering Committee

Raftis reviewed the minutes that are attached as Schedule “A”.

MOTION

Moved by: Cameron Green Seconded by: Shirley Borges

THAT the minutes of the December 5, 2024, Clifford Connects, December 9, 2024 and January 8, 2025, Harriston Rising, and December 17, 2024, All Aboard Palmerston meetings be approved.

CARRIED.

4. Roundtable Discussion

a. January - February 2025 Building and Planning Update

Wesley Graham presented a year-to-date building update.

2025 Jan-Feb Permit #'s		
PERMIT TYPE	PERMITS ISSUED	DOLLAR VALUE
Single Family Dwelling / Semi	1	\$ 400,000.00
Multi-Family Dwelling	-	-
Res. Reno / Addition	1	\$ 125,000.00
Accessory Structures	1	\$ 10,000.00
Additional Dwelling units	-	-
Commercial	3	\$ 115,000.00
Industrial	-	-
Institutional	-	-
Agricultural	10	\$ 3,050,000.00
Sewage Systems	1	\$ 20,000.00
Demolitions	-	-
Change of Use	-	-
Misc. (Solar, Tent, Retaining Wall)	-	-
Total	17	\$ 3,720,000.00

b. Local Labour Market Update

Wick-Graham reviewed the local labour market update on behalf of Charlene Hofbauer, attached as Schedule “B”.

c. Saugeen Connects 2024 Year in Review and 2025 MOU

Wick-Graham presented on Saugeen Connects 2024 Year in Review, attached as Schedule “C” and reviewed the new Memorandum of Understanding created for membership in the partnership, which is attached as Schedule “D”

RECOMMENDATION:

Moved by: George Bridge and Seconded by: Mary Lou Colwell

THAT the Town of Minto sign the Memorandum of Understanding to participate in the Saugeen Connects partnership for 2025.

CARRIED.

d. Updated EDPG Terms of Reference

The Committee reviewed the amended version of the Terms of Reference for approval. Attached as Schedule “E”.

MOTION:

Moved by: Katherine Noble Seconded by: Sadia Bartool

THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee Terms of Reference be approved.

CARRIED.

e. Committee Member Updates and Question of the Day

Committee member updates were as follows:

Shirley Borges provided an update on the Family Health Team (FHT), which is approaching its March year-end. The Nurse Practitioner (NP) expansion in Harriston and Clifford has been successful, with 1,319 new patients attached as of February 2025, and the clinics are expected to be full by June. A new NP was recruited in December to replace Clifford NP Becky, leading to some patient transitions. The Harriston clinic now offers bloodwork services for community residents with a requisition from their provider—appointments can be booked by calling the Harriston office. Dr. Luzinga, the new physician in Palmerston working with Dr. Chu, is accepting new patients, though official numbers are pending Ministry of Health processing. The FHT is currently recruiting for a full-time permanent Registered Dietitian, with the posting available on Facebook and Bamboo HR. Lastly, FHTs across the province continue to face staff retention challenges due to stagnant compensation over the past five years, with many forecasting deficits and hoping advocacy efforts will lead to improvements.

On behalf of Alison Armstrong, Borges reported that the Family Health Team is working with an International Trainee who is interested in completing his residency in Ontario and settling in Minto. She added that there is a steady stream of residents training with Dr. Peterkin, with a new one starting this week, and they have applied for a McMaster Core Residency training position and are close to securing it, which would bring a resident to the community for two years. Armstrong attended the ROMP event in Collingwood in February, and connected with Palmerston Family Medicine Resident Marissa MacLean, hoping she will train with us. In the Spring they are attending the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada conference in Winnipeg

(April), and Western University's event in Grand Bend (May). The PRO program may be offered again, and they will decide whether to apply. Additionally, they are hosting two rural medicine weeks for first-year medical students in June.

Jamie Doherty noted that Hawk's Nest received 17 applications, 2 of which are from Minto (including a Minto youth). The event is scheduled for June 17th at the Hanover Civic Theatre. Wick-Graham added they are still in search of another Hawk and sponsors.

Katherine Noble thanked the committee for the invitation to the meeting and provided an update on the Wellington Federation of Agriculture. They will be attending several upcoming events including an educational event for grade 3 students, Pizza Perfect, the Drayton Farm Show, and an education event about rural planning to which municipalities and councillors are invited.

Raisa Abraham, new Business Development Coordinator, shared that Launchit has successfully relocated to the Old Post building, and the grand opening is on March 19th from 11am - 2pm for those to drop-in and see the space. They are hosting a WOWSA networking event in Launchit on April 10, and preparing their Spring training schedule, including a workshop series on crime prevention. Abraham added that Homegrown will return on June 12th, 2025. On behalf of the Chamber, Abraham reported that the Mayor's Breakfast is April 25th. They are working to support the businesses through this unknown time, getting more sponsors, and growing the membership.

Sadia Bartool shared on behalf of the Career Education Council that Northern Wellington Works event is scheduled for March 27th from 10am - 2pm at Norwell DSS and is open to both high school students and the public. Exhibitors include both volunteer groups and employers. They also host a Career Pathways event for youth this Spring.

Cameron Green reported that the installation of the fibre optic internet in Clifford will be completed in 2025.

The roundtable also held a discussion on tariffs, highlighting the following:

- The County of Wellington has put together a resource page to guide businesses on what they can do regarding tariffs. Minto has agreed to share and promote this.
- The Western Ontario Warden's Caucus has a survey that members are sharing with their businesses and we are actively promoting that.
- Increase in Canadians reading labels and interest in where their food is made.
- An increase in businesses requesting loans from SEDC.
- Noted that there are likely to be supply chain issues upcoming.
- Discussions are planned with Minto's manufacturing businesses to learn how the tariffs are impacting them and how we can support them.
- The downtown Harriston committee is planning an Easter business passport to get people moving around different stores.
- Shop "Locally Loyal Minto" campaign promoting businesses on social media.

- Suggestion to promote where you can buy things in Minto that people would already be buying (ex. “Did you know you can get this in Minto” series)
- Brainstorming to be done on how to connect businesses and get them referring each other to their customers.

5. Adjournment at 4:49 p.m.