

Minutes of the Meeting of the Creston Valley Chamber of Commerce

December 14th, 2017

1. Request by President Mark Wolfe to record the meeting, as Secretary, Megan McKendry, is unable to attend. None opposed.
2. Call to order and Attendance:
Meeting is called to order at 12:05pm.
Members in attendance include Mark Wolfe, Mark Saunders, Brian Lawrence, Dobrilla Braunstein, Ralph Vigna, and Kim Garety. Others in attendance include Karen Unruh (representing the Town of Creston), Heidi Germann (representing the Economic Action Partnership), and Chamber Manager Vern Gorham, who arrived at 12:44pm. Megan McKendry, although not present, will be listening to the recorded meeting to provide minutes.
3. Approval of Previous Minutes
Mark W. requests member input regarding minutes from the last meeting. No corrections or concerns. Minutes are approved and passed.
4. Discussion of Manager Contract
As the Managers position has come up for renewal, the position will need to be filled via an open posting. Mark W. suggests need to strike a committee to create a job description to put out to tender, create a contract, negotiate terms and interview prospective candidates. Mark S. has created a contract template with the terms requested by the current manager. Board discussion of existing hours at 28 hours per week resulted in general agreement that additional hours should be added each week. Successful candidate must be able to continue with the preparation of events already in the planning stages. The committee will need to determine what strengths the Manager should have to focus on the goals for the Chamber in the coming years.

Request to strike a Tendering Committee accepted by board.
Committee chair, Heidi Germann as a volunteer (not in affiliation with EAP), with Dobrilla Braunstein, Brian Lawrence and Megan McKendry.
First meeting of the committee Wednesday, December 20th at 12pm.
Committee to have posting defined with salary details and job description ready to present at the next meeting.
5. Presidents Report
 - a) Business Recovery Strategy
There is an opportunity for the Chamber to make a contribution to the overall recovery strategy that exists, and fill the gap in terms of what would happen to get business back in gear quickly following a major disaster. This would involve a knowledgeable consultant writing a strategy to integrate with the existing emergency response planning documentation. The BC Rural Development Program is offering grants to pay a consultant use the existing research to write up the strategy. Mark W. requests to submit an application for \$5000 to allow this to be done for the Creston business community. Part of the application requirements are to have board approval. If the funding is approved the

consulting position will be put out to tender to find the best candidate to complete the project. Mark W. indicates that he will be applying to be the consultant for this project. The selection process will be decided by committee.

The funds would actually come from the Rural Dividend Fund, which is administered by the Ministry of Rural Development. The source was misnamed in the meeting but corrected upon review of the minutes.

Mark W. requests a motion that the Creston Valley Chamber of Commerce authorizes the submission of an application to the Rural Dividend Fund for the business recovery strategy and that the board will support this project through its duration. Moved by Mark S.; seconded by Dobrilla B.; none opposed; so carried. (*The source has been adjusted based on the above correction.*)

b) Volunteer Committee

This item is pushed to the next meeting in the interest of lack of time to properly discuss the details. At that time, it will be necessary to strike a committee to be charged with recruiting volunteers and partners for the upcoming Chamber events.

New dates for Ball Tournament is June 1-3, 2018 to accommodate the hospitality industry.

c) Membership Committee

Mark W. indicated the need to get moving on the organization of member events for the new year. Hoping to get a calendar in effect for the next meeting. Pushed to next meeting as Megan M., committee chair, is not present.

6. Vice Presidents Report

a) Building Maintenance

Mark S. has been putting in countless hours of volunteer time to complete the office renovations and address many general maintenance tasks over the last several months. He indicates that he is not able to continue to dedicate hours to on-going tasks as a volunteer.

A list has been compiled of maintenance tasks and building repairs that need to be addressed. The list includes items including drainage issues, signage, completion of renovation finishing touches and basic maintenance such as changing lights.

Mark S. is willing to continue with maintenance and repairs as a paid contractor.

In the interest of fairness to all members, it is suggested to draft a contract for an on-call maintenance person to be openly posted to qualified Chamber members. It is suggested that once the contract is prepared the Chamber call the contractors who are members and let them know the position is being posted. Ralph Vigna, as the head of the Building Committee, will be involved in preparing the posting and reaching out to qualified members. Mark S. will assist in preparing the job description.

Suggested by Kim G., and agreed in discussion, that while the position is being defined and until it is filled that the Chamber authorize Mark S. to complete priority tasks, to be determined by the Building Committee, at a rate of \$30/hr, to a \$1000 maximum.

Motion to direct the Manager to allocate a maximum of \$1000 over the next 60 days for building maintenance funds to Mark S. on an interim basis at an hourly rate of \$30. Moved

by Dobrilla B.; seconded by Ralph V.; none opposed (Mark S. abstaining from the vote); so carried.

Motion for Ralph to create a posting to advertise for a contracted on-call maintenance person and that the task be resolved with a target of the end of January 2018. Moved by Brian L.; seconded by Ralph V.; none opposed; so carried.

b) Building Signage

On the list of required building improvements is appropriate signage for both inside and outside the building. Priority on directional signage in the building to indicate where tenants and events are located. Some quotes have been obtained from members on permanent signage, but it may be necessary to look at temporary solution in the meantime. Agreed to move forward with obtaining additional quotes from members.

7. Managers Report

Vern G. arrived to the meeting at 12:44pm

a) Financials

The projected revenue for 2018 is \$140,000. This includes ongoing revenue sources as well as projected revenue from new events which are in the planning stages. There could be additional revenue sources generated from improvements to the downstairs space. It is anticipated the Chamber will end 2017 with total revenue of approximately \$110,000. Increased annual revenue in 2018 would be from new events, projected increased membership and increase in membership fees.

The Chamber has received word from financier of approval for additional funding up to a total of \$100,000. Currently the mortgage is at approximately \$25,000, \$10,000 on a line of credit and about \$1000 on credit card. This leaves approximately an additional \$64,000 that could be accessed.

Additional funding could be used for paying off outstanding debts, including the line of credit, and priority building improvements, possibly including signage and final touches on upstairs renovation projects. Vern G. suggests it is a good idea to advance some of these funds to start 2018 with a clean slate and to have some operating funds to work with. Having accessible funds is helpful when applying for future grants and funds.

Following earlier discussion there was board agreement that at this point only prioritized maintenance projects should be addressed. The Building Committee chair, Ralph V., will be charged with deciding what is priority, with the remaining jobs to be included with the contract for the on-call maintenance person.

b) Downstairs Renovation Ideas

Vern G. compiled a list of ideas with estimated expenses to complete the downstairs space. Ideas for downstairs were considered based on value added and income potential.

Renovation ideas include:

- A virtual golf setup which could generate income of \$8000-\$48,000/year depending on usage was suggested by Vern G.
- An area for video screening was suggested. There is a possibility of collaboration with the Kootenay Film Society for bringing an International Film Festival to Creston.

Heidi G. mentioned concern over the possibility of competition with the Tivoli Theater and the need for further research.

- It was mentioned that Pete Banman has 4500 sets of salt and pepper shakers that could be used to create a display which would need to be glassed in to keep them clean and safe. This could create a unique point of interest and conversation piece. Pete Banman has indicated he would allow the Chamber to use his collection indefinitely and would help with constructing the display unit.
- Multi media production space is something that has been previously discussed. This is a project that could tie in with local clubs, schools and projects.

Vern has estimated \$225,000 to complete the downstairs renovations, taking into account contractors fees and cost of material. Vern would like approval to look at possible grant sources. Consensus is that there is much research to do before moving forward. There is a concern that taking on a project of this size at this time will take away from the time needed to focus on membership in 2018, which has been established as a focus in the upcoming year. Karen U. reiterates the importance of building on the successes the Chamber has already achieved, including the Spring Trade Show and the Dragon's Den, as well as making the projects already in the planning stages a success, the ball tournament specifically, before taking on too many new projects. It is suggested that the Chamber host a facilitated meeting with the members to obtain their input on what they would like to see happen regarding the space in the basement. This suggestion is met with general agreement from the board.

c) Automation of systems

In recent weeks Vern and the student intern have been automating some of the systems to allow for more time for direct member interaction. Some of these automations include online boardroom booking and trade show booking through the website. This years Spring Trade Show rates are set at \$175 for members and \$225 for non-members for the first booth with additional booths receiving a \$50 discount.

8. Chamber News Magazine

There was some discussion regarding the Chamber publication. The idea for the Chamber magazine was brought to the executive and then presented to the board with unanimous approval to move forward and seek out a collaboration with the Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce. Kim G. mentioned that what seemed like an innocuous decision at the time, did have some unforeseen implications and pointed out the desire to be careful moving forward to take the time to be thoughtful of the implications of any decisions made by the board that may impact members. Mark W. states that he believes that there was some serious overreaction and that the publication would have no lasting negative effect on other local publications. Heidi G. mentioned that she was approached with concerns from the KLCOC surrounding the way the project was presented to their board without asking for board input before initiating the project. She believes it was a result of moving too quickly and not ensuring there was adequate communication between the Chambers. Mark W. responded that it sounded like there was some miscommunication, and while there was no specific action to be taken, the concerns would be noted and followed up on.

9. President Mark W. called the meeting adjourned at 1:29pm.