

North Huron Economic Development Committee
Minutes
March 1, 2018

Attendees: Glen Manjin, Wingham BIA Representative
Karen Stewart, Blyth BIA Representative
Rebecca Rathwell, Centre for Employment and Learning
Dave Tiffin
Murray Simpson
Grant Sparling
Councillor Knott
Councillor Seip
Gil Garratt, Blyth Festival (part of the meeting)
Rachael King, Blyth Festival (part of the meeting)
Heather Boa, Blyth Festival (part of the meeting)
Deb Sholdice, General Manager, North Huron Publishing
Heather Fraser, North Huron Publishing
Rhonda Long, Day Tripping in Southern Ontario
Harry Shinder, Huron County Consultant
Dwayne Evans, CAO
Amanda Piskorski, Assistant to the CAO

Absent:

CAO Evans called the meeting to order at 12:09 p.m., welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. New attendees were introduced.

- 2.0 MOTION:
THAT the North Huron Economic Committee; accept the Agenda for the March 1, 2018 Committee Meeting.

Moved by: Karen Stewart
Seconded by: Trevor Seip

CARRIED

- 3.0 MOITION:
THAT the North Huron Economic Committee; accepts the minutes from the Economic Committee held on February 1, 2018 and the Huron County Economic Development Special Board Meeting held on January 29, 2018.

Moved by: Bill Knott
Seconded by: Glen Manjin

CARRIED

- 4.0 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None Declared

5.0 Appointment of Committee Chair

To be discussed later in the meeting.

6.0 REPORTS

6.1 Gil Garratt, Artistic Director and Rachael King, General Manager, Blyth Festival Presentation

Gil and Rachael from the Blyth Festival, presented their PowerPoint that was presented to North Huron Council on February 5, 2018. The presentation was well received by the committee. The presentation detailed the partnership between the Blyth Festival and North Huron to promote and advertise the municipality. There was a suggestion that the Economic Development Committee could do the same and market themselves through a partnership with the festival.

6.2 Deb Sholdice, The Citizen, General Manager and Heather Fraser, The Citizen, Advertising Sales Presentation

Deb explained that The Citizen would like to continue working with the Township on three areas; brand awareness, public notices and tourism marketing. She explained that the Committee could explore more options to advertise, by adding immigration and Economic Development marketing into their plan.

Deb emphasized that newspapers are not a thing of the past. It is still important to have physical versions available to the public; more eyes are able to see them and they are around much longer. Digital marketing from The Citizen for 2018 has had some improvements. The Citizen has a new partnership with City Media that allows customers to take their marketing digital and searchable on the web. The searchable capabilities is provided free to individuals and businesses who use The Citizen's services.

After an extensive discussion the Economic Development committee decided that it would be beneficial to get more information and develop a marketing plan. The establishment of a subcommittee was suggested.

After some discussion;

Moved by: Trevor Seip

Seconded by: Karen Stewart

MOTION:

THAT the North Huron Economic Committee establish a marketing subcommittee;

AND FURTHER, THAT, that Councillor Trevor Seip, CAO Dwayne Evans, North Huron Clerical/Marketing Assistant Denise Lockie and Director of Recreation and Facilities, Pat Newson be appointed to the subcommittee and work with Deb Sholdice and Heather

Fraser from The Citizen, to develop marketing strategies and bring back a report to the Committee on how to proceed with advertising.

CARRIED

6.3 Rhonda Long, Daytripping, Advertising Sales Presentation

Rhonda advised that she previously worked with the Economic Development Officer at the Township on advertisements in the Daytripping Magazine. Their focus is to promote buy local, shop local and eat local. They would like to continue to provide services to North Huron. The Committee suggested publications such as the Daytripping Magazine be considered as part of the marketing strategy.

6.4 Update from Glen Manjin on Employer Roundtable #2

Glen Manjin provided an update on the Huron County Economic Development Board Roundtable meeting he attended. The event was hosted by Chris Watson from the County of Huron. The Roundtable meeting was a follow up discussion on the success, or not, of the County job fair held in London.

Glen reported that employers were very satisfied with the job fair and many interviews took place in small break out rooms with mini interviews. Many volunteers at the County level were in attendance. Employers were impressed with the worthwhile venture however, it was noted that not a lot of hiring took place. At the Roundtable event there was a lot of discussion about how to get new hires from London to their potential places of employment. At the Roundtable event, employers were working together to bring new ideas to the table. One idea mentioned was the option of renting a bus to transport employees to their places of employment. It was noted that from London to Exeter the cost would be \$22 for a round trip. There was a proposal to the County to pay for the purchase of a bus. Glen commented that the employers in attendance were determined to find a solution to the travel problem.

The Committee discussed how the Town of Minto transports employees using this method. The purchase/renting of a bus would be the short-term fix; a more permanent resolution would be finding the employees housing options. Two North Huron employers are reaching out to the labour pool through the radio in hopes of finding employees for the positions they have available.

6.5 Vicki Lass, OMAFRA, F.E. Madill Project

Vicki was unable to attend. Deferred to next meeting.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Libro Prosperity Fund, Sponsorships & Donations

CAO Evans explained that after the recent Wingham BIA Annual General Meeting there was a discussion regarding the Libro Prosperity Fund. It was suggested two applications be submitted by the Township to launch an economic development program called, "In It to Win It-North Huron". This program would replicate the "Win This Space" concept which has been successful in neighbouring communities such as Minto, Huron East and Listowel. The proposal presented was to submit a funding application to the Wingham Libro Branch for Wingham and a second proposal to the Clinton Libro Branch for Blyth. If successful Libro would support the program by granting \$10,000 for each program. Through the Huron Community Futures Program, a consultant would be hired to facilitate the program. The consultant would work a day to a day and a half a week, on average. The proposal, as presented, includes \$10,000 from the Township's Economic Development Budget (\$5,000 to support each of the applications). Pre-budget approval from Council would be required.

There was a lot of positive energy and support for the program. Community members agreed that there is not just one winner. Everyone who participates in the program is a winner with the experience and skills they would gain.

After some discussion;

Moved by: Councillor Knott

Seconded by: Murray Simpson

MOTION:

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee recommends the Council of the Township of North Huron support the Libro Credit Union Prosperity Fund Applications;

AND FURTHER, that the North Huron Economic Development Committee recommends the Council of the Township of North Huron grant pre-budget approval of \$10,000 from the economic development budget to support the Libro Credit Union Growing Prosperity Funding applications (\$5,000 towards each application).

CARRIED

7.2 Economic Strategic Plan – Status Update

Deferred to next meeting.

7.3 Tourism Strategy, Workforce Attraction and Retention Strategy, Ag Strategy

Deferred to next meeting.

7.4 Blyth Tourism Destination Report

CAO Evans reports RTO4 held a launch party of the Blyth Tourism Destination Report. At the launch it was announced that RTO4 has established three project categories with funding attached. The funding requires matching dollars and applications are due by March 31, 2018.

CAO Evans also reminds the committee that OMAFRA has announced and made funding available to municipalities for downtown revitalization projects. North Huron has been allocated approximately \$40,000. Further details on the funding program will be announced shortly by OMAFRA. Within the parameters and guidelines of the program, North Huron will need to consider how to allocate the money. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

7.5 Ontario BIA Association

Received for Information

7.6 Huron Chamber of Commerce, Volume 111 January 2018

Received for Information

8. DISCUSSION

8.1 The committee agreed that they need to develop strategies and a budget to be able to effectively assign and tackle issues.

Moved by: Murray Simpson

Seconded by: Glen Marjin

MOTION:

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee dedicate one hour at the April 5th 2018 meeting to discuss committee priorities.

CARRIED

8.1 Litter Bags for Festival

CAO Evans reports that he has been contacted by the Township's Recreational Department about whether the Township will be purchasing little promotional bags for distribution at festival events in the Blyth campground. The little bags cost around \$1,350.00 plus taxes and get distributed at the Threshers Reunion and the Barn Dance festival. After some discussion, it was decided this strategy of marketing is not effective and not a good use of promotional dollars.

Moved by: Dave Tiffin

Seconded by: Councillor Knott

MOTION:

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee discontinue the litter bag promotional program.

CARRIED

8.3 Regional Tourism Organization

Each Regional Tourism Organization is an independent, industry-led and not-for-profit and each provides leadership and coordination to support competitive and sustainable tourism regions.

It was discussed at the committee that staff will bring back templates of Goderich and Exeter's Community Improvement Plan.

9. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. Belgrave Community Centre.

10. ADJOURMENT

Moved by: Glen Manjin

Seconded by: Councillor Seip

MOTION:

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee agree that there being no further business the Committee; the meeting be hereby adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

CARRIED