



Minutes

**Of a Meeting of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission
of the City of Kenora
Friday, November 15, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.
City of Kenora Operations Building, 2nd Floor Boardroom**

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**With** Graham Chaze - Chair, Teresa Gallik - Treasurer, Lindsay Koch, Councillor Mort Goss, Mayor Daniel Reynard, Councillor Ralko (Alternate)

**Staff** Megan Dokuchie - Economic Development Officer, Josh Nelson - Tourism Development Officer, Adam Smith – Development Services Manager, Stace Gander – Community Services Manager, Kelly Galbraith – Deputy Clerk

**Guests** Stefan Robinson, Business Liaison & Development Coordinator with Kenora Airport Authority & Kenora Hospitality Alliance

**Regrets** Sarah Minor

## 1. Call to Order

Graham called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

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

There were none declared.

## 3. Welcome & Introductions

Roundtable introductions were done and Stefan was welcomed by the group.

## 4. Rabbit Lake Skating Trail and Outdoor Rink Presentation with guest Stefan Robinson, Business Liaison & Development Coordinator with KAA & KHA

Stefan Robinson, Business Liaison & Development Coordinator with the Kenora Hospitality Alliance presented plans to develop a winter attraction on Rabbit Lake. This year the lake will feature a skating trail and rink, with hopes of expanding in years to come. Rabbit Lake was selected as the location for its close proximity local schools and transit, as well as attractions like Garrow Park, the SportsPlex and Mount Evergreen. The skating rink and trail will not hinder the Rabbit Lake snowmobile trail and proper signage will be posted.

St. Thomas Aquinas High School students have built a skate shack and Bell's Septic will be supplying a portable washroom for the site. The venue will be open to any businesses wanting to participate in any capacity. Access to the skating trail and rink will be free. Stefan asked Mayor and Council to consider providing a reduced Transit rate to Rabbit Lake which would also increase transit ridership. He also requested that the Garrow Park parking lot be plowed to allow for visitors to park in a designated lot and reduce parking along Rabbit Lake Road.

## **5. Confirmation of Minutes**

### **a) Moved by Lindsay Koch, Seconded by Teresa Gallik and Carried -**

That the Minutes of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission meeting held on August 16, 2019 be confirmed as written and filed.

### **b) Tourism Committee Minutes**

There are no Tourism Committee minutes to be confirmed at this time. There was no quorum at the August 29<sup>th</sup> Tourism Committee meeting. The meeting notes were attached for review.

### **Discussion:**

The increased number of visitors over the summer was discussed. Congratulations to staff.

There was no budget request related to Canada Day but there is an application request to be submitted to Celebrate Canada on today's agenda. The Farmers Market revenue covers cost overruns with this event.

An update was provided on Sunset Country and the previous budget request to Council and current funding supports. There may be a request from Sunset Country for support from the LOWDC at an upcoming meeting. The next Tourism Committee meeting will be in January.

## **6. New Business:**

### **Financials**

#### **a) Financial Statements**

Financial statements for all accounts were presented. Work related to the Second Street wayfinding project may be completed prior to Christmas. The 861 account is on track and the 862 account reflects the end of the events season. It was a really good year. There will be an upcoming discussion at a future meeting regarding the special events grants. Discussion took place related to the tent rentals and opportunities to increase usage. A suggestion was made to meet with event organizers to discuss.

#### **b) MAT Revenue Review**

Revenues for the 12 month period of October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019 were \$495,360.44 with some properties either under reporting or not yet reporting. This does not include the allocation that will be submitted to the Kenora Hospitality Alliance. This revenue aligns with what the group had previously estimated during the planning session earlier in 2019.

#### **c) 2020 Budget Presentation to Council**

A draft of the 2020 budget presentation was presented to the group. Graham will be attending Council on December 17, 2019 to present the request. The request will be to receive the MAT revenues again for 2020.

## **7. Other Commission Business**

### **a) Economic Development**

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

Next steps for the Harbourfront Business Development Plan were identified. There was an open house on November 5<sup>th</sup> and the final report will be presented to Council in December.

The Vacant Land Supply and Growth Analysis is underway, waiting on the funding decision from NOHFC. Project work began in August. The consulting team hosted a review of all municipal lands on November 6<sup>th</sup> to examine high level opportunities/challenges.

Small Business Week was October 20-24<sup>th</sup> and 10 events were hosted with 250 attendees. A Community Improvement Plan (CIP) coffee break was hosted as a part of the celebrations.

The wayfinding project is underway. The curbing is going in soon. The City participated in a site visit to Signex in October. They have received shop drawings which have been reviewed by structural engineering and have all information for fabrication. Signex is hoping to have everything completed by Christmas.

The downtown washroom project is in progress. Part of this work will include a partnership with U of M.

#### **ii) NOHFC Application – Five Year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy**

##### **Moved by Teresa Gallik, Seconded by Lindsay Koch and Carried -**

THAT the Board of Directors approves an application to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) for the delivery of a five year economic development and tourism strategy; and further

THAT the Board of Directors confirms a contribution of up to \$7,500 for the project; and further

THAT the Board of Directors hereby approves any cost overruns associated with the project.

### **b) Tourism**

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

The Fall advertising campaign is complete. The Take a Hike campaign targeted Winnipeg residents and was advertised through Sun Media, WAKE Marketing and digital campaigns through social media. The next advertising campaign is scheduled to run from December to March.

Blue Flag Beaches requires a safety audit of qualifying beaches. The Life Saving Society has conducted an audit of Coney beach and the inspection results are expected back this month.

Tourism Kenora In partnership with Sioux Narrows and Destination Northern Ontario are developing 4 canoe routes including the Winnipeg River Loop, Kenora to Sioux Narrows (Pipestone point), Dogthooth Lake and Crow Lake (Kakagi Lake). The routes will be published for public use.

NOHFC made an announcement at the Discovery Centre to support Science North's Northwestern Ontario feasibility study. The City of Kenora contributed \$5000 to the project as well.

Helena Devins, Matiowski Market/Special Event Coordinator attended the Annual Science and Technology Conference in Toronto. A large part of the conference costs were offset by Science North.

In January a workshop will be held in Sioux Narrows in partnership with Destination Northern Ontario to develop a touring route of Northwestern Ontario with the intent of attracting international visitors. Travel Manitoba is very interested in this project as well, especially in Kenora, as they do not have this type of natural outdoor product to offer to international visitors.

Anicinabe Park is looking at winter tourism. The concession has been recently renovated, as well as the washrooms to support activity in the winter. Attractions will include walking trails, cross country skiing, skating, etc.

Infrastructure for a knot tying station has been purchased for a new exhibit at the Discovery Centre and needs to be assembled by Kenora Recreation Staff. This is an additional interactive exhibit at the Discovery Centre.

Tourism Kenora met with the Kenora and Keewatin curling clubs to discuss potential of hosting larger curling events. The parties agreed to put in a bid for the Northern Ontario Playdowns under Curling Kenora. Proceeds, if any, will be split 3 ways with Tourism Kenora's funds to be put into reserve for bids future curling events.

**ii) Blue Flag – Tall Pines Ask**

**Moved by Mayor Reynard, Seconded by Teresa Gallik and Carried –**

THAT the Board of Directors allocate \$625 to Tall Pines Marina to help offset Blue Flag accreditation costs.

**iii) Celebrate Canada Application**

**Moved by Lindsay Koch, Seconded by Teresa Gallik and Carried -**

THAT the Board of Directors approves an application to the Celebrate Canada Fund to assist in the delivery of the 2020 Canada Day Festivities.

**iv) Railway Museum**

**Moved by, Seconded by and Carried -**

THAT the Board of Directors allocate \$15,000 from the Municipal Accommodation Tax to the Railway Museum to support their renovation and expansion plan.

**Discussion:** The Railway Museum is looking to expand their building and increase their hours. With the Railway Museum expansion, opening of the Splash Park and the inflatable water park, Norman Park is developing into a tourist destination.

The parameters of the ask were discussed by the group and it was felt more information was needed. This item was deferred. Josh will extend an invitation to the next LOWDC meeting to Ralph Webb of the Rail Roaders Association to provide more information to the group.

## **v) Kenora Urban Trails Committee Ask**

### **Recommendation:**

THAT the Board of Directors allocate \$3,200 from the Municipal Accommodation Tax to assist the Kenora Urban Recreational Trails Committee in the purchase and installation of two water bottle filling stations.

**Discussion:** The style and location(s) of the water filling stations were discussed extensively by the group. Concerns with vandalism and accessibility were brought forward. This item was deferred.

## **8. Follow-up from Previous Meetings**

### **a) Winnipeg River Lock or Boat Lift**

The idea of reaching out to the community to identify the interest in a lock or lift system from the Winnipeg River to Lake of the Woods was shared. This project was brought forward to the group as a suggested project for the LOWDC to undertake and will be discussed further at the five year strategy planning session.

### **b) Acquire & Redevelop Hotel**

The idea of forming an Economic Development sub-committee who would work towards acquiring and redeveloping underutilized buildings with a focus on downtown redevelopment was discussed. A hotel in the downtown area was identified as being in great need of repair. While it is a large undertaking there is a need for long term goals of the LOWDC. The group was encouraged to prepare and bring forward ideas such as these to the strategy planning session.

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

### **Roundtable**

The need for a Coney Island shuttle was discussed and it was asked that this be added to the agenda early in the New Year.

Teresa spoke to some of the challenges the hotel visitors experienced with shelter being closed.

The idea of canvassing downtown businesses for good news stories was discussed.

## **10. Next Meeting Date**

- To be determined.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.