

**City of Kenora**  
**Minutes**  
**Of a Special Committee of the Whole of Council**  
**December 9, 2011**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
**Lake of the Woods Discovery Centre**

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**City Representatives Present:**

**Mayor D. Canfield, Councillor C. Drinkwater, Councillor R. Lunny, Councillor R. McKay, Councillor R. McMillan, Councillor L. Roussin, Councillor S. Smith, Karen Brown, CAO, Colleen Neil, Recreation Services Manager, Heather Paterson, Tourism Development Officer, Diane Schwartz-Williams, Northwest Business Centre Manager, Heather Kasprick, Deputy Clerk**

**Public Present:**

**Don Denver, Marc Bissonette, Mort Goss, Fred Williams, Tracy Laffin, Keric Funk, Jeff Port, Pamela Bryson and Theresa Gallik, Teika Newton.**

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**A. Public Information Notices**

**N/A**

**B. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest & the General Nature thereof**

**1) On Today's Agenda**

**2) From a Meeting at which a Member was not in Attendance**

None Declared.

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**1. Roger Brooks Presentation**

Mr. Brooks opened the meeting by identifying that he is here to facilitate the process of branding our community, not to do it for us, and that there are 13 steps in this process and we are on 3 or 4. He indicated that he would like this to be completed by April 2012. The branding committee is writing the plan and Rogers firm is facilitating the process.

There is a Brand Development Committee formed and their job will be to complete the process. An on-line survey is available on the tourism website until the middle of January. This is the public outreach opportunity and after that period, the public outreach in this process is completed. It is strongly encouraged to get as many people to complete those surveys. It would be great to receive 700-800, however, other much larger centres have not received that many responses. The surveys are asking locals what you would like to be known for 5, 10, 20 years down the road. The Branding Committee will then compile the survey results and review with the ultimate job of picking one from the results. Mr. Brooks noted that you do not do branding top down and that brands take time to do. Elected officials are all things to all people, brands are not. City Council becomes a partner, not a lead in this process and should not develop the brand direction. The most successful brands weren't built on public facilities, they were privately developed. Mr. Brooks noted that they hope the brand will not be built on the lake alone.

It was noted that the process of branding and identifying the brand is publicly funded. Recruitment of the private sector businesses that have been identified will be the cost to the City through the Economic Development office.

The intent of a brand is to try to bring a market that isn't already here, to attract a different kind of a market. Competition forces people to raise the bar or get out of the business. The idea is to bring in a market that you don't already have to enhance and grow the community, to be known as that brand. The brand comes first, and the development will follow. Once you are known for something, developers will come and add onto that.

Kenora needs to improve the way finding signage. This tells people how to get to the most important things they are looking for in a community. If you don't direct them, they will continue on to the next community. Way finding signage is publicly funded and is a City project.

The subject of parking was raised by a member of the public. Mr. Brooks noted that two hour parking will kill a downtown. Parking does not have to be free, but if you are going to charge for parking use a system to promote staying longer. He suggested a model of \$1.00/hour up to 3 hours and after that it's free. This scheme creates incentive to stay longer in the downtown area. When someone who is a visitor gets a ticket, whether they were right or wrong, they write you off as a community. He referenced another community who uses handheld machines to track how long you have been parked. If you stay past your time, they record the plate and leave a printed ticket that states "While you were enjoying our downtown your parking meter expired. We have extended your parking privilege for an hour to extend your shopping experience. Here are locations to park all day (map on back of ticket)". This is more well received than just a parking ticket on your windshield.

Parking should never be considered as a revenue source for a City. Parking is an economic development tool, similar to a convention centre, it's an amenity. Your tax base is in the businesses, not in the parking. He referenced other communities where some businesses will refund people for their parking if they spend a certain amount in their business. Mr. Brooks noted that Kenora does need more parking and we do not have a good way finding system to find parking. Kenora does not do a good job of signs, he noted we need to tell people where it is and make it easy to get there. The better your downtown is, the further they will walk to get there. There are many options out there now for parking and collecting parking fees. The days of doing coins in meters are over with everything from apps for i-phones and kiosks with multiple options for payment.

The subject of snow banks was raised by a member of the public. Mr. Brooks noted that in many communities the BIA maintains the sidewalks. The merchants are paying for it. It takes a combination effort from the City and merchants but the merchants have to be willing to take care of their own storefronts. He questioned what merchants are doing for themselves and for their customers. Pedestrian access is incredibly important and it can't just be a responsibility of the City.

Mr. Brooks recommended outdoor dining be encouraged during the season, and suggested the City consider implementing on Main Street. He noted that the City would lose the parking spots in front of the restaurant for this purpose, and lease the

space to the restaurant for \$1 / year, and the restaurant would be responsible for putting in a boardwalk around and ensuring this is accessible (wheelchair). He noted this creates a gathering space. He further encouraged the City to review its internal processes to determine if need to eliminate red tape and reduce timelines and costs for businesses in doing this.

Roger noted that he had taken a tour last June when he was in, and again the previous day. He felt some businesses had done a great job in beautification / exterior improvements since his last visit. He further noted that Kenora's potential is unbelievable.

Mr. Brooks noted that at the end of March there would be a Brand Development Team in Kenora for 3 1/2 days, from the Tuesday, to Friday at noon, noting that there would be between 10 - 20 people that would each make a 3 1/2 day investment that would be for the next 30 years. The work over these days will be broken down into brand development - "Where Will We be In 15 - 20 Years?", Product Development, and how to let the world know about our new brand.

Mr. Brooks suggested that when it comes to logos, the key is continuity in theme. Logos should be a feeling and not a scenic structure, and that anything that promotes tourism in Kenora should have the tourism logo attached to it.

**Moved by R. McMillan, Seconded by R. Lunny & Carried:-**

That this meeting now be declared closed at 9:17 a.m.