



## **Economic Development and Planning Committee Minutes**

**Thursday, June 5, 2025**

**11:30 a.m.**

**LaunchIt Minto**

Members Present: Chair Glen Hall, Cameron Green, Amy Heinmiller, Charlene Hofbauer, Councillor Geoff Gunson, Jamie Doherty, George Bridge, Mary Lou Colwell, Councillor Judy Dirksen, and new members Kristel Maines, and James Vaclavek.

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

Regrets: Alison Armstrong, Shirley Borges, Kelly Schafer, Mike Hallam, Brian Currie, Katherine Noble, and Sadia Bartool.

### **1. Call to Order at 11:39 a.m.**

The Committee welcomed James Vaclavek (or another representative) from the County of Wellington and Kristel Maines, from Business Centre Guelph Wellington.

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- a. Minutes of March 13, 2025, Economic Development and Planning Committee Meeting

#### **MOTION:**

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

**THAT the Economic Development Planning Committee minutes of the March 13, 2025, meeting be approved.**

**CARRIED.**

### **3. Committee Minutes for Approval**

- a. Minutes of March 10, 2025 Clifford Connects Steering Committee
- b. Minutes of May 5, 2025 Clifford Connects Steering Committee Meeting
- c. Minutes of April 9, 2025 Harriston Rising Steering Committee Meeting

- d. Minutes of March 24, 2025 All Aboard Palmerston Steering Committee Meeting
- e. Minutes of May 15, 2025 All Aboard Palmerston Steering Committee Meeting

The Committee reviewed the various Downtown Committee minutes that are attached as Schedule "A"

#### **MOTION**

**Moved by: Mary Lou Colwell Seconded by: Councillor Judy Dirksen**

**THAT the minutes of the March 10<sup>th</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup>, Clifford Connects, April 9<sup>th</sup>, Harriston Rising, and March 24<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup>, All Aboard Palmerston meetings be approved.**

**CARRIED.**

#### **4. Roundtable Discussion**

- a. Business Retention and Expansion Project 2025

Belinda Wick-Graham presented on the upcoming Business Retention and Expansion Project, attached as Schedule B. The Committee reviewed the BR&E Survey and provided feedback. Wick-Graham will send out sector specific surveys to relevant members of the Committee for further review.

The survey will be finalized in June, conducted in July and August, and analyzed/presented in the fall.

- b. Committee Member Updates

Erin Raftis shared that the New Resident Welcome Picnic is on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and encouraged members to share with anyone new to the area. She added that the Minto Farmers' Market opens on June 7<sup>th</sup> for the season.

Glen Hall reported that their business continues to grow and shift to adapt to the ever-changing consumer market.

Kristel Maines reported that she is the Executive Director of the Business Centre Guelph Wellington, which is a funded not-for-profit for the past 25 years. They serve 1,500 clients annually, 40% located in Wellington County. The Centre handles 20,000 - 22,000 inquiries annually with an expert team of virtual advisors.

George Bridge commented on recent public health updates, noting measles cases are on the downfall, however, air quality has been worse due to the wild fires.

Amy Heinmiller updated on recent housing market trends in Minto, noting the average price in Palmerston is approximately \$578,000, in Harriston is \$634,000, and Clifford is \$750,000 (Clifford is higher due to Country properties recently sold). She noted Finoro Homes sub-division is selling well, with many residents relocating from Caledon, Arthur,

Fergus, and Elora. Wick-Graham reminded the Committee of the Corporate Call taking place at Finoro Homes following the meeting.

Councillor Geoff Gunson promoted the Firefighter's Breakfast, and Horticultural Society Garden Festival on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

James Vaclavek reported that there is now a dedicated Ridewell car for the northern part of Wellington County, and that accessible rides are now available through the app. He shared that a Tourism Experience grant just launched offering up to \$,3000, matching 50%. He also updated that \$1 million dollars per municipality has been allocated for housing related projects to address affordable housing gaps.

Charlene Hofbauer noted that the Workforce Planning Board is hosting a Growing your Workforce conference on November 20<sup>th</sup> in St. Jacobs. She added that they will be implementing the Employer One survey again, and working to analyse housing and workforce data trends to determine how they align and how to prepare.

Mary Lou Colwell shared that the Harriston Legion will be giving away free flags on June 6<sup>th</sup> from 4pm-8pm, as well as selling poppies. Raftis added that Harriston Rising is planning a pop-up photo display for Canada Day. Dirksen noted that the Harriston Crossroads Church is planning Canada Day fireworks on July 1<sup>st</sup>, with a rain date of July 5<sup>th</sup>.

Raisa Abraham noted that the Minto Chamber hired Ellie Holtam. She is working on promoting the Think Minto First Gift Card program, as well as creating content to promote local businesses. The Chamber will be hosting monthly business after 5 events in the summer and fall. They are also working with the Student Start Up Program to host a young entrepreneur's market at Launchit this summer. Abraham also updated on Launchit, which has had increased usage of coworking and office rentals since moving to our new location. She shared that Pitchit trained four businesses, 3 of which will continue in the competition. Abraham also updated that Homegrown, a one-day female entrepreneurs conference, sold out at 100 people and is on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

Jamie Doherty reported that Hawk's Nest is hosted at the Hanover Civic Centre on June 18<sup>th</sup>.

Cameron Green shared that Wightman Telecom is busy installing fibre locally, with Clifford and Ayton to be done soon. He noted that their company was impacted by the tariffs, resulting in a supplier chain switch for the company. He also shared his appreciation for everyone who hosted the Palmerston Hospital Gala, noting a successful event.

## **5. Reports**

- a. Ratification of Community Improvement Grants approved by Committee via email in March, April and May

## **MOTION**

**Moved By: Councillor Judy Dirksen Seconded By: Cameron Green**

THAT the Economic Development and Planning Committee ratify the Community Improvement Grants approved by email in March, April, and May.  
CARRIED.

6. Adjournment at 1:41 p.m.

MOTION

Moved by: Kristel Maines Seconded by: Charlene Hofbauer

THAT the June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED.

Next Meeting:

September 18<sup>th</sup>

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm Corporate Call Tour – Pike Lake

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm EDPC Meeting - Launchit