

**SMITHS FALLS & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**April 13, 2016**

**Council Lounge**

**7:30 am**

**Present:** Anne Shropshire, Barbara Black, Kristina Mausser, Chris Saumure, Cy Wells, Sean Lawrence, Tracy Gallipeau-Nolan, Tina Hughes, Becky White

**Council Reps:** Jeff Banks

**Regrets:** Dawn Quinn, Jay Brennan, Ann Knowlton and Dale Hilton

**Guests:** Erin Courtney from Chartwell Retirement Residences

**Call to Order**

Anne Shropshire called the meeting to order at 7:35am and read the mission statement aloud. Anne welcomed member Erin Courtney to the meeting.

**New Business to Add to Agenda**

None

**Motion to Accept Agenda**

Moved: Sean Lawrence

Seconded: Kristina Mausser

Motion Carried

**Changes to the Minutes from March 9, 2016**

None

**Motion to accept the Minutes from March 9, 2016**

Moved: Cy Wells

Seconded: Barbara Black

Motion Carried

**Disclosure of Monetary Interest**

None

**Council Report Town of Smiths Falls**

No report

**Council Report – Township of Rideau Lake**

Jeff reported that Council approved the process for the Smiths Falls police to do a cost analysis for Rideau Lakes. Jeff also noted that there has been a substantial property tax increase for those in the Rideau Lakes township, of approximately 20% (or 24% for waterfront), which will be split three ways between education, county, and the township.

**Staffing Update**

Anne reported that the hiring committee met this past weekend to review the candidates for both positions of Marketing Coordinator and Administrator/Bookkeeper (as the deadline for submission was April 8<sup>th</sup>). The hiring committee is meeting in the afternoon of April 13<sup>th</sup> to create a candidate shortlist and to establish a plan of action for the hiring process. The Board will be updated once decisions are

made. Anne noted that approximately 20 applications were received for each position and said the prospects were positive.

### **Marketing Coordinator Update**

Becky White updated the board members on what she has been up to since the last meeting.

- Following up with members for visits – all local members interested in meeting have been met with - a total of 75 visits have been completed. Becky asked the Board what they'd like her to do about the members out of town. It was suggested a day trip be done to Perth and to Carleton Place to meet the members there. Becky stated the response was positive overall and that members appreciated the effort. She recommended this be done at least once per year going forward. Becky asked what the Board would like her to do with the data collected. The Board requested a "Coles Notes" version of the data and recommendations - to be distributed to the Board and for the benefit of her replacement.
- Visitor Guide
  - Visitor Guide was delivered (behind schedule) to the Chamber office on April 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - Becky asked for recommendations on how to distribute locally, and suggested it may be a good opportunity for her replacement to start meeting some local businesses.
  - Ashley had approached a list of dozens of visitor centres across Ontario to see if they were interested in our VG, with a minimum number of 25 guides. Almost 3,000 have been requested to date. Becky asked if there should be a cap on the number delivered to visitor centres - Board said no. Becky mentioned that last year the SF Chamber combined their external distribution efforts with the Carleton Place Chamber to save costs. This can be done again for 2016. Becky will have to figure out a way to keep track of what is being distributed as she believes the CP Chamber is sending out substantially more than the SF Chamber is.
  - The Board asked that we put a link on our website to the virtual version of the VG that the Town posts on their website.
- Policy Handbook being recreated to include all policies and some new ones to be written. Looking for suggestions on topics to be included.
- Becky has started working on a proposal for a new membership plan structure, in conjunction with the sponsorship package proposal. This is ongoing and updates are to follow.
- The semi-annual membership renewal plan is on schedule. Once the new staff persons are in place, work on preparing the June-issued renewals will begin.
- It was discovered that VPC doesn't qualify for the EODP grant through Valley Heartland for campground software as the project would not create a job. Becky did some research and recommended the campground tries KW Hotel - a free software that could meet the needs of the campground. The Board suggested the campground staff look into purchasing software that would suit the campground's needs. The campground staff are to determine their needs and trial software and let the Board know their recommendation.
- Events
  - Next networking event is April 21<sup>st</sup> at Van Horne Manor. Registration hasn't been great so far. Becky will send out an email to the membership later this week to promote the event.

- The proposed date for the golf tournament is August 5<sup>th</sup>. Since this is the first day of the summer Olympics, it was suggested we could have an Olympics theme. There was no objection to this date, so it is moving forward.
- Requests
  - St. John The Evangelist Church requested a donation for their auction once again this year. They requested a gift certificate for Victoria Park Campground, as in previous years. Anne will follow-up on this.
  - We received a request by mail from Clay Williams for our members to join him on a run through Smiths Falls called “The Canal Pursuit for Mental Health”. Becky is to include this invitation in the next newsletter.
  - Request from Eastern Regional Medical Education Program for coupons and gift certificates for 5 medical students visiting the region. Board decided the Chamber doesn’t have the staff capacity to solicit donations this year. In future, it is recommended we have a selection of these types of items on hand.
- Becky has discovered some discrepancies between our membership list and the accounting program. The extent of these issues will be realized once the new Bookkeeper is in place.

### **Strategic Plan Update**

Kristina reminded the Board that there will need to be a follow-up meeting to put in place an action plan for the strategic plan. The public launch date will likely be in the fall.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

Moved: Chris Saumure

Seconded: Cy Wells

Motion Carried

### **Upcoming Board Meetings**

**May 11, 2016**

**June 8, 2016**

### **Mission Statement:**

**The Smiths Falls & District Chamber of Commerce is the Voice of Commerce dedicated to the promotion of economic development and the prosperity for the enrichment of our community.**