

LaunchIt Minto Board  
LaunchIt Minto  
February 14, 2017

The LaunchIt Minto Board held a meeting on Tuesday February 14, 2017 at LaunchIt Minto. Board Members present for the meeting were Chair Glen Hall, Mayor George Bridge, Councillor Mary-Lou Colwell, Bernice Weber Passchier, Harold DeVries, Calvin Frey, Irmgard Kuersten-Kirkorian, Tony Tsotros and Business & Economic Manager Belinda Wick-Graham.

Regrets were received from Hope Reidt, John Mock, Ryan Koeslag and Business Development Coordinator Somer Gerber.

Chair Glen Hall opened the meeting at 4:02 p.m. and welcomed Tony Tsotros to the LaunchIt Minto Board as a new Chamber representative in addition to John Mock and Glen Hall.

The Board reviewed and approved the previous meeting minutes from December 13, 2016

**Moved by: Mayor George Bridge and Seconded by Harold DeVries**

**THAT the LaunchIt Minto Board accepts the minutes of the December 13, 2016 meeting.**

**CARRIED**

Wick-Graham presented the 2016 financials and 2017 budget to the Board. reserves. Wick-Graham was pleased to report that the LaunchIt Board did not need to touch reserves in 2016 and had a small surplus. She will report back at the next meeting the amount of money LaunchIt currently has in reserves.

**Moved by: Councillor Mary Lou Colwell and Seconded by Bernice Weber Passchier**

**THAT the LaunchIt Minto Board accepts the 2017 budget and 2016 financials**

**CARRIED**

Hall told the Board about the newly formed LaunchIt Sponsorship Committee. This Committee consists of Harold DeVries, Bernice Weber Passchier, Glen Hall and LaunchIt staff, Somer Gerber. The Committee held their first meeting on January 31, 2017. Hall stated that the Committee identified the need for long term, sustainable sponsorships suggesting that we offer a three year/\$1000 sponsorship opportunity that matches sponsors with a new businesses in varied sectors including: Agriculture, Retail, Youth etc. Sponsors would be featured on the Board Room wall, website, press releases and other promotional materials, as well given recognition at and tickets to the Live2Lead 2017 event.

Other potential sponsorship opportunities were discussed such as: Training Sponsorships and Lunch & Learn Sponsorships.

The Board reviewed the new BFP brochure. It was suggested that images of local businesses and previous Business Flight Participants be used instead of stock photos. Wick-Graham explained that only 50 brochures were printed but that the brochures were needed for the Chamber AGM. Gerber would be directed to solicit images of existing or previous LaunchIt clients to use in the brochure.

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Pat Raftis of the Wellington Advertiser featured LaunchIt Minto in the January 27<sup>th</sup> edition. Raftis captured and highlighted all that LaunchIt has to offer for people looking to start or grow a business. The article also showcased the new Business Flight Program. Gerber will continue to keep in close contact with local media to share events, programs and other opportunities available at LaunchIt.

Wick-Graham told the Board about the Elevating Ag Committee meeting that took place on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017. A copy of the minutes is attached as Schedule "A".

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

The next LaunchIt Minto meeting will be on Tuesday March 14, 2017 at 4:00pm LaunchIt Minto.

Belinda Wick-Graham  
Business & Economic Manager

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Schedule "A"

Elevate Ag. Committee  
LaunchIt Minto  
January 24, 2017

The Elevate Ag Committee held a meeting on Tuesday January 24, 2017 at LaunchIt Minto. Committee Members present for the meeting were Glen Hall, Vince Tkaczuk, Jonathan Zettler, Caitlin Hall, Belinda Wick-Graham, Business & Economic Manager and Somer Gerber, Business Development Coordinator.

Regrets: Councillor Judy Dirksen, Rose Austin & Gerry Horst

The meeting opened at 7:05 p.m.

The Board reviewed the Libro Credit Union Prosperity Fund Grant that LaunchIt received to develop Elevate Ag in the amount of \$10,000.

The Committee reviewed three potential properties owned by the Town of Minto as potential locations to develop and divide into smaller parcels for the purposes of leasing to new farmers enrolled in the Elevate Ag program. After some discussion and several major challenges being addressed such as: lack of access to water, lack of access to equipment and tools that will be needed, cost of infrastructure and storage at proposed locations etc. it was decided that Elevate Ag would focus on the training component of farm startups. The Committee discussed researching local opportunities with existing farmers to develop a plan and agreement that would connect new farmers with existing farmers that are willing to act as a "host" farm, and thereby offering participants' access to land, use of equipment, on site mentorship and practical training. Details, agreements, contracts and costs/fees will be discussed and developed as we move forward.

The Committee tried to determine what the target demographic would be for this program. The importance of prior experience or exposure to farming was highlighted by all committee members that are experienced farmers. It was stressed that if the participant has no knowledge of the time commitment and dedication it takes they are likely to let the crop become over grown, leaving the host farm with a mess which could potentially create problems moving forward. Having a strict application process and being selective about the people approved is key.

It was determined the Elevate Ag program would move forward and develop a training curriculum designed to assist individuals that are new to farming (with some, but little knowledge of the industry) and partner them up with local host farms who are willing to offer practical training, support, coaching and mentorship, as well as address training topics directly related to farming as well as the business of farming.

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**Suggestions for potential host farms:**

- Reroot Organic
- Glen Hall
- Harold Fisher
- Stephan Von Mehlenen
- Steckles
- Krista Fisk & Terry Fisk
- Bev May
- Von Westerholts

**Suggestions for potential Mentors:**

- Mike Holzworth
- Luke Hartung
- Martin Tamlin
- Brad Martin
- Steckles
- Kim Delaney
- Judy Dirksen
- Glen May

**Training Resources:**

- AMI
- OMAFRA – Growing Forward 2 (fund)
- C-Team
- UofG
- [Farms.com](http://Farms.com)
- EFAO
- Farmers Growing Farmers
- Georgian College
- Fleming College

**Next Steps:**

- Research existing training
- Determine what training is needed for Farming and the Business of Farming
- Develop a draft agreement for host farms
- Develop Farm Profile Sheets
- Connect with possible Mentors
- Connect with organizations or people that fit our target market to research and develop the program.

Next meeting Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.