

Date: July 5, 2013



City Council Committee Report

TO: Mayor & Council

FR: Diane Schwartz-Williams, Manager of Northwest Business Centre

RE: Northwest Business Centre Q2 - 2013 Report

Recommendation:

That Council accepts the 2013 Second Quarter report for the Northwest Business Centre.

Background:

NWBC Activity Report: April - June 2013

Client Usage and Traffic

- 25 new client consultations; 26 existing client consultations and 193 other client contacts, including emails, phone calls, walk-in's.
- Online engagement – total online engagement of 3,393 (including 2,256 website page views, 556 unique website visitors, 481 new website visitors, 95 new Twitter followers and 5 new Facebook followers).

Events and Initiatives

- 57 Outreach/Networking events and presentations generating 393 contacts.
- 80 small workshops and video conferences offered across the district, several of them through our partnership with Lake of the Woods Business Incentive Corp. (LOWBIC), Patricia Area Community Endeavours (PACE), Rainy River Future Development Corp. and the Sioux Lookout Economic Development Office.
- Good media profile and coverage with interviews on Q104, CJRL, CKDR, CFOB, Good Morning Kenora (Shaw TV), Daily Miner & News, Fort Frances Times, Sioux Lookout Bulletin for both Summer Company, BizKids programs and a new provincial contest "Make your Pitch".
- A Video Conference to introduce Virtual Advisor program to remote First Nations offered via video conference in partnership with K-Net and K-O; 6 communities with a total of 10 participants.
- Work continues on the development of the Virtual Advisor program and we have already put it to the test with a few clients. Interest in partnering with the Northwest Business Centre has been expressed by a third organization. The Virtual Advisor program will serve to deliver the NWBC consulting services to clients across the district, not restricted to the remote communities.
- Significant progress continues to enhance the NWBC social media program, presence and activities. Plans are in place to deliver weekly social media "lunch and learns" beginning in August.

- Manager attended provincial conference with all representatives of other Small Business Enterprise Centres, CFDC's, Regional Innovation Centres, FedNor and other partners from across the province. This conference was the next step in the strategic alliance review initiated by the Province in February. Work on the regional self-assessments and strategies continues.

Success Stories:

- The NWBC is proud to have worked with clients who launched their business this quarter – D. Mitchell & Sons Cheese.

Youth Programs

- Summer Company applications accepted beginning in April. Three candidates in final stages of approval at the end of the second quarter. (Subsequently approved and open for business July 2.)
- A Kenora CYBF (Canadian Youth Business Foundation) applicant successfully presented her business plans to the Loan Review Committee (LRC). The LRC recommended these plans and funding to CYBF, and following their own review process CYBF confirmed funding and mentoring support to Tangled Tree Framing & Gifts.

Budget: N/A

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements: N/A