

SMITHS FALLS & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Minutes of Meeting – April 11, 2018
7:30 a.m.

Present: Barbara Black, Sean Lawrence, Mike Fletcher, Cy Wells, Tracy Gallipeau-Nolan, Crystal LeVatte, Pat Wiseman, Jean Sherman

Council: Jay Brennan

Staff: Becky Allen, Mercedes Masson

Regrets: Amber Beasley, Eileen Crosbie, Kristine Fair, Chris Saumure

Absent: Jeff Banks, Dawn Quinn

Guest:

Call to Order by President, Barbara Black, at 7:32 a.m.

Mission Statement read by President, Barbara Black

- Barbara Black mentioned that some of our meetings have been lengthy. It would be great to get the reports before. We have an obligation as board members to be informed, questions at meeting, so we can concentrate on other things.
- Jay Brennan stated that everything is on the website and he brings the agenda.

Motion to Accept Minutes of March 14, 2018

Moved: Sean Lawrence

Second: Cy Wells

Motion Carried.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

Council Report – Town of Smiths Falls

- Had a meeting on Monday.
- We had a presentation by Terri Lee Kelford, youth homeless group has come with a proposal
 - Talking about the problems with youth homelessness. 30 true youth homeless cases, 22 in Smiths Falls.
 - They have staff that works with them
 - There is a piece of land on Franklin street, behind Jersey Joes. It is a very small parcel, was hoping for the town to donate that land.
 - 3 tiny homes there
 - \$12,000 is the value of the land.
- The former Rideau Hotel – it's going to start, everything is in place. The porch, they have to come back to that.
- Impact of assessment lowered. Property to be re-developed. Belongs to someone at Le Boat. Rockland house. (bed & breakfast)

- Becky Allen mentioned it was Lisa Mclean that owned the Rockland House.
- Barbara Black asked Jay Brennan if the campground was discussed? Jay Brennan said no, but he was away.

Council Report – Township of Rideau Lakes

- No Report

Treasurer Report – Mike Fletcher

- Billing to the members has been very successful. No direct involvement needed from the office, as it's online.
- \$23,000 of accounts receivable still to come in. Our membership revenue may go up to \$40 thousand.
- In 2014 the total equity dropped to \$2600. We are now up to \$6,600. On the assets side this time last year we had \$4,800. Looking at \$8,800 now.
- Membership is our only revenue. \$25,500 in membership dues. \$6,200 profit year to date.
- Thanked and compliment Mercedes Masson on working on the system. She wrestled the bank reconciliations on her own. Very impressed.
- Financial reports are looking the way he wanted.
- Would like to send them ahead of time
- The new layout is doing well.
- We ran into a couple hiccups for breakfast meeting income, reports

Campground Profit Contribution 2017 V.S. 2018

- Split with the town is changing, we are getting 5% less.
- The software, hoping it will have a full management system. Becky Allen and Mike Fletcher talked about staffing cost.
- Peace around delaying opening – Barbara Black mentioned. In regards to the construction. Gail Moore-Barrie is back a week today. May need to get input from Gail Moore-Barrie.
- Staff management
- We may lose some sites from construction
- As we move forward and the campground changes, I think that it is prudent for us what ever the plans are the chamber should be an investor as well as operating it.
- We should set a portion of the campground profits into a reserve. That's something that will take dollars away from the dollars we have coming in, another factor that will put pressure on the bottom line.
- We are getting bookings for May. There is potential to doing better this May.
- Canada 150 had pluses and minuses. Every extra booking is a profit. The more we drive the sales the better.
- We really have to focus on revenue for all events.

Hydro Rates

- The way the new software is working. The hydro rates \$10.00 a week \$1.79 daily. Board feels its too cheap.
- Sean Lawrence mentioned for this year we need to look at the hydro rates. Get the bill from the town and do the math.
- Cy Wells mentioned to put in a disclaimer about the hydro. Put a sign in the office.
- Mike Fletcher and Mercedes Masson to figure out what we should charge for hydro. Mike Fletcher mentions for now to keep it at \$1.79.
- \$25 dollars a week.
- Mike Fletcher needs to speak with the guy with the software. Would like to get back to the board.

Motion that the hydro rates be set at \$20/week and a disclaimer to say that the rates are subject to change without notice.

Moved: Cy Wells

Second: Mike Fletcher

All in favor.

Breakfast Charges

- Last breakfast- 50 people attended and 12 no shows.
- February - 28 all in.
- We have lost \$20 dollars so far.
- Sean Lawrence mentioned that we should be billing people who don't show.
- Barbara Black wants us to charge the no shows.
- Do we want this to be a fundraising or focus on breaking even? Barbara Black thinks that we are obligated to bring value to our members. We do enough of other things to make up for breaking even with breakfast meetings.
- When people pay cash on the spot. Set up with Quickbooks, invoiced some. We are charging \$13.27 and HST. Becky Allen feels it's low. \$15 and HST is what she suggests.
- Upped the price for non-members, it encourages non-members to become members - \$25.
 - Sean Lawrence mentioned, if they join maybe we could refund the extra cost.

Chamber Update – Becky Allen

- Campsite. Had a meeting with Art Manhire to renegotiate the contract. It went better by the end. He was really pleased to see 6 people from the chamber board.
- This should be a priority for Art Manhire. There is a real negative feeling about the campground. All of the old pieces around why the campground shouldn't exist. Since we took it, they lost revenue. Negative points were pointed out for the first part of the meeting. Had financials to show they are making money.
- The construction timeline. The biggest problem is the entrance, as you can not use the same entrance as the construction workers.
 - See if it could be split, put up a barrier.

- The time when the water main surfaced they were already 2 wks. behind. The pipe set them back another 3wks. Construction deadline is May 11th.
- Barbara Black asked if we can get this entrance problem fixed or are we going to let campers know our issue? Becky Allen will reach out to Art Manhire.
 - You have to let them know they are going to enter a construction zone.
- Construction company looking at using another entrance from Beckwith street, but they would have to put in a temp. road.
- We need to let our campers know – Barbara Black mentions.
- Becky Allen thought we should find out what's going on then contact campers.
- Campground opens 24th of April.
- Moving seasonal to another location. trying to find a new plan.
- Jay Brennan said the strategic plan mentions relocating the campground. Not moving it until they know what they can do with it. Campers bring value to the town.
- Art Manhire seems more willing to work with in regards to moving part or all of the campground. Mentions going behind Roosteraunt.
- Barbara Black mentions that Art Manhire at one point suggested that because its public asset. Everyone should be able to make a bid on the campground.
- We save the town wages by doing the campground paperwork.
- Becky Allen wants to speak with Gail Moore-Barrie before they move forward. Working to create positive PR for the campground.
- A few beautifications, for example on Abbott St.
- Breakfasts- April 24th at the station theatre. We have a speaker from tweed coming to talk about their work culture and how that impacts customer services and on your business.
- With this breakfast, Station Theatre reached out to us, you can't bring food into the theatre. We will eat and then have presentation.
- Of the 10 people that did rsvp as late as the night before. We were looking at having 55 or 58.
- Wanted to get a few under belt before doing surveys.
- No breakfast meeting in July or August.
- MI613 Inc. is interested in speaking in the future about cyber security.
- Mike Fletcher mentioned doing a financial one in the future.
- Two guys for Lunch is catering for the April meeting
- May – June (Breakfasts), September or October for All Candidates. Beginning of October. (evening events)
- Small business access website launch Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and Ontario government trying to do sessions, we were going to piggy back that. Barbara Black wants more information for this.
- Cy Wells mentions to contact Robin from Alzheimer society to speak for breakfast. Feels that is good value for membership.
- Place making workshop hosted by Parks Canada and the Town March 28th. It was a visioning to do with the Rideau canal. It was a really great experience.
- Amber Beasley and Becky Allen are working on a passport. It's the same concept as the coupon books. This is more focused on coupons. Amber Beasley is managing all of this project. No advertisements. It will go to Le Boat and through the mail to everyone.

- The DBA is not involved. Cy Wells mentions to check to see if they are doing a coupon book.
- There will be a discount for chamber members.
- Golf tournament is set for June 8th. Meeting will be after this one. They will continue working on the details.
- CIP – that there is CIP available this year. Rockland house and Rideau hotel. Its these two that will be using most of the funds.
- Becky Allen is also on the municipal heritage committee.
- They have a custom window maker, wooden original. They are working with the local carpenter.
- You can apply though Valley Heartland for the CIP grant. They help you pay.
- May 10th and 11th – chamber should go. Becky Allen volunteered to go. Talks about street structures, etc. Cy Wells mentioned.
- Becky Allen to follow up with the CIP grant.
- Welcoming the World – international visitors coming to Smiths Falls. Things to prepare your staff (It's tonight and it's free).
- Tourism meeting in the town. There was a presentation by Le Boat. Talking about visitors coming. They only have their 5-star boats here. 70% sold. People are flying in and don't have a way to get to Smiths Falls. They are forced to stay as the lock, which are locked. 2 full days. Approx. 4 days. They can sleep on the boat. They are stationed in the basin.
- Downtown- Cy Wells and Becky Allen have been working on a letter. Troy Dunlop is putting on and inviting someone from Kingston to talk about what they did during their construction. Parsons has good strategies for us to put in place. Cy Wells has had a lot of ideas. Becky Allen sending it out for approval today.
- Becky Allen would like to do a delegation but not sure when. Waiting until fall.
 - Then you can outline exactly what they want.
- United way- governance capacity workshop.
- Membership wise we are growing. Mercedes Masson and Becky Allen are working on doing an outreach. Feels our membership should be bigger. The Perth membership is bigger than ours.
 - Becky Allen wants to get over 300 this year.
 - Having other board members, bring people in.
 - Jean Sherman mentioned testimonies.

New Business Added to Agenda

- Election nomination period starts May 1st ends July 27th. Oct 22nd is Internet and telephone voting. People vote on paper on the day at the town hall. All candidates.
- Municipal Heritage Committee. 2011 an application was made. Musical ride on May 27th at lower reach 2 – 4p.m. It will be free.

Permission to Distribute Contact Information

- Mike Fletcher would like a list amongst our board.
- Barbara Black doesn't want her information on the chamber website. Due to the scam emails with her email.
- Sean Lawrence mentions that the next election you should be signing to give our permission.

Motion Going Forward Any Board Member is to Share Contact Information and Email with Board Members and Staff.

Moved: Barbara Black

Second: Cy Wells

All in Favor.

Adjourn at 9:00 a.m.

Moved: Pat Wiseman

Second: Crystal LeVatte

Motion Carried.

Next Meeting, Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at Valley Heartland board room