



Minutes

Of a Meeting of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission of the City of Kenora Friday, September 21, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. City Hall, Council Chambers

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**With** Graham Chaze - Chair, Teresa Gallik - Treasurer, Lindsay Koch, Councillor Mort Goss, Crystal Kast, Taras Manzie, Ken Behrsin, Torin Bergagnini

**Staff** Megan Dokuchie - Economic Development Officer, Corey Jones – Economic Development Intern, Josh Nelson - Tourism Development Officer, Kelly Galbraith – Deputy Clerk/Customer Services Division Lead, Adam Smith – Special Projects and Research Officer, Karen Brown - CAO

**Regrets** Mayor David Canfield, Jeff Kurz, Chief Lorraine Cobiness

### 1. Call to Order

Graham called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

### 2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

There were none declared.

### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

#### a) Moved by Teresa Gallik seconded by Councillor Mort Goss and Carried -

That the Minutes of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission meeting held on June 15, 2018 be confirmed as written and filed.

#### b) Follow-Up on Previous LOWDC Meetings

##### i) Update on the Strategic Plan

It was recognized that the LOWDC strategic plan ends in 2019 and the City’s strategic plan ends in 2020. There was a discussion on extending the LOWDC strategic plan by one year to mirror the City’s strategic plan.

### **c) Tourism Committee Minutes**

There are no Tourism Committee minutes to be confirmed at this time.

## **5. New Business:**

### **a) Financials**

The financial reports were circulated to the group for their review. Teresa spoke to the accounts and no questions were asked.

### **b) Accommodation Tax Discussion; Short Term Planning**

Graham encouraged the group to bring forward their thoughts about what can be done in the short term with funds generated from the accommodation tax which comes into effect on October 1, 2018. It was asked what the projected revenue will be for the 3 months in 2018. The estimated revenue will be approximately \$20,000. Based on previous occupancy rates over a 12 month period the revenue is estimated at \$350,000-\$400,000, less the remittance to Kenora Hospitality Alliance (KHA).

The idea of enhancing the Tourism and Special Events grant program was shared. There is opportunity to expand on the events program by reducing the parameters and moving towards a Celebrate Ontario style of selection process. The suggestion to increase the advertising budget was also brought forward. It was commented that there is great opportunity for the revenue to be swung back into tourism as the funds are tourism driven. It was identified there is opportunity to leverage funding opportunities that the City has access to.

Partnerships with our local first Nations communities was discussed. Culture is a large draw that Kenora can attract visitors with.

KHA will be focused on winter events. The need for a major winter event and the need to develop the Winter Carnival into something special was discussed. Partnerships with local restaurants and providing funding for infrastructure for the proposed pop-up restaurant on the ice was also discussed.

The concept of pop-up, mobile toilets was shared with the group. Winnipeg has recently introduced pop-up toilets which have a kiosk incorporated in them. The toilets/kiosk are moveable and can be relocated to high traffic areas around the city.

The group was encouraged to keeping thinking of innovate ideas to be brought to the table.

## **6. Other Commission Business**

### **a) Economic Development**

#### **i) EDO Update**

Megan shared with the group that the Choose Kenora campaign won multiple awards at the Economic Developers Association of Canada. The campaign won in two categories including the advertising campaign and video promotion. Choose Kenora was also a marketing cup contender for the campaign's budget category. Work is underway on the second round of the campaign which will feature 8 participants. Partnership contributions have been secured.

A steering committee of approximately 15 people has been formed for the Harbourfront Redevelopment Plan. LOWDC members Graham and Councillor Goss are members of the steering committee. The first workshop of the Harbourfront Redevelopment Plan will be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. HTFC Planning and Design has contracted two consultants from Stantec who will be attending the first workshop.

Community and Development Services will be hosting a housing forum. Planning for the itinerary and location is underway. Policy and project based presentations will be incorporated into the event. Save the date for November 28<sup>th</sup>.

Small Business Week runs October 15-18. The theme this year will be Digitizing Your Business.

The second phase of the Wayfinding Project has begun. One stream of the program is gateway signage for the Harbourtown Centre. Due to the prominent nature of the roundabout, a public engagement session will be held with three or so concepts presented.

Super Summer Sundays has wrapped for the season, ending on August 19<sup>th</sup>. The campaign had 40 participants this year and was put on in partnership with the Harbourtown Biz. Corey conducted a survey to the participants for feedback on the campaign and to see which weekends were the most successful and which were least successful. August long weekend was the most successful weekend and the July 29<sup>th</sup> weekend was the least successful. The Coney Island Music Festival was held on July 29<sup>th</sup> and drew visitors out of the downtown. The events such as the buskers, bouncy castles, big games and concert were encouraging and had a bigger draw however, some participants felt the events aren't enough to bring consumers to the area.

#### **Discussion:**

It was asked if the campaign should continue longer into the season. September long weekend was identified as a good weekend to end Super Summer Sundays. Marketing for the campaign was discussed. Teresa shared that the postcards were great for hotel staff to provide to visitors. The size was convenient to be carried around. It was asked what the costs associated with the campaign are. The LOWDC contributes \$3,000 which is matched by the Harbourtown Biz. There is no cost to the businesses to participate in the campaign, just their commitment to be open. It was commented

that businesses need to see the business case to be open on Sundays, testimonials are important. A suggestion was brought forward to locate some the attractions such as the large games and buskers throughout town rather than just at the Whitecap.

**ii) Northern Communities Investment Readiness (NCIR) Application  
Moved by Councillor Mort Goss, seconded by Teresa Gallik and Carried –**

That the Board of Directors of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission (LOWDC) approves an application to the Northern Communities Investment Readiness Program (NCIR) for the delivery of a Competitive Advantage Analysis; and further

That the LOWDC confirms its financial commitment of up to \$2,500 for the project; and further

That the LOWDC hereby approves any cost overruns associated with the project.

**Background:**

The board had identified funds in the 2018 budget to implement recommendations from the investment readiness assessment exercise. This project was one of these recommendations.

**iii) Rural Economic Development (RED) Application**

**Moved by Lindsay Koch, seconded by Councillor Mort Goss and Carried –**

That the Board of Directors of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission (LOWDC) supports the City of Kenora application to the Rural Economic Development (RED) Program for the delivery of a Growth Management and Vacant Land Supply Analysis; and further

That Graham Chaze, Chair, sign a letter of support to accompany the City of Kenora application.

**Background:**

Megan shared that Community and Development Services Staff have identified a potential funding program that may support an initiative to assist in achieving these objectives. Upon further best practice research, Staff are recommending that the City of Kenora undertake a project to conduct a growth management and vacant land supply analysis which would result in the development of updated population and growth projections, a highest and best use analysis for vacant and municipally-owned lands, and the preparation of vacant property profiles to be used in marketing efforts.

Key activities include a review of policy and current zoning; development of project methodology to identify analysis criteria; development of population and employment projections; an analysis of highest and best use for municipally-owned vacant lands; delivery of a final report; and preparation of vacant land property profiles to be used in marketing efforts.

## **b) Tourism**

### **i) Tourism & Special Events Update**

The summer was a successful event season with 24 events held under the Whitecap, including 8 new events.

The Matiowski Farmers' Market is wrapping up on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The shuttle service was successful and will continue next year. The costs associated with the shuttle were recovered by an increase in vendor fees. This summer outdoor space was utilized to fit additional vendors for 8-10 weeks. A customer appreciation event will be held on October 3<sup>rd</sup> which will include giveaways and pulled pork.

The Walking Tour App is currently in the beta testing phase for the mural, historical and cemetery tours. There is a push to begin beta testing for the trails before the winter weather arrives. A soft launch will be happening in early 2019 with the official launch happening in early May.

In partnership with Tourism Northern Ontario (TNO) and the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines (MNDM), Morgan Seller, Special Events Coordinator and Jennifer Findlay (MNDM) will be hosting an Events Information Session. Folk Fest organizers will be presenting on the successes and failures they have faced, how to move ahead, how to retain volunteers, etc. The date has not been set yet but it is anticipated to take place in the late fall or early winter.

A KHA Planning Session was held mid-September. There is opportunity for extended partnership as Tourism Kenora, The City of Kenora and KHA all move towards the same goal of building Kenora.

The food vendor contract is expired and set to be re-tendered. Josh received a request from a salon to see if they could have a beauty truck at the harbourfront. The group was asked for their thoughts and there were no objections.

Josh shared that he will be attending the TNO conference in Sault Ste. Marie on November 13-15.

## **6. Communications and/or Announcements**

### **a) Roundtable**

Graham shared that Colt Manson has submitted his letter of resignation from the LOWDC. Graham and the group extended their well wishes to Colt in his future endeavors.

Ken informed the group that he presented to the Rotary Club of Kenora in July on the proposed ambassador program. He shared there is a need for someone to champion the program. The Rotary Club expressed interest in the project but they are in the midst of wrapping up the Splash Park project. The pop-up kiosk/washroom discussed earlier in the meeting was seen as a potential location for the proposed ambassadors to be located.

## **7. Next Meeting Date**

- Friday, October 19, 2018

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

### **LOWDC Tentative 2018 Meeting Schedule**

**Friday      November 16      Monthly Meeting**

**\* Board member's term will expire on Friday, November 30, 2018**