

Minutes of the Merrickville and District Chamber of Commerce

Tuesday, March 9, 2020

Merrickville - Wolford Public Library

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

Absent: Bruce Perron

Delegation: Michelle Vallee - Juice FM

Gallery: Daniel Robles - Merrickville Preparatory School

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM
2. Motion to approve the agenda was made by Lisa and seconded by Anne - passed.
3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests was passed.
4. Motion to approve the Minutes of the February 11, 2020 meeting was made by Alessandro and seconded by Lisa - passed.
5. Delegations

Ms. Michelle Vallee of Juice FM spoke about advertising costs for the Chamber in the preceding year (2019). This involved radio ads, rack cards and the involvement of a car for advertising purposes. Michelle presented an online example of how she proposed to advertise information on the Chamber and various business events in and around Merrickville-Wolford.

The Board members posed a number of questions regarding the catchment area and the cost of advertising for the 2020 year. One suggestion was that the Chamber could waive the corporate membership fee and receive advertising in return. The decision to renew the use of the car for advertising was deferred to a future date. Michelle noted that Juice FM can customize local ads (fee was \$500 for 6 months), can provide free advertising for events that are free to the public (on Kemptvillenow.com) and suggested that we consider advertising through the "Spin & Win" platform. Michelle also indicated that from March to December in 2019, they recorded 29,000 users per month accessing information on the Kemptvillenow.com site.

Decisions on the extent of advertising, other advertisers and costs was deferred to a future meeting.

6. Correspondence

Yves indicated that the Chamber has received a request for financial assistance from the organizers of the Tulip Festival (May 16 & 17, 2020). This engendered a discussion on the Chamber's ability to respond to such requests given our relatively small operating budget. It was moved that, "The Chamber will consider requests for financial assistance from local organizations on a case by case basis. The total amount available for the year will be set at \$1000.00 and the maximum provided will be \$100.00." The motion was proposed by Robyn and seconded by Lisa and passed. The Tulip Festival will receive \$100.00 in response to their request.

7. Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Lisa and seconded by Nick to accept the Treasurer's Report - passed. Anne provided various balance sheets outlining both assets and liabilities. The total funds currently being held are \$14,285.63 with \$3,401.29 in accounts receivable for a total of \$17,686.92. Nick noted that the Merrickville Artists' Guild is still not reflected in the accompanying sheet on "Income by Customer" - these are paid-up members.

8. Committee Reports

a) Membership

Lisa described the work currently underway with respect to decals, door & window stickers with the Chamber logo and laminated cards for members. She also provided information on an opportunity for members through Canada Post. "Pooled shipping" provides up to 37% reduction in shipping costs. Members would have to log-in to a Canada Post site to obtain shipping labels. There was a consensus that we add this opportunity to the communications dealing with benefits to our members.

A motion was proposed by Robyn and seconded by Lisa that, "The Chamber adopt a middle tier of membership fee in the amount of \$125.00." - passed. The middle tier is to include contractors, home-based businesses and service providers.

b) Marketing

Discussion to be postponed to the next meeting.

c) Networking

Robyn provided information on the proposed Chamber meet and greet meeting on March 26th at the Baldachin. The suggestion was made to possibly have a "speakers series" for future meetings sponsored by the Chamber.

* Addendum: Subsequent to the March 9th meeting in light of the COVID 19 pandemic, and recommendations to limit gatherings, Yves advised that the March 26th Chamber Launch event should be cancelled.

9. Old Business Items

a) Revenue Generation Ideas

- postponed to a future meeting

b) Map

- Approval for the Chamber to move forward on printing the map was unanimous. The cost to produce 2500 copies will be app. \$.45 per map. Sponsors will be able to advertise on the map on a first come first served basis (fee to be determined). The locations of those businesses who sponsor the map will not be shown on the map itself.

10. New Business

a) Certification Mark Project

Yves noted that a Working Group has been set up to develop a "Certification Mark" for Merrickville-Wolford makers (artisans, artists, crafters, etc.). This would be an officially registered mark with Industry Canada. Members would be provided with the Certification free of charge.

11. Question Period

Robyn noted that meetings of the Chamber should be posted in The Phoenix calendar of events.

12. Adjournment

Lisa proposed and seconded by Robyn that the meeting be adjourned (at 6:55 PM) - passed. The next meeting is scheduled on April 14, 2020.

