

Deep River Economic Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 09, 2015 - 7:00 PM

Present: Jason McAuley
Mary MacCafferty
Hazel Ladouceur
Ken Philipose
Uditha Senaratne

1. Introductions

Members introduced themselves and talked briefly about why they volunteered to be on the committee.

2. Agenda Approval

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There was no disclosure of pecuniary interest by any member of committee.

4. Appointment of Roles

It was agreed that Mary MacCafferty would chair the committee, Jason McAuley would be vice-chair, and John Walden would be secretary.

5. Defining a path forward for the Advisory Committee

a) SWOT Exercise on Economic Development potential for Deep River Strengths

- People
- Skill-level
- Natural environment
- Recreation – facilities (pool, library, marina, golf course), programs and clubs
- Volunteerism
- Safe, clean, well maintained
- Emergency services – hospital, police and fire
- Good internet service overall

- Lifestyle – safe, healthy, prosperous, quality schools, hospital, GPs, plus all of the above

Weaknesses & Threats

- One key employer
- Uncertainty about Go-Co
- Small population
- Lack of promotion of the town
- Limited land, rentals and business facilities available
- Proximity to major centre (good and bad)
- No airport
- Town needs to be more self-sufficient
- Neighbouring communities are attracting new families and businesses
- Lack of growth in tax base, housing, businesses, population

Opportunities

- Attract new business
- Sustain existing businesses
- Promote the town – to potential employees to buy or rent, military families, young people, tourists, businesses, developers
- Sell the benefits/strengths of the town – actively to outsiders
- Attract developers – remove barriers
- Compete with other communities for residents and business opportunities
- Develop a technical campus in town using existing expertise/skills
- Communicate to potential newcomers what they are getting for their taxes vs what is offered in other communities
- Look at zoning for development – town houses, side-yard setbacks
- Look at land use within town boundaries – needs today, needs 5 and 10 years ahead, rental vs purchase for all age groups, business/commercial opportunities
- Small business opportunities – launderette, car wash

b) Alignment with the Deep River Strategic Plan

Committee members agreed that it was important to be aware of Council's priorities. Members agreed to read the Town's strategic Plan prior to the next meeting (assuming it is available).

6. New Items

a) Committee members agreed that there would likely be some synergy with the Housing Advisory Committee and that it would be beneficial to review housing committee minutes.

b) Mary told the committee about a program that the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) runs called "First Impressions". The Ministry will match a participating community with another community with somewhat similar characteristics. They then train members of both communities how to do an objective community evaluation. People from each community visit the other community and conduct an evaluation exercise then do a report for the visited community. The exercise gives a community a feel for what impressions they make on a visitor. The committee thought that "First Impressions" was an excellent idea. Mary agreed to follow-up with our OMAFRA representative. ACTION: MARY

7. Next Meeting Date: April 28th

8. Meeting Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn: Jason McAuley

Seconded: Uditha Senaratne