

Minutes of the Merrickville and District Chamber of Commerce

Date: June 16, 2020

Location: On-line meeting through Zoom teleconference

Present: Yves Grandmaitre, Nick Previsich, Robyn Eagle, Lisa Card, Anne Barr

Regrets: Alessandro Giuliani

Guest: None

Gallery: None

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:14 PM
2. Motion to approve the agenda was made by Nick and seconded by Robyn - passed.
3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests - none; passed.

4. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2020 meeting with one minor revision was made by Robyn and seconded by Lisa - passed.

5. Committee Reports

a. Membership

Fees:

As discussed in the previous minutes on June 9, 2020, Board members felt that due to the COVID-19 pandemic local businesses may have difficulty in paying their membership fees for 2020 and possibly 2021. Nick noted that as President of MAG, the Guild decided to forego collection of new membership fees for 2020 and those who have already paid will have their 2021 fees waived. Shelbi McFarlane from UCLG, who attended the

Chamber June 9, 2020 meeting, reached out to other Chambers on our behalf and reported that a variety of approaches are being adopted including fee reductions, deferred payments and payment arrangements. This information was helpful in our deliberations.

Yves reminded the Board members that to some extent, there are outstanding Chamber activities that will need financial resources. These included the legal fees associated updating the minutes and the articles of incorporation as well as the need to file tax returns for the past several years.

Lisa felt that we have enough financial resources in place to continue a modest operation for this year and Anne indicated that it may not be until 2022 that the Chamber will be in a position of real revenue generation unless we can access government grants. Yves suggested that the Chamber may wish to consider a fundraising event in January or February of 2021. Robyn stated that we will have to do things differently and she and Nick both supported the shift to promoting the Chamber primarily through social media platforms. Yves offered to meet with our Website manager to tweak or make revisions that may not be too expensive.

Anne as Treasurer reported that we may have app. \$9000 available to the Chamber this year depending on specific liabilities (eg. insurance) that have yet to be calculated. We will have a better picture of our finances by the end of August, 2020.

The following motion was proposed by Anne and seconded by Lisa:

“Given the extraordinary impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the businesses of Merrickville-Wolford the Merrickville & District Chamber of Commerce has decided that membership fees for 2021 for existing members will not be charged. New members joining after August 1, 2020 or in 2021 will be asked to pay the regular fee.”

The motion was passed. Yves indicated that he will send out a notice of the motion to members through the Chamber’s newsletter in the next couple of days.

b. Marketing:

Given our financial status and the passing of the motion as stated above, the Board felt that we could not afford to entertain the marketing opportunities proposed as this time by the Pattison ads and FanSaves.

6. Question Period

Robyn asked about the status of the Chamber Map and when it will be printed. Yves responded by noting that a couple of advertising spots are still available on the Wolford section of the Map. Printing is expected within the next 20 days. One thousand copies will be printed for distribution within the Village. Yves also indicated that the large map at the corner of St. Lawrence and Main streets is being updated.

Robyn also asked if it would be possible to submit a Community Grant request to the Municipality to facilitate the reopening of the portable toilet and the toilets at the rink. Yves noted that the Council has yet to decide on the applications that were submitted end of January 2020 and that any new grant applications will take place after Council's decision on existing applications. Anne suggested that the Chamber offer a "partnership" to Council where we would pay for the rental of a portable toilet provided the Municipality would pay for the regular and timely cleaning. Yves mentioned that the recently sent letter to Council mentions a willingness to discuss a solution to the situation.

7. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Robyn and seconded by Nick. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM. The next meeting will take place on July 14th, 2020 at 7:00 PM.