

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON



**MINUTES OF THE
TOURISM COMMISSION MEETING
HELD NOVEMBER 15, 2023 AT 8:00 AM
OKANAGAN LAKE ROOM (COUNCIL CHAMBER) CITY HALL**

PRESENT: VOTING:

Dauna Kennedy, Arts & Culture
Peter Kaz, Downtown Vernon Association
Mike Van Horn, Golf
Councillor Durning, Council Appointed
Dan Proulx, Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce
Gale Woodhouse, Arts & Culture
Mayor Cumming
Kat Boloten, Accommodation Provider
Clara Snedden, Accommodation Provider
Kris Fuller, Sports & Events
Claus Larsen, Accommodation Provider, Chair
Cassandra Zerebeski, Ski
Bradley Calihoo, Okanagan Indian Band

NON-VOTING:

Ian Jenkins, Silverstar

GUESTS:

Josh Welter, SCSNO

ABSENT: Bobby Bissessar, Accommodation Provider

STAFF: Torrie Silverthorn, Manager, Tourism
Cocine Wattie, Administrative Assistant
Karen Savill, Visitor Services Coordinator
Hannah Lucich, Tourism Marketing Coordinator
Hilary Irvine, Tourism Marketing Coordinator
Jennifer Pounder, Records/Committee Clerk

ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m.

**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.

**ADOPTION OF THE
AGENDA**

Moved by M. Van Horne, seconded by P. Kaz:

THAT the agenda of the November 15, 2023 Tourism Commission meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

**ADOPTION OF THE
MINUTES**

Moved by K. Fuller, seconded by K. Boloten:

THAT the minutes of the October 18, 2023 Tourism Commission meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:**MANAGERS UPDATE**

T. Silverthorn, Manager, Tourism, provided the following update:

- Dan Proulx, Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce, was welcomed to the Commission.
- The 2024 budget will be coming to the Commission at the December 20, 2023 meeting before it goes to Council in January 2024.
- Destination BC Coop Applications are due the end of November. This year we are doing a partner application with Destination Silverstar.
- 2024 Visitor Guide and ad sales will be coming soon.
- Tourism Vernon's Coop Marketing Program will be opening up for intake one in 2024. We will match your funds up to \$5,000.00 for any marketing in and around BC to attract visitors to the area and plan to invest \$100,000.00.
- Tourism Vernon is facilitating a sales-focused event in Vancouver and bringing some of our hotel and resort contacts with us and sell Vernon for 2024. Remember to please RSVP to your invitation and friends and colleagues are welcome to join.
- The Chair informed the Commission he attended the Chamber Awards and it was a very well-organized event. Well done Chamber of Commerce (?).

SCSNO UPDATE

Josh Welter provided the following update from the Sport & Culture Society of the North Okanagan:

- The Quidditch Western Regionals Tournament was held at Polson Park last weekend. It was a successful event. Hoping to have a Vernon team participate next year. We are hoping to host this event for five years and will be working towards that.
- We are continuing to work on hosting the Folk Festival and are currently searching for a location to host it. We were hoping to have it at Sovereign Lake during Brokanagan, however that did not work out.
- We have submitted an expression of interest to host the October 2024-25 BC Cross Country Running Championships.
- It was confirmed they have seniors and volunteer door workers in their current volunteer database; it's an evolving database. We are still waiting on receipt of the BC Winter Games volunteer database. Councillor Durning will look into it.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

The following items were discussed:

- M. Van Horne - Building construction is slated to be finished in May or June, 2024. Winter is our downtime. Seasonal sales for next year are good. We have revamped our entire membership program.
- B. Suranko – We are still biking until December. We are currently restructuring our Board.
- D. Kennedy – Behind the Mask won an Honorable Mention from the Toronto Film Festival. The exhibition will be travelling to new locations. Our new facility; we are making final decisions. It is going much slower than we hoped, but it is progressing.
- C. Zerebeski - A lot of businesses are opening up in SilverStar. We are helping empower local community events. December 1 we are doing a staff ambassadorship program to get all local employees together and show some love.
- D. Proulx – In 2024 we will be concentrating on short term rentals and we have created a task force to work on potential pitfalls and solutions. Business after 5 will be at the Vernon Art Gallery next Tuesday, November 21, 2023.
- K. Fuller – Getting ready for Winter Carnival. I have secured three trail activities. November 25 at 4:00 p.m. is the VWC Countdown to Carnival light up at Spirit Square. February 2-11, 2024 is the Winter Carnival.
- K. Boloten – We are wrapping up renovations; hoping to be done by the end of November. Looking forward to 2024 and increasing events and occupancy.

- B. Calihoo – The annual OKIB Golf tournament went well - \$72,000.00 was raised. Next year the event will be at The Rise. The OKIB will be having a weekly Story telling culture exhibit at Silverstar in January, 2024. On a ranch that is owned by the OKIB, we will be working with native plants and foods on a food security program.
- K. Boloten – We have been working on a New Orleans theme new year's party. We are also working on events for next year that we have not done before. We are working with the Men Shed on events for Christmas, 2024. We will be closed January 8 to the 21, 2024 for deep clean. December will be my last meeting – I will be taking a one-year maternity leave.
- I. Jenkins – We have approximately 400 staff from all over the world. It looks like we are staying on track for opening. Looks like winter, but we need more snow. We are focusing on filling up for the March breaks. We are booked from January to the end of February.
- P. Kaz – We had great events in summer/fall 2023. Shop late until 8 on Thursdays in November – has 30 businesses participating and we are possibly extending until end of December. Free parking Saturdays in December. \$15,000 in Downtown Dollars cards were sold last month.
- J. Collard – We are still completing our refresh so there will be no Christmas party this year. December 1 will be our Winter Warm Up concert including outside food and entertainment.
- Gerran – December 10 will be our big toy drive. Giving 50% off your meal when you bring in a toy. We are sponsoring foster families this holiday season as well. Renovations are planned for the middle of February that will take around ten days.
- Mayor – Sovereign Lake trails are almost complete. They helicoptered bridges in three days ago. The Bailey Road Connection is all locked in. Machinery just finishing in the next week on the Grey Canal Trail. In 2024 there will be \$29 million dollars in infrastructure upgrades around the city. Also, a round-about will be built at the corner of 39th Avenue and Pleasant Valley Road.
- G. Woodhouse – Christmas is our busy season. I am the advisor for four organizations now. We have been looking at heritage properties for tourist destinations in Vernon. Our talks in January and February, 2024 will be about fire season; ie. indoor events, how do we accommodate?
- C. Larsen – We just finished expanding our trails and they will be open for use in spring 2024. We also have just opened our golf shop that has a golf simulator.
- Councillor Durning – I am happy to announce that I have been assigned for another year on the Tourism Commission.

- G. Woodhouse – Artsolutely is coming up. We are expecting 38 artists. It is occurring from December 1-23. On Friday, November 29 you are all welcome to a private viewing.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

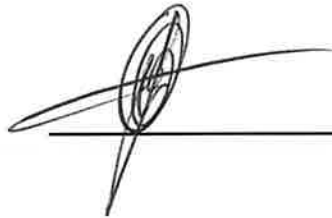
NEXT MEETING

The next meeting for the Tourism Commission is set for December 20, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Tourism Commission adjourned at 8:57a.m. by call of the Chair.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, circular shape with a vertical line through it, and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chair