

MARKDALE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
GENERAL MEETING
April 17, 2008 - 7 – 9 p.m.
Steven's Restaurant, Markdale

MINUTES - DRAFT

ATTENDING: Teresa & Noel Pascoe; Doug Crawford; Janie Badgerow; Rick & Kathy Gamblen; Lynn Silverton; Kate Russell (Manager)

REGRETS: Wayne Fitzgerald, Don Kopplin, Nereda Manion.

WELCOME: 7 p.m. The President and Manager welcomed all in attendance. The President then declared a quorum for the purposes of the meeting.

PAST MINUTES:

The minutes of the General Meeting held April 26, 2007 were reviewed by those in attendance.

MOTION: Moved by Doug Crawford, seconded by Janie Badgerow that the minutes of the General Meeting April 26, 2007 be accepted as presented. Carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

NAME CHANGE PROPOSAL: The president Teresa Pascoe reviewed a motion passed by the executive at the March 27, 2008 meeting, which essentially moved away from a name change to the Grey Highlands and area Chamber to the Markdale and District Chamber of Commerce, to reflect the desire to cover a larger area of the municipality (outside the village proper) but not infringe on Flesherton & District Chamber. The decision was made for a variety of reasons outlined in the executive committee minutes (available online at www.village.markdale.on.ca) including the members survey, which supported an amalgamation with Flesherton, but that was not reflected in correspondence with the Flesherton group.

The Executive Motion read: Moved by Wayne Fitzgerald, seconded by Charlie Rheume that the Markdale Chamber of Commerce investigate a name change to include a wider area (& District) to reflect the coverage of the membership outside the village. Further that the Markdale Chamber withdraw all efforts to amalgamate officially or unofficially with other Chambers within the Grey Highlands boundaries at this time. Carried.

DIRECTOR RETIREMENT: It was announced to the membership that Chamber director Charlie Rheume is retiring from Chapman's Ice Cream and relocating out of the area. It is with regret the executive accepted his resignation from the Chamber board. He will be missed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

The manager then presented financial statements from the previous Chamber executive meeting on March 27, 2008 for review by the membership. It was the most recent available as Treasurer Don Kopplin is busy with the tax season at this time. The financial statement from year-ending Dec. 31, 2008 was also presented and reviewed for the information of the membership. These were for review only, as they have already been accepted and approved by the executive.

PRESIDENT RETIREMENT:

President Teresa Pascoe then announced she would be retiring from the Markdale Chamber executive, as she and Noel are closing their business and will be relocating out of the area in June 2008. They put their house on the market and it sold within 48 hours. She put the Chamber on notice that she will cease to be president as on June 1, 2008. The announcement was received with regret by the membership. Teresa has lead the Chamber through a Trillium grant application, development of an action plan for a vision for the Chamber, as well as taking on the stressful task of proposing a name change for the Chamber. She experienced personally the aggressive response from the Flesherton Chamber. She hopes to return to support the Chamber movement when she relocates to Burlington. Those in attendance wished her and Noel best of luck on their future plans.

It was noted the Vice President Nereda Manion has just had a baby, so is not likely to be able to step up into the role.

ACTION: Doug Crawford suggested the executive discuss the matter and plan recruitment at the May meeting.

With the retirement of Charlie Rheaume and Teresa Pascoe, and an existing vacancy on the board – there are now three director positions open – with the president’s seat vacant.

The Manager mentioned she had heard from new Markdale resident Pat Palmer, who has been extensively involved in the Chamber movement in the past. She will follow up with him to discern his interest in coming onto the board.

Grey Bruce Insurance representatives Rick and Kathy Gamblen were in attendance at the meeting. They recently purchased McFadden Insurance (company and house) and are now the representatives for the Chamber’s group insurance plan. Rick had previously been on the executive of the Ajax Pickering Oshawa Chamber as a membership director.

He wondered if the Chamber saw a conflict in his being a director, as his business benefits from the Chamber group insurance plan. There was general consensus this is not a conflict, as the benefits to his business would also benefit the Chamber in general through the percentages of fees paid monthly to the Chamber.

ACTION: He and Kathy will consider executive positions and get back to the manager.

CHAMBER INITIATIVES REPORT

Manager Kate Russell then reported on the various initiatives of the Chamber.

GREY HIGHLANDS VOLUNTEER SUPPORT INITIATIVE: (GHVSI) The manager reported on the upcoming Volunteer Recognition & Recruitment Night on April 22. This is being supported by the Trillium funds and a donation from the Municipality of Grey Highlands. The Blue Water School Board has offered discounted rates on using the high school auditorium. There is a photographer coming (Valerie Whitney) and the Markdale Agricultural Society will be providing refreshments. Ice River Springs donated some water and the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation supported the photocopying of invitations. The evening will include tables for people to showcase their events, groups and volunteer opportunities. A dozen groups have confirmed they will put up tables at the event. There have been 67 RSVPs – though planning will be prepared for 200 people, as many people don't RSVP.

ACTION: Teresa Pascoe, Doug Crawford, Janie Badgerow and Lynn Silverton all volunteered to assist on the evening – with set up and greeting.

TRAINING SESSION: A workshop on Event Planning 101 will be held as part of the Apr. 22 Volunteer Night. This is the first of four volunteer training sessions, which are part of the Trillium grant workplan. It was suggested by Trillium program manager Wendy Dempsey that we host a workshop as part of the Recognition & Recruitment Night. There have been 25 people RSVP for the workshop so far. Workshop presenter Joanne Robbins from Saugeen Shores Chamber was instrumental in developing and growing the popular Pumpkifest in that community. She has offered to present the workshop for free.

OLDE FIREHALL RESTORATION:

LEASE: The manager presented an update on the Olde Firehall restoration project. A lease agreement has been reached with the municipality for \$600 a year plus all utilities. (This is reduced from an original request of \$2,500 per year). This is up from the previous lease, which was with the former Village of Markdale and was for “in-kind” maintenance of the building. It was outdated and needed to be renewed. The new lease is for five years and includes a clause showing the intention of the Chamber to restore and redevelop the Olde Firehall. It also makes provision for two parking spaces at the back of the hall.

TRILLIUM CAPITAL GRANT: The lease now clears the way for a Trillium capital grant application in Nov. 2008. This was originally intended for the March 1 deadline, but an extensive revision and rewrite of the previous (rejected) grant application is necessary. The manager has acquired updated quotes for needed work, and will work with the municipality and Chamber special projects director Wayne Fitzgerald to develop a new, community supported capital grant application for the November 1 application deadline.

CRUISE NIGHT 2008: The annual Chamber Classic Cruise Night will go ahead on July 4th, 2008. It has traditionally been the kick-off evening for the Ice Cream Festival, and will go ahead despite the cancellation of that event this year. The manager noted the ads

have been placed in Old Autos, and encourage people to stick around for the weekend to enjoy the Eugenia Gold Rush Days, which is on July 5 & 6.

The manager has been working on seeking live entertainment for the event this year. There is still a need to find a sponsor for the event, as Neverest Auto indicated they would not be coming on board again this year as sponsor, as they will want to give to another organization this year.

ACTION PLAN UPDATE:

TRILLIUM SUPPORT OF MANAGER: As the previous GM minutes noted an outline of the Chamber's Action Plan, the manager provided an update. The Trillium grant application successful – the manager is on the project until October 2008. A recent progress report requesting an extension of the grant has been approved – so the rest of the funding will be available soon.

TRILLIUM WORKPLAN: Other plans for the Trillium grant program include 2 new events (enhancement events in Flesherton (Spring Fling – May 17 – Children's Art Workshop & Art Show) and Eugenia Gold Rush Days – July 5 & 6 (Children's Art Workshop & Art Show – July 5). Training sessions – 3 pending. Volunteer resource centre (at Olde Firehall) are in the planning stage. Saugeen Economic Development Corp. is supporting some training sessions to leverage Trillium funds. A 2008 Grey Highlands Event Network Events brochure is in the design stage with the printer.

SUMMER STUDENT: The application for Canada Student Jobs funding was submitted. We have yet to hear if we will get funding. There was some feedback indicating we scored high in the pack and there is a limit of 9 weeks employment being placed on the program to ensure good funding coverage across the area. Manager has been contacted by 2007 Summer Student application – she is returning home for the summer and is interested in the job for the 2008 summer season.

OTHER STAFFING: A "volunteer worker" (CSO) is in part-time now – doing Thursdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Getting plenty of database and organizing work done.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

UPCOMING EVENTS: Trillium funded special events: Flesherton Spring Fling May 17/EGRD July 5 – as above.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES: The Trillium grant allows funds for the purchase of event equipment. To date, plans are to purchase 10 6 ft. folding tables (on sale at Canadian Tire – rain check – 3 purchased so far) & two event tents (on sale through Sears – ordered – on back order until June – will be available for July event).

GREY HIGHLANDS EVENT NETWORK: 2008 events brochure is in the works. 5,000 to be printed and distributed. Complete for brochure swap May 6. Discussions underway for summer radio promotions with CKNX (The Bull) and Bayshore Broadcasting

(Country 93) – will leverage Trillium funds with local group budgets. Some print co-marketing potential.

FALL FAIR SUPPORT: The Markdale Agricultural Society is hosting its 150th Markdale Fall Fair in August (22-24). The Chamber has made a \$150 donation and will challenge businesses to sponsor at this level.

BUSINESS AWARDS: STARS awards nominations will be sought to enter in this annual competition. The Chamber manager will not be coordinator this year, but will sit on the organizing committee. Event date has been moved back to October with a deadline in September. Nomination suggestions will be sought later.

CHAMBER REPRESENTATION: The Manager outlined her participation, representing the Chamber on Centre Grey Area Physician Recruitment & Retention Committee; Grey Tourism Committee; Grey Bruce Multi-Chamber Group; Markdale Agricultural Society; Eugenia & District Community Improvement Assoc. (Gold Rush Days).

GENERAL MEMBERS FORUM

NEW GROUP INSURANCE REPS: Rick & Kathy Gamblen of Grey Bruce Insurance Agency Inc. introduced themselves and reviewed the group insurance with members present. Rick was involved with the Ajax Pickering Oshawa Chamber for the last 5 years. He saw the opportunity to take over the McFadden Insurance as Lloyd and Marie retired. He and his wife have purchased the McFadden's house as well as the business and have now relocated. They have moved from a brokerage in Whitby to take over the McFadden practice, which was highly desirable as the group insurance is a very popular product. They jumped at the rare opportunity to pick up a group insurance broker. – re: group insurance/insurance discounts

Rick hopes to reach out more to farmers and has had discussions with the Manager about the best ways to do this – including attending Keady market and other agricultural functions to get the word out that group insurance is available through Chamber membership.

Rick then outlined a new affinity program for Chamber members. He has worked with Secure Insurance to offer discounted home and auto insurance to Chamber members. Insurance offered through ING Insurance will offer 10 – 15% off home and auto policies for members. This was a popular program in the city, as often the discount covered the cost of membership in the Chamber.

He has contacted Secure's representative for this plan in the area, and he will meet with the Manager to obtain a letter approving the program for him to approach people about the discount. There were some questions about the program – Manager later learned existing members may contact Secure to get on the program – they may need to cancel existing policies (at a cost) or may have their file flagged for follow-up at renewal.

ADJOURNMENT: 9 p.m. by consensus.