



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

MINUTES OF

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

OKANAGAN LAKE ROOM

PRESENT: **VOTING:**

Mayor Victor Cumming, Chair (Appointed Member)
Leigha Horsfield, Community Futures (via phone)
Dina Mostat, Downtown Vernon Association (via phone)
Annette Sharkey, Social Planning of North Okanagan (via phone)
Jenna Stasuk, Accelerate Okanagan (via phone)
Richard Toperczer, Province of B.C. – Regional Ec. Dev.
Richard Rolke, Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce
Bud Mortenson, Director, UBCO (via phone)

ABSENT: Jane Lister, Okanagan College
Councillor Brian Quiring (Appointed Member)
Tannis Nelson, Regional District of North Okanagan

STAFF: Kevin Poole, Manager, Economic Development & Tourism (via phone)
Roy Nuriel, Economic Development Planner
Janice Nicol, Legislative Committee Clerk

ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

**ADOPTION OF
AGENDA**

Moved by Richard Rolke; seconded by Richard Toperczer;

THAT the agenda for the Thursday, June 11, 2020 meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee be adopted.

CARRIED.

**ADOPTION OF
MINUTES**

Moved by Richard Toperczer, seconded by Leigha Horsfield:

THAT the minutes for the April 16, 2020 meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee be amended to read, under **3. New Business, a) Update on Innovation Centre** to read:

- Bud Mortensen ~~has some space available~~ looking at programming opportunities with UBC-O and will connect with Leigha Horsfield

AND FURTHER, that the minutes be adopted as amended.

CARRIED.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

**BUSINESS RECOVERY
– TEMPORARY
'OUTDOOR SPACE'**

Roy Nuriel, Economic Development Planner, reviewed Council's decision at their May 25, 2020 meeting to expand commercial uses into one available public on-street parking space. The following points were noted:

- As a result of Public Health regulations, there is now limited space for customers when businesses provide for physical distancing
- Ideas came out of searching for outdoor space that is private or uses a City right-of-way within the primary business improvement area (BIA) boundaries
- Businesses can now repurpose up to 50% of private parking spaces, from June 1 to September 30, for customer use but outdoor space needs to be able to be moved at anytime and spaces cannot exceed your existing, pre-COVID-19 occupancy
- Many businesses are unable to take advantage of this provision as they don't have private parking areas so...from June 1 – December 31 for business can use one public parking space and the full length of the sidewalk adjacent to your business for patios, retail displays, customer waiting areas, etc
- Business must enter into a License of Occupation and must provide insurance, space must be temporary (removable in short notice)
- Looking for more ideas, hope that more businesses will be creative with the space
- A webinar was presented to the Downtown Vernon Association (DVA) members, well received
- Full details are on our website.

Feedback from Committee

- If there are other areas outside the BIA where businesses request additional space – will this be considered? Yes, these provisions are only applicable to private property for those outside BIA but if there is a business, City is willing to explore this option if there is room for safe movement
- Congratulations to City for being innovative
- Thank you from the DVA to the City for providing webinar
- Please keep feedback flowing regularly
- There is a great relationship with businesses and great communication to date.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE JUNE 11, 2020

SUGGESTIONS FOR POTENTIAL SPEAKERS FOR 2020/2021

The Committee regularly has industry specific speakers who can share important economic information. The following is a list of potential representatives the Committee suggested:

- Forestry industry
- Agriculture – specifically the impacts of the pandemic on food security and farm labourers
- wine industry and the City's role in that industry in the future
- Tolko
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association
- Construction Association
- Work integrated programs from UBCO – how UBCO co-op programs work and how they are resourced
- Companies that are socially responsible – Kal Tire, for example
- Veg Pro
- Non—profit sector –many jobs lost as a result of the pandemic, loss in fundraising dollars, etc.
- International trade
- Innovation sector

It was suggested to hold a meeting in one month to hear from industries most impacted by the pandemic. The Committee agreed to meet again on July 16, 2020 at 9 a.m.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

The following Council resolutions (from the May 25, 2020 meeting) were attached to the agenda for the Committee's information:

- COVID-19 Physical Distancing for Businesses – summary
- Temporary Expansion of Liquor Service Area. – permit for outdoor use in line with Provincial.

The Committee provided general information regarding their recovery status:

Social Planning Council: Working with non-profits and their needs, program launching in the fall with access to food and necessity items, continuing to work with homeless to ensure they are able to socially distance

Community Futures (CF): The government has introduced a new rural relief and recovery fund that will begin shortly to fill a gap, CF continuing to provide small business help. Innovation Centre construction going well, hoping to open in August, the tech sector continues to expand greatly. Vision North Okanagan Program continuing to run. It was noted that the youth employment funding program has been significantly cut.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE JUNE 11, 2020

UBCO – Summer term enrollment is up 40% over previous years, currently trying to assess fall enrollment. 76% of students attend from outside the Okanagan so there won't be as many students living on campus, depending on provincial guidelines. International student enrollment remains healthy. There will be a huge impact with 5,000 less students on campus in September.

Accelerate Okanagan (AO) – great to see positive stats in the Tech industry, continuing to support entrepreneurs. In the fall, AO will be launching tech innovation support.

Downtown Vernon Association (DVA) – encouraging local visitors, opening up temporary spaces per guidelines, working with property owners for reduced rents through grants, supporting businesses with opening with care.

Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce – Continue to support members with information and resources, assisting with promotion of 'Shop Local' initiative shared with other Chambers of Commerce in the region, continuing with webinars and waiting for regulations to see how fall events will be impacted.

Regional Economic Development Branch BC – many discussions revolving around recovery. Vernon Task Force seems be ahead – with survey completion, etc. There has been a great balance with medical information and economic response. A firm definition of local is needed. Looking forward to Phase 3.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:



Victor S. Cumming