

**Digby and Area Board of Trade
Minutes of General Meeting
Thursday, February 20 2020
Soo Good Restaurant, Noon**

Members Present: Kevin Ellis, Rick Foote, Lori Prentice-Van Luven, Beth Earle, Peter James, Ben Cleveland, Ed Chisholm, Michael Carty, Barbara Hawthorn, Ron Parks, Dave Kirton, Paul Lombard and Linda Weir

New Members: Paul Lombard - Transport de Clare

Guests: Charles Haliburton, Nella Pidutti- Solas Health & speaker John Light

Regrets: Karen Enright, David Cvet

Call to Order: Meeting opened at 12:09 pm with Welcome and Introductions around the room. Kevin Ellis in the chair.

Approval of the Agenda – Chair called for additions to the agenda. Hearing no additions, the chair called for adoption of agenda as presented.

Lori Prentice VanLuven moved to adopt the agenda for February 20 2020 . Seconded by Michael Carty.

Approval of Minutes from November 28 2019 . Chair called for errors or omissions. Hearing no errors or omissions, Chair called for adoption of Minutes as presented.

Lori Prentice VanLuven moved to adopt the minutes from November 28 2019 . Seconded by Rick Foote.

Guest Speaker - John Light. was introduced and gave his Bio having moved to this area in 2002. He spoke on a shrinking community and how we should get together as community to change Digby to be destination of choice, where the money comes from and how we use these funds. Touched on losses of other communities and how they have recovered. Suggested Digby could learn from some of the examples, and promoting the benefits of this location to other parts of the world, to bring in revenue and business to the area. If all contribute, all will gain. How can we better the community without increasing funding from government he asked. He spoke on Bay Ferries, government funding and his reasons for ridership losses. Suggested getting ridership up by lowering the existing pricing and have Bay Ferries offer Boat Bucks to passengers that could be redeemed with businesses in the local area.. Bay Ferries would distribute the Bucks, merchants would gather the bucks and take to the bank, the bank would return to province for re-use. Suggested the Board could approach the province and Bay Ferries with his idea. Digby needs to change to grow and needs to do something to shine. Discussion followed, along with response by Dave Kirton of Bay Ferries. Questions taken from the floor. Beth Earle pointed out that banks may not want to deal with these bucks, as it may result in setting a precedent and other businesses wanting to use similar style "currency".

Business Arising From the Minutes:

- March Newsletter - Turning the Tide - Michael Carty to send information for newsletter.
- Research /social media/website person - Candidates fell through and the position is open again \$15/hr for part-time position . Lori will take on the newsletter for now.
- Brainstorming Session - Kevin advised 7 individuals met last week to gather ideas for the area. Good exchange, and David Cvet will have full report at later meeting.
- 2020 membership are now overdue. Lori reported there would be 71 members if everyone re-news their membership this year.. About 50% received to date. Talked about an effective method of renewal. \$200 charge for printing of invoice and sending reminders by mail this year. Suggested other methods might be less costly - email, auto renewal . Agreed to reach out to those who need a reminder by email, and only mail out to those who request this method.

New Business

- Workplace Education - Kevin spoke on the subject. 40 hour certificate courses have been offered in the past. New criteria came into play last year requesting SIN numbers would be required to take the courses. Board did not want to be responsible to deal with people's private information and did not go ahead with courses. Would like to offer again this year, and asked for any suggestions for courses to let the board know. Courses are excellent training, with certified instructors hired by the Province. Free to members and staff as long as they are currently employed. This is also has been a revenue stream for the board in the past. Contact Kevin or board executive if interested. Past courses have been Excel, HR, Marketing and social media. Etc. Kevin to meet with coordinator to see what is upcoming this year. 8 - 10 people are needed to proceed with a course.
- Financial Statements - Lori gave quick overview of current statements, copies issued, along with list of paid membership.
- 1st Vice President resignation. Judy Green offered her resignation from position due to possible conflict of interest as she tries to pursue leadership of the Green Party. Executive has to meet to discuss further, but will go forward with 2nd Vice only at this point.
- Board's stand on aquaculture. Kevin advised there has been a fair amount of interest in the topic lately, with recent Cermaq public meetings. The Board has decided to follow the Municipality's work plan on aquaculture which is "Support the growth expansion and investment of the aquaculture industry providing it is done in an environmentally sustainable manner and brings social and economic benefit to the people and communities of rural Nova Scotia."

Edwin Chisholm moved to accept the board's stand on aquaculture as noted above. Seconded by Lori Prentice VanLuven .

Discussion followed. Ron Parks suggested that with the large membership group within the Board, there would be too many opinions to come to one conclusion by the board. Nella Pidutti said we have to question what sustainability means for Digby County - who defines this today. We should decide as our economy depends on sustainability. The motion was put to a vote, with 10 hands For, to accept the motion.

Motion carried. Digby Board of Trade will "support the growth expansion and investment of the aquaculture industry providing it is done in an environmentally sustainable manner and brings social and economic benefit to the people and communities of rural Nova Scotia."

Correspondence

Invitation to Southwest African Heritage Month Dinner & Dance Gala February 22 received - \$20 ticket encouraged to attend. Kevin is attending and the Town have purchased a table.

Edwin Chisholm questioned where does the new Acaciaville Community now stand? Mayor reported the land has been cleared, road in and project manager has been hired. Debating the sq footage but no RFP out yet for project.

Announcements

- J W Lindsay has been hired to build new Scotia Harvest fish plant in Digby municipal park They bought O'Neil Fisheries in 2012 and will move from their current location on the waterfront when the new plant is complete. This will create long term employment in the area. Future opportunity for old O'Neil property and the head of Maiden Lane.
- Mayor also spoke briefly on province recent suggest of amalgamation of Town and Municipality of Digby. Mainly internal changes, not a lot of external changes would be noticed.
- Rick Foote announced Spring into Summer is back this year. Saturday June 13th 1 day only They are accepting applications for booths.
- Paul Lombard announced Transport de Clare have a charter license and can be hired for service. They will be keeping 2 vehicles in Digby and have recently purchased new buses.

Adjournment – Ron Parks moved to adjourn. 1:25 pm.

Next Meeting – March meeting will be at ABCC, State of union address. Kevin is trying to coordinate date with Gordon Wilson to speak. TBA date and time.