



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

**MINUTES OF THE
TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING
HELD WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021
OKANAGAN LAKE ROOM & ZOOM - 8:00 AM**

PRESENT: Bobby Bissessar, Accommodation Provider (*Via Zoom*)
Claus Larsen, Accommodation Provider, Chair
Clinton Bilas, Restaurant
Councillor Gares, City of Vernon (Appointed Member)
Dauna Kennedy, Arts & Culture, Vice Chair (*Via Zoom*)
Gale Woodhouse, Arts & Culture
Kevin O'Brien, Attractions
Mayor Victor Cumming (Alternate Member)
Michael Van Horne, Golf
Mike Fotheringham, Okanagan Indian Band
Ricardo Smith, Sports and Events
Richard Rolke, Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce

DELEGATION: John Welter, Sports & Cultural Society of North Okanagan

ABSENT: Brett Woods, Biking
Ian Jenkins, Silver Star Mountain Resort (Non-Voting)
Susan Lehman, Downtown Vernon Association
Troy Hudson, Ski

STAFF: Hannah Lucich, Tourism Coordinator
John Perrott, Manager, Economic Development & Tourism
Torrie Silverthorn, Manager, Tourism
Tracy Mueller, Committee Clerk

ORDER The meeting was called to order at 8:01 AM

**LAND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *As Chair of the City of Vernon's Tourism Commission, and in the spirit of this gathering, I recognize the City of Vernon is located in the traditional territory of the Syilx people of the Okanagan Nation.*

- There are currently four (4) board members with SCSNO and essentially what they have been tasked to do over the years is put together a network of information; the next step is bringing people to the community.
- Vernon is hosting the BC Winter Games in February 2022. The event will allow for spectators. In the past there have been about 1500 athletes participating in the event.
- SCNSO put together a comprehensive Resource Toolkit on what it takes to run an event; the documentation is available on the Society's website <https://www.scsno.ca/>; members of the Committee were invited to visit the website and review the contents and provide their comments.
- The delegation noted that the website contains excellent volunteer database whereby people can reach out, volunteer, and get engaged.
- There are currently 112 sporting groups that are looking to put events on. When the world turns the lights back on there is a great talent base to work with.
- As part of the "tool kit" SCSNO is developing various templates for letters of support for bid assembly; and there several highly skilled individuals on the Board of Directors who have experience in putting together bids and supporting documentation.
- When organizations look to produce events, dealing with the City of Vernon is needed in terms of procuring the necessary permits. To assist with that process, SCSNO has excellent resources and can provide guidance in regarding what specific groups need to be contacted to secure the permits in accordance with local bylaws.
- In terms of sponsorships, the SCSNO website has a listing of who individuals can approach with sponsorship opportunities.
- The delegation noted that the City of Vernon is currently not a member of Sport Tourism Canada, and it is an item that SCSNO plans to discuss with the City of Vernon in the coming weeks.
 - In response the Tourism Manager noted that she is in the process of exploring partnership opportunities with Sport Tourism Canada.

- Within the fall newsletter there was an invitation online for visitors to book with local hoteliers. It takes visitors to the hotelier's page on Tourism's website.
- **Castanet.net** - The Tourism team launched a campaign with the publication Castanet.net and it performed really well with the content. Even though the pandemic is easing, people are eager to support their own backyards and support Vernon.
- **Top Performing Webpages:**
 - BC Trip Planners
 - Airport Transit from Vernon to Kelowna has crept back up.
 - Traffic by region, BC has out performed everyone, followed by Alberta and Ontario. Looking into an Eastern specific campaign for Winter.
 - Are running a YouTube Campaign - partnered through Destination BC Co-Operative Marketing Campaign.**Action:** Staff will email a link to members of the Commission.
- **Scheduled / Targeted Campaigns:**
 - Video Pre-Roll with NHL.com
 - KelownaNow - Contest Campaign
 - CityTV - TV Commercial 300 spots
 - Vancouver Is Awesome - Sponsored Content
- **"Off Track Travel" Influencers Gemma and JR** -- They are a *"Canadian couple who live explore beyond the beaten path and love helping others do the same"*. Tourism staff are working with them directly, and any content that is created is living on the first page of Google which is great advertising for the City of Vernon and all we have to offer.

Upcoming Advertising / Media Bookings:

- Working out the details of the BC Magazine spread, will be doing a feature on Winter Carnival in February.
- 4 Page Spread booked with BC's guide for the Arts. Will be working with them to make a nice array of amenities on the guide for Vernon.
- Will partner with Sparkling Hills on Health and Wellness Campaign. Focusing on the full array of activities available in Vernon.
- Talked with SilverStar regarding the options available for visitors to the City of Vernon.

created something on the corner to drive traffic to other businesses.

- We need to revisit with more planning and more partnership. We need to look at it now, remove some of the barriers.

In response to the feedback received from members of the Commission, staff noted that a further presentation to Council could have a more of a lens based on feedback and Commission members can speak to what worked and what did not.

Councillor Gares left the meeting at 8:48 AM

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Tourism Commission is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 17, 2021** at 8:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT


Moved by Richard Rolke, seconded by Clinton Bialas:

THAT the Tourism Commission meeting of October 20, 2021 be adjourned.

CARRIED.

The Tourism Commission meeting adjourned at **8:56 AM**

CERTIFIED CORRECT:



Chair