

North Huron Economic Development Committee
Minutes
December 7, 2017

Attendees: Murray Simpson
Dave Tiffin
Councillor Knott
Councillor Seip
Karen Stewart, Blyth BIA Representative
Glen Manjin, Wingham BIA Representative
Dwayne Evans, CAO

Purpose and Direction of the Committee

CAO Evans welcomes and thanks everyone for attending. He notes this is the first meeting of the North Huron Economic Development Committee and briefly reviews the Terms of Reference which were shared with the committee members in advance.

There is a discussion regarding the composition and mandate of the committee. Members express that they would like to see more young members on the committee. Additional members for the committee are identified. Karen and Councillor Knott offer to contact the individuals and extend an invitation on behalf of the committee. CAO Evans advises the Centre for Employment and Learning has expressed an interest in the committee. CAO Evans is asked to extend an invitation. Committee members also have business community contacts and all are encouraged to reach out for additional committee members.

Development of a marketing package is discussed as a mandate of the committee. It is noted our existing marketing strategies focus on what we have and not what we want. There is a discussion as to what we need to attract. Suggestions offered include industries and a major call centre. Target marketing is discussed noting members of the Amish community are present in the area but their products are not visible.

There is a discussion regarding online marketing. It is suggested people under the age of 25 are not on facebook. It is also suggested social media directs you to websites and content on websites drives google searches. It is suggested websites are like a filing cabinet and are not intended to be a marketing tool.

There is a discussion regarding the allocation of the Township's economic development resources. It is suggested the Committee needs to advise Council how existing economic development resources should be allocated. There is a brief discussion about the Township's Economic Development Strategic Plan and the need to remove roadblocks for developers. Developers need step-by-step information to grow North Huron with one point of contact. There is a discussion about meeting with developers to learn more about their development experience. The Strategic Plan is available on the Township's website. CAO Evans will distribute copies of the plan in advance of the next meeting.

At a recent Huron Manufacturing Association Award event it was learned that a majority of economic growth is driven by expansions of existing businesses. Business owners are driven by passion and store front don't tell the whole story. There is a brief discussion about inviting

existing business owners to meet with the Economic Development Committee. This leads into a discussion regarding the mandate of the committee. Is the purpose to extract information and data and facilitate transformation or is the purpose to set a new course for economic development?

In closing, the committee agrees to meet monthly and there is a suggestion to hold the meetings at various locations throughout the municipality. The committee also decides to consider the selection of a Chair and Vice-Chair at their next meeting.

Next meeting: Thursday, January 4, 2018
 12:00 pm.
 Location to be determined