MINUTES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HURON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday, July 11, 2019
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Location: HELD IN THE BLYTH COMMUNITY CENTRE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Murray Simpson
                    Dave Tiffin
                    Bernie Bailey
                    Member Deb Sholdice
                    Councillor Kevin Falconer
                    Jordan Hodgins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Glen Manjin

STAFF PRESENT: Dwayne Evans, CAO/ Deputy Clerk
               Amanda Piskorski

OTHERS PRESENT: Alex Ripley, County of Huron Economic Development Officer
                Chris Watson, County of Huron Economic Development Officer
                Laura Simpson, County of Huron Planner
                Anita van Hittersum, North Huron Councillor
                Donna White, North Huron Director of Finance
                Rebecca Rathwell, Centre of Employment and Learning
                Mark Woodward, Huron Chamber of Commerce

1. CALL TO ORDER

   Chair Simpson called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

2. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

   MOVED BY: Bernie Bailey
   SECONDED BY: Dave Tiffin

   THAT the North Huron Economic Committee; accept the Agenda for the July 11, 2019 Committee Meeting, as amended to include a PowerPoint presentation to Agenda Item 6.1.

   CARRIED

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

   None noted.
4. MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Economic Development Meeting held June 13, 2019

MOVED BY: Kevin Falconer
SECONDED BY: Bernie Bailey

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee hereby adopts the minutes of the meeting held June 13, 2019; as presented.

CARRIED

5. DELEGATIONS

6. REPORTS

6.1 Chris Watson and Alex Ripley, County Of Huron - Finding Solutions to the Acute Labour and Housing Shortage

Chris Watson and Alex Ripley from Huron County Economic Development presented their report on Finding Solutions to the Acute Labour and Housing Shortage in Huron County.

Watson commented that the unemployment rate in Huron County has dipped to the lowest rate since 2001. He added, that the unemployment rate is around 3% where the Provincial average is 5.6%.

Watson commented that the symptoms of having a labour shortage in the workplace are less skilled workers, lower standards, increased absenteeism, retention problems and a lack of motivation.

Watson commented that North Huron is seeing the effects of the labour shortage. The shortage is being seen all over Huron County.

Watson reported that employers are hesitant to add shifts or conduct expansions because they are constrained by getting workers and finding them housing.

Watson commented that on June 16, 2019 a meeting was held to find possible solutions on the labour and housing shortages. Watson mentioned that workers might be hesitate to move to the area given the cost and low amount of rental housing available to them.

Watson looked to the Committee for suggestions to the housing issue.

Chair Simpson commented that The Town of Shelbourne changed their zoning to allow residential properties to be on the main floor of the downtown core to accommodate the issue. Laura Simpson, Planner advised that this practice is not sustainable over the long-term and causes stores in the downtown to be vacate. However, Simpson advised that residential properties could be behind or below store fronts.
Councillor Falconer commented that the Minto Community Improvement Plan incorporated structural improvement funds for businesses to improve their residential apartments. Watson commented that the County is looking more for immediate housing solutions.

Watson commented that North Huron is taking positive steps towards housing with the future development of Hutton Heights and the Community Improvement Plan. He explained that, however the County is looking for more short-term/medium-term solutions, rather then long-term.

Reeve Bailey commented that looking at the Blyth Campground for immediate temporary accommodation was mentioned at the June 16 County meeting.

Councillor van Hittersum commented that some farmers have second housing units on their agricultural lands that could be empty and may be a possible idea to accommodate workers. van Hittersum added that the County and Municipality could make it easier for farmers to build and sell additional units on agricultural lands.

Councillor Falconer suggested that the County host a public meeting for community education and outreach purposes.

Watson commented that there will be an open meeting held of July 16, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. in the Hot Stove Lounge at the Wingham Complex to revisit these issues.

6.2 Donna White - 2019 Budget

Donna White, Director of Finance with the Township of North Huron presented her report on the 2019 budget that was also presented to Council on January 23, 2019.

Dave Tiffin commented that the North Huron Howson Bridge/Dam Committee has been formed and indicated there is $15,000 in the budget for the Committee. Evans commented that the funds are to be used as a resource for the Committee to help them come to a decision on the bridge/dam. Evans also commented that there is $20,000 available to the Economic Development Committee for the purposes of a consultant.

6.3 MUNICIPAL UPDATE

Dwayne Evans, CAO commented that the Museum Committee has been established and the Committee is set to have their first meeting in August. The Committee's mandate is to develop a work plan which will be used to facilitate a decision on the relocation of the museum to the former train station.
Councillor Falconer commented that the Howson Bridge/Dam Committee had their first meeting and invited all to attend.

6.4 BLYTH BIA UPDATE

Member Deb Sholdice commented that the Blyth BIA helped sponsor a "Flower Me Blyth" community project that launched in June. The project is designed to beautify Blyth.

Sholdice commented that David Sparling is spearheading a "Blyth Plaques and Portraits Project". This project creates plaques and portraits that tell of significant stories around the Village of Blyth.

Sholdice commented that the outdoor market in Blyth moved to a new more visible location at the Pharmacy pad in Blyth.

Sholdice commented that the Blyth BIA is working with FauxPop media to enhance their digital presence in conjunction with the Digital Main Street Project. Sholdice mentioned that the project will allow volunteers to manage the website.

6.5 WINGHAM BIA UPDATE

Member Dave Tiffin commented that the next Howson Bridge/Dam Committee meeting will be held on August 14, 2019.

Tiffin commented that the Wingham BIA is looking for new ways to promote the Wingham Townhall Theatre.

Tiffin mentioned that the Wingham "In It To Win It" winner, Huron County Designs, has picked her store front and plans to open the store in late July 2019.

Tiffin commented that the Wingham sidewalk sales event is being held the last weekend in July.

Tiffin commented that the Huron Small Business Centre is offering free workshops for businesses located in the County of Huron.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

8.1 Mayor George Bridge, Town of Minto, will be in attendance at the North Huron Council meeting on August 12 to discuss Minto's Economic Development Initiatives

8.2 Township of North Huron's Community Improvement Plan Update

There was previous discussions from the Committee whether the Community Improvement Plan funds needed to be spent by the end of the program. Evans commented the that he was in discussions with AMO and
they advised that the Community Improvement Plan funds all need to be allocated by the end of the program not necessary spent.

Evans also provided an update from a previous meeting. Evans commented that he was in discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and they advised that they are aware of other Community Improvement Plan's (CIP) incorporating structural improvements within CIP's. The Ministry did not see anything wrong with this and stated it would have to be incorporated into the North Huron Official Plan.

Simpson, Planner commented that if the Committee decided to incorporate changes into the North Huron Community Improvement Plan then they would need to amend the current version and advertise for public comment to consider changes. Simpson added that the cost to update the current version would come from the Committee Budget.

Vice-Chair Jordan Hodjins commented that the Community Improvement Plan pamphlets have been developed and are ready for distribution. Hodjins will provide further details at the August meeting.

MOVED BY: Dave Tiffin
SECONDED BY: Kevin Falconer

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee hereby instruct Laura Simpson, Planner to incorporate structural changes into the North Huron Community Improvement Plan;
AND FURTHER THAT the revised Community Improvement Plan be brought for review to the August Committee meeting.

CARRIED

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Rebecca Rathwell, Promotion Material

Rebecca Rathwell commented that North Huron needs promotional material to hand out to new visitors in the community.

Dave Tiffin commented that the Community Connectors community group are working on something to provide to new visitors.

10. NEXT STEPS

Simpson is to bring back the revised North Huron Community Improvement Plan to review at the August Committee Meeting.

Vice-Chair Hodjins to update the Committee regarding the Community Improvement Plan pamphlet distribution at the August Committee meeting.

11. NEXT MEETING
The next North Huron Economic Development meeting will be held August 8, 2019. Location TBD.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: Kevin Falconer
SECONDED BY: Dave Tiffin

THAT the North Huron Economic Development Committee agree that there being no further business before the Committee; the meeting be hereby adjourned at 9:56 am.

CARRIED

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Chair

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Co-Chair