



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

**MINUTES OF
TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING
HELD WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2018
OKANAGAN LAKE ROOM**

PRESENT: VOTING:

Christine Kashuba, Arts & Culture
Gale Woodhouse, Arts & Culture
Kevin O'Brien, Attractions
Jacqueline Birk, Accommodation Provider
Claus Larsen, Accommodation Provider
David Gibbs, Accommodation Provider
Matt Ball, Biking
Myles Johnson, Golf
Mary Jo O'Keefe, Restaurant
Troy Hudson, Ski
Ricardo Smith, Sports and Event
Dione Chambers, Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce
Councillor Dalvir Nahal

ABSENT: Cecilia Guerrero, Accommodation Provide
Susan Lehman, Downtown Vernon Association

STAFF: Ange Chew, Staff Liaison, Manager, Tourism
Kevin Poole, Manager, Economic Development & Tourism
Janice Nicol, Legislative Committee Clerk

ORDER The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS The Committee held roundtable introductions.

ELECTION OF CHAIR Moved by Kevin O'Brien, seconded by Matt Ball:

THAT Claus Larsen be elected as Chair of the Tourism Commission for 2018.

CARRIED.

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ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Moved by Christine Kashuba, seconded by Gale Woodhouse:

THAT Jacqueline Birk be elected as Vice-Chair of the Tourism Commission for 2018.

CARRIED.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by Kevin O'Brien, seconded by Dione Chambers:

THAT the agenda for Wednesday, July 18, 2018 Tourism Advisory Committee meeting be adopted.

CARRIED.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by Kevin O'Brien, seconded by Dione Chambers:

THAT the minutes of the Tourism Advisory Committee meeting held Wednesday, April 18, 2018 be adopted.

CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

TERMS OF REFERENCE OVERVIEW

The Manager, Economic Development and Tourism provided an overview of the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT) and a brief history on why the Commission was formed. The following points were also noted:

- A 3% MRDT started being collected in January 2018
- There has been tremendous growth over the past year in tourism for our region
- It was noted that the private sector is driving the tourism function, and that there was a need to move to a Commission structure
- The Commission operates at arms-length of Council and the lag time for approvals is omitted
- Will send out five strategic plan to Commission
- A new position, a Tourism Admin person for the City, starts at end of July
- The Tourism Coordinator is in the interview process – this position's focus will be working with key stakeholders, travel trade and the sports and events sector.

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STRUCTURE AND SUB-COMMITTEES

It was suggested that a Marketing Sub-Committee be started to meet quarterly, advice will also be needed from the Commission on budget related items as the MRDT evolves with the collection of online platforms such as Airbnb and Expedia. The Marketing Sub-Committee can also look at all assets within our region and develop a fire and flood plan.

Those interested in sitting on the Marketing Sub-Committee are:

- Kevin O'Brien
- Jacqueline Birk
- Mary Jo O'Keefe
- Claus Larsen
- Matt Ball
- Gale Woodhouse
- Troy Hudson

It was noted that funds are needed for the beautification of trails leading to the Rail Trail. The Commission, through the sub-committee, can work with City Operations.

ACTION ITEM: Video and photos should be prepared this summer for promotion of the Rail Trail from the region's perspective. The Commission requested that the Manager, Tourism make this filming/photography initiative a priority.

BUDGET PLANNING FOR 2019

Input is sought from Commission members on the upcoming Tourism Budget. More information to follow.

NEW DESTINATION BC STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MARKETING – OPEN POOL & SECTOR PROJECTS

Tourism Vernon (TV) is now participating in Open Pool and Sector Projects through Destination B.C. Qualification is based on matching dollars and there are currently eight projects underway. One of the projects "Activating Our Potential" poses challenges moving into international markets as TV is not invited to international shows.

There are opportunities to leverage our brand worldwide without begin at the shows, Tier One section needs to be expanded. It is also important to be product ready, partners need to have a process in place.

New this year, the establishment of a Golf Consortium, has been effective to date.

Contract has been renewed with Destination Think!

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INFORMATION ITEMS:

ACCOMMODATION TRACKING

This remains an ongoing challenge – Teresa from Durning Directions (Visitor Info Centre) has been contacting accommodators on an individual bases but there are staffing challenges for many accommodator.

VISITOR INFO CENTRE STATISTICS

The Committee reviewed the statistics for the Visitor Info Centre.

MUNICIPAL & REGIONAL DISTRICT TAX (MRDT) UPDATE

The Committee reviewed the statistics attached to the agenda for the Municipal & Regional District Tax. Collection of the 3% began in January. We are pacing about \$500,000 ahead - which is exceptional,

ACTION ITEM: The Commission requested that a column be added to the MRDT info sheet showing the difference between the 2% and #5 collection rate.

MEDIA

The Manager, Tourism reviewed various media information including events, conferences, hosting opportunities and articles, etc. that have happened and are upcoming. Partnering offering sheet was shared with the Committee. Some discounts for international guests shopping on Friday and Saturday.

INFO ITEMS

The Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce is hosting an event on July 26, all Commission members welcome to attend.

It was suggested that the Greyhound station and parking lot be considered as a tour bus turnaround.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Tourism Advisory Committee is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 19, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. in the Okanagan Lake Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The Tourism Advisory Committee meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:


Chair