

# **Advisory Committee on Industry, Economic Development and Tourism**

Meeting Minutes – October 19, 2015

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Advisory Committee on Industry, Economic Development and Tourism was called to order at 7:00 pm on October 19, 2015 in the Community Room, Rideau Community Health Services.

**Present:** Councillor Dave Snowdon, Ian Donald, Yves Grandmaitre, Jane Graham (Chairperson), Nick Previsich (Secretary) **Absent:** Councillor Anne Barr

## **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the September 21, 2015 meeting of the Advisory Committee were previously approved by e-mail after which they were forwarded to the CAO for endorsement by Council. Approval of minutes will no longer be required as an agenda item for each meeting of the Advisory Committee if they have been circulated previously electronically to Advisory Committee members and approved.

## **Declaration of pecuniary interest**

None declared

## **Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was unanimously approved as distributed.

## **Old Business:**

### **a. Committee Member Replacement**

The Mayor has received a list of several people with excellent qualifications and will be selecting a replacement shortly.

### **b. Strategic Planning Group (SPG)**

This item was to be addressed by Councillor Anne Barr who was not able to attend the Advisory Committee meeting. Councillor Snowdon noted that the concern about possible duplication of effort between the Advisory Committee and the SPG has been recognized by Council. He assured the members that the SPG intends to consult soon with the Advisory Committee. To date, the SPG has not tabled a written report with their recommendations to Council

### **c. Municipal Business Stats.**

Ian Donald provided information in response to a request for information from Council to the Advisory Committee with respect to business data.

He advised that OMAFRA has now replaced the previous REDDI data base with a Canada Business Patterns data base which is not published but is accessible through the regional OMAFRA representative-. This data is based on the 2006 Census, adds some

labour force projections and wage rate information, is grouped by firm size, and is updated every six months by Revenue Canada. To access this information the CAO should contact Katie Nolan at 613 258 8371.

A predictive data base, using job postings and applications, is also available through a private sector organization, Economic Modelling Specialists International (EMSI). However this should not be required at this time.

Some information may also be available from the Chamber of Commerce.

### **New Business:**

#### **a. Suggestions for “low hanging fruit”**

Yves Grandmaitre provided an overview of five ideas that he felt had potential to stimulate economic development in the Municipality. These included the development of a cohesive marketing and promotion plan, sponsoring the use of business-related “passports” for visitors, revamping the Municipality’s web site to make it more timely and user friendly, creating an artist tool “hub”, and subsidizing fuel costs for bus tours to the Municipality. These ideas were appreciated and it engendered discussion on how to move forward.

#### **b. First Tasks for the Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee has raised on a number of occasions the need for clarity on its mandate and direction from Council on how we should proceed and which economic development issues to address. In the absence of receiving guidance from Council, the Advisory Committee members unanimously felt that we have the authority to proceed as appropriate and will identify its own priorities.

The Advisory Committee felt that the action items identified in key documents such as the 2010 Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan as well as the 2013 Economic Development Strategic Review & Action Plan would be a good place to start.

On that note, the Advisory Committee felt that it should be a priority for the Committee to be able to engage multiple key stakeholders on an ongoing basis to obtain their views on economic development priorities and proposed initiatives. The Committee particularly focussed on the recommendations related to the Economic Development Framework which were summarized at page 47, Annex 1 of the 2010 Economic Development Strategy.

In this context the Advisory Committee Chairperson – Jane Graham offered to contact the Vision 2020 group to solicit their interest in acting as a special “Subcommittee” to the Advisory Committee. Other members of the Advisory Committee expressed interest in joining the Chairperson in meeting with the Vision 2020 group at their regular sessions.

**c. Other items**

Dave Snowdon suggested that the Advisory Committee organize a roundtable discussion with Valley Heartland and issue an open invitation to interested business and individuals in the Municipality. Spring 2016 was identified as a likely date for such an event.

Information was requested on various new businesses starting in or near the Municipality. These included a cement "operation" based in Montague Township – near the border of Merrickville-Wolford. Also raised was the size and location of the development of a solar farm by Abundant Solar Energy.

**Future Actions**

Advisory Committee members were reminded of the upcoming Leeds Grenville Economic Development Summit to take place on November 20<sup>th</sup> at the North Grenville Municipal Centre. Advance registration and payment (\$24) is required. Information can be found at: <https://ecdevsummit2015.eventbrite.ca>

**Agenda and Date for the Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday, November 16, 2015 at 7:00 pm in the Community Room, Rideau Community Health Services.

**Adjournment** The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm by the Chairperson.