



Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday 29 May 10 2017

Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers (175 Queen Street East)

Time: 7:30 – 9:00 am

Attending: Andrew Atlin, Cathy Forster (until 8:20 am), Councillor Carey Pope, Matt Staffen, Mayor Al Strathdee

Regrets: Tammy Adkin, Deb Hotchkiss

Guests: Brad Beatty, General Manager, Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce; MJ Thompson, Chair, Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce

Staff in Attendance: Laurel Davies Snyder, Brent Kittmer (arrived 8:15 am), Trisha McKibbin (arrived 7:35 am)

Agenda Items

1.0 Welcome and call to order: 7:30 am

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: Carey

Second: Cathy

3.0 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

None

4.0 Staff Updates

4.1 Business Update Newsletter

The inaugural edition was distributed via email 18 May 2017. Feedback received to date: helpful information; use Mailchimp or other enewsletter service, incorporate pictures.

4.2 St. Marys Business Networking Breakfast

The invitation for the Wednesday 7 June 2017 St. Marys Business Networking Breakfast was distributed via email on 24 May 2017. EDAC Members were encouraged to attend.

4.3 Sign By-law Review

Grant Brouwer, Director of Building & Development, is leading the project to review the Sign by-Law and related policies and processes. The Public Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 1 June at 6pm in the Town Hall Auditorium. Comments and questions can be sent directly to Grant. EDAC Members were encouraged to provide feedback.

4.4 Review of Vacant Unit Rebate and Vacant/Excess Land Tax Reduction Program

Jim Brown, Director of Finance, is leading the project to review the Vacant Unit Rebate and Vacant/Excess Land Tax Reduction Program. The Public Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 13 June at 6pm in the Town Hall Council Chambers. People can also submit comments through the confidential online survey:

<http://townofstmarys.survey.esolutionsgroup.ca/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n2KJlI6>.

EDAC Members were encouraged to provide feedback.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Data from Ontario Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) for review and discussion (attached)

Laurel Davies Snyder presented the following data to EDAC Members for information and discussion: Highest Employing Industries, Job Growth Rate per Industry, Industry Location Quotient, Number of Jobs per Occupation, Growth in Occupations, Occupation Location Quotient.

EDAC Members discussed the following general points:

- a) it is important to consider and analyze Demographic information while analyzing economic data
- b) the drop in professional services is concerning
- c) the data indicates that the manufacturing sector is still an important and driving part of the local economy

Action

Laurel to obtain Demographic Information for a future EDAC Meeting

Cathy Forster left the meeting at 8:20am.

5.2 Presentation by the Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce – MJ Thompson, Chair and Brad Beatty, General Manager (8:20 am)



Brad Beatty and MJ Thompson attended the EDAC Meeting to talk about the Chamber's role and interest in working with St. Marys' businesses. They provided EDAC Members and Staff with a verbal update on the Stratford & District Chamber of Commerce including the following points:

- the Chamber would like to build connections with St. Marys businesses
- there are currently 20 St. Marys businesses that are Chamber Members
- Members and future Members are welcome to attend the Business After 5 events
- After 50 years, the Chamber has moved the Annual Golf Tournament to St. Marys
- The next Business After 5 event is at the Stone Willow Inn, hosted by TD
- The Chamber has reached out to St. Marys businesses, but feels that there is a disconnect

The following comments and questions were made by EDAC Members and Staff:

Question: How does the Chamber communicate its events and opportunities?

Answer from Brad Beatty: the Chamber advertises in the two local newspapers.

Comment and Question: Part of the challenge for St. Marys' businesses might be the name "Stratford & District". No one wants to be known as "District". Can this be changed?

Answer from Brad Beatty: The Chamber understands this. Changing a name is a challenge.

Comment: Many St. Marys Businesses are sole-proprietor and staffed by one person. They often can't attend mid-day events in Stratford, or leave work early to attend events.

Question: Is it part of the Chamber's mandate to provide services like training and seminars?

Answer from Brad Beatty: It's on his radar. It would help if the specific topics that businesses are interested in could be identified.

Question: How far ahead does the Chamber book its Business After 5 and other events?

Answer from Brad Beatty: Things are booked a year in advance.

Question: Can the Chamber provide a list of events and a summary of the benefits to being a Member to Laurel Davies Snyder so that these things can be communicated?

Answer from Brad Beatty: He will drop off an Information Package and send the information.



Question: How can St. Marys businesses increase their profile at events like the Business Excellence Awards?

Answer from MJ Thompson: These opportunities are available for a fee.

Actions

Laurel to provide Brad with a list of the top 4 or 5 topics/skills that St. Marys businesses would like to learn about/develop

Laurel will send Brad information on how to post events on the Town's Community Calendar

Laurel will post Chamber events on the Town's calendar after receiving information from the Chamber

Brad will deliver a Chamber Information Package to Laurel

Laurel will send Brad information on the St. Marys Business Update newsletter, including content deadlines

6.0 Agenda Items for future meetings

EDAC Terms of Reference

Demographic Information

7.0 Adjournment

2017 EDAC Meeting Dates

Jan 23 (cancelled)	Feb (cancelled)	Mar 6	Apr 10
May 29	Jun 19	Jul 17	Aug 21
Sep 18	Oct 23	Nov 20	Dec 18

Committee Members: Tammy Adkin, Andrew Atlin (Chair), Cathy Forster, Deb Hotchkiss, Councillor Carey Pope, Matt Staffen, Mayor Al Strathdee (Ex-officio)

Town of St. Marys Staff: Laurel Davies Snyder (Manager of Culture & Economic Development)

For Information: Brent Kittmer (CAO / Clerk), Trisha McKibbin (Director of Corporate Services)