

**SMITHS FALLS & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**March 12, 2014**

**Valley Heart Land Board Room**

**7:30 am**

**Present:** *Chris Saumure Dave Lawrence, John Maloney, Barry Webster, Jim Pankow, CY Wells, Tracey Pankow, Joe Gallipeau, Sean Lawrence, John Gray Kristine Fair, Anne Shropshire*

**Council Reps:** *Dennis Staples, Jay Brennan*

**Regrets:** *Eileen Crosbie, Hugh Colton, Bev Street, Jeff Banks*

**Guests:** *Jennifer Heale, Nicole Guthrie, Donna Gough, Kevin ODair*

**Call to Order**

Chris Saumure called meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Chris read the mission statement

**New Business to add to Agenda**

John Maloney added the wresting event in May

**Motion to accept Agenda**

**Moved** Dave Lawrence

**Seconded** John Gray

**Changes to the minutes from January 15, 2014**

No changes

**Motion to accept the minutes from January 15, 2014**

**Moved** CY Wells

**Seconded** John Maloney

**Disclosure of Monetary Interest**

None

## **Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO)**

- Nicole Guthrie attended to discuss the growing shift in tourism
- With several festivals and projects in the area the potential in tourism for Smiths Falls is unique
- OHTO has identified 13 tourism regions in Ontario
- Smiths Falls is a part of one of the largest regions
- The focus is on the ideal guest (The Connected Explorer: Mid 20s – 40s)
- Our front line staff need to be knowledgeable when tourists ask questions
- How do we reach them after they leave? Social media is one of the fastest growing communication for follow ups
- OHTO is creating a tool kit for each region to help with some of these issues
- Cross promoting each other is a major goal
- OHTO offers a free Mystery Shopper service called OHvation
- OHTO offers workshops such as the Customer Service Excellence one the chamber is holding on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March
- Membership to OHTO is free
- OHTO has over 8000 followers on Face book
- Collaboration is required, to enhance the experience guest have while in Smiths Falls
- There is project funding available. Contact Nicole Whiting for further information
- Funding is calculated by geographic location and other factors

## **Canadian Blood Services**

- Jennifer Heale attended to inform the board about Canadian Blood Services
- Typically, 1 in 4 people can donate; and 1 in 6 do
- They are a national not for profit organization
- They collect 850,000 units annually
- Every unit is tested thoroughly
- Clinics are held in Smiths Falls 6 times a year at the Civitan Club
- Canadian Blood Services are looking for local partnership. The town of Smiths Falls has partnered with a pledge to provide a certain amount of units over the next year
- It takes 56 day to rejuvenate after giving blood
- They hold blood typing clinics as well
- O- can be used for all types and is in high demand
- Canadian Blood Services is looking to partner with the Chamber
- Each clinic they hold in Smiths Falls their goal is to collect 115 units of blood
- Possibility of having a blood typing clinic at the Healthy Living Festival
- Canadian Blood Services promotes their partners vigorously
- You can now book online to have an appointment

## **Council Report –Town of Smiths Falls**

- Mayor Staples introduced Kevin O’Dair as the new Community Development Coordinator
  - Kevin has many different experiences that will complement each other to enable him to be a success at the position
- A delegation on Monday night was from Marylyn Bird of the Lanark County Transportation Authority
  - She gave an update on ridership and thanked the town for their contribution, which allows the LTA to qualify for funds through the provincial gas tax
  - Because of the shortage of doctors the LTA is almost an essential service
  - They will be expanding their service to include a type of transportation to include several stops in town and along the highway to Perth and to Carleton Place
- The ad for a new CAO is in the paper
- Fire chief has begun giving council monthly summaries of training, types of calls, amount of calls etc. this is available on the website
- The “Rink of Dreams” was discussed and a sample was passed around
- The 2014 budget was passed
- A by-law will be passed at the upcoming council meeting to establish a “Properties of Interest Registry “ in this there are three to be added right away
- The attendance at the Strategic Planning meeting was lower than they has anticipated
- Jay Brennan mention that Steve Fournier is still working on the Service Review
- Dennis gave a brief report on Tourism that Anne Shropshire had inquired about
  - In this briefing he discussed the following:
  - The information is from the document turning point from 2012
  - Downtown Revitalization
  - Waterfront
  - Tourism
  - Arts and Culture
  - There were 48 events here last year
  - There were 48 recommendations and out of them 25 have been completed
  - 23 recommendations are left to address

## **Council Report – Township of Rideau Lakes**

N/A

## **Victoria Park Contract**

- The Town is proposing to have their portion of the revenue changed from a 70% Chamber/30% Town split, to the following:
  - 2014 70% 30%
  - 2015 65% 35%
  - 2016 60% 40%
  - 2017 55% 45%
  - 2018 60% 40%
- The Victoria Park committee has given the town a counter proposal of
  - 2014 70% 30%
  - 2015 70% 30%
  - 2016 65% 35%
  - 2017 65% 35%
  - 2018 60% 40%
- The mayor would like a delegation be brought to council for final approval of the contract
- The Chamber would like a breakdown of cost for the hydro, water, garbage collection etc. which the committee has asked for previously
- Still waiting on the agreement to be finalized
- Wages will be going up this year, as per legislation
- The gross amount of sales has gone up 253% since the Chamber took over the management of the park

## **Strategic Planning Update**

- The meeting for the 19th of March has been postponed
- The deadline for input and home work is March 31<sup>st</sup>
- There has been a suggestion brought forward that the DBA and the Chamber go together and hire a facilitator to help with the process
- Kevin O'Dair has agreed to do this
- Anne is still looking for assistance from other Board Members

## **Physician Recruitment**

- We need doctors
- We need to embrace the students when they are here for their visits and give them an experience to take home with them
- We need funding to have a full time recruiter on this the funding would be \$100,000 a year for the next three years
- The hospital foundation has been asked to fund part of this
- We purchase new equipment but we need the doctors to run the equipment
- This is ongoing until a solution can be found
- There are possibly upwards of 5000 people in the area without a family doctor
- We need a task force of young professionals to help with the recruitment

## **Chamber Updates**

- Melissa mentioned the request for the soap box derby for \$250.00
- It was decided to deferred to next meeting as we need to secure the Victoria Park contract prior to making any commitments
- Visitor Guide is going to final proof
- We are holding Networking Sessions every month and need board participation

## **New Business**

- John Maloney is participating in wrestling match at the arena on May 10,2014
- Portion of the sales will go to the Gerry Lowe Foundation
- John asked that each board member take a poster back to their places of employment and help promote the event

## **Standing Item**

- **Economic Development**

## **Upcoming Board Meetings --**

**April 9, 2014**  
**May 14, 2014**  
**June 11, 2014**

## **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.**