

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 4, 2017

The Township of Rideau Lakes Economic Development Committee held a Regular Meeting on Monday, December 4, 2017 at the Municipal Office in Chantry, Ontario.

The following committee members were in attendance: Councillors Arie Hoogenboom, Bob Lavoie, Cathy Livingston, Claire Gunnewiek, Mayor Ron Holman, and public representative Sharen Symondson. Public representative Jennifer Campbell was absent. Michael Dwyer, CAO, was also in attendance.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

RECOMMENDATION #1

Moved By: Arie Hoogenboom

Seconded By: Ron Holman

To pass a Recommendation that the following items be added to the Agenda:

7.6 Community Transportation Grant Program

Carried:

RECOMMENDATION #2

Moved By: Ron Holman

Seconded By: Cathy Livingston

That this Committee adopt the Agenda, as amended.

Carried:

DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST & GENERAL NATURE THEREOF:

Chairperson Lavoie asked if anyone had a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof and none were declared.

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

Minutes of the November 6, 2017 Economic Development Committee Meeting were distributed to the Committee. Chairperson Lavoie asked for any errors, omissions or questions and none were heard.

The following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #3

Moved By: Cathy Livingston

Seconded By: Ron Holman

That this committee approve the Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2017, as submitted.

Carried:

GUEST SPEAKER:

Ann Weir, Economic Development Officer for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG), provided a summary of the Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) project that will commence in 2018. Ms. Weir stated that UCLG has created two new positions to assist with the multi-tier project involving

UCLG as a whole and three additional participating municipalities. The BR+E involves conducting an extensive survey to interested businesses to identify the strengths of the community and to help identify areas for improvement, among other beneficial information.

Ms. Weir stated that an estimated 80 to 90 businesses within Rideau Lakes would be questioned by approximately 20 volunteers to ensure a complete BR+E study. She stated that non-participating municipalities of a similar size will only have around 10 businesses surveyed for the UCLG overall report.

Ms. Weir stated that the township has the option to include 15 customized questions and outlined the projected timeline for different stages of the project, with full reports becoming available in late 2018.

After discussion, the following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #4

Moved By: Cathy Livingston

Seconded By: Claire Gunnewiek

That the Economic Development Committee thank Ann Weir, Economic Development Officer for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville for her presentation.

Carried:

ACTION LISTING:

Alison Merkley provided a brief overview of the Action Listing items and their progress.

The Committee requested that a list of Investment Ready Sites be created.

NEW BUSINESS:

SMALL HOMES

Councillor Gunnewiek provided a verbal overview of a presentation by Cabinspace at a recent Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) meeting. She stated that the company provides short term rentals of small cabins in remote locations which has been gaining in popularity and is looking to expand. Councillor Gunnewiek continued to state that the Committee has discussed tiny homes from a residential living viewpoint and not from a tourist one, and that Rideau Lakes could offer the opportunity for similar endeavours.

Chair Lavoie asked if the CRCA was considering offering parts of its land for small tourist lodging along its trails. Councillor Gunnewiek stated that she believes they are considering it.

The Committee discussed the challenges in determining when a tiny home on wheel stops being considered a trailer which is only permitted in certain zones. They also stated their hesitation to amending municipal policies to permit small homes as the public can ask for a minor variance to build under the established minimum dwelling size, in addition to stating the benefit of having permitting the micro-dwellings within a small home community opposed to on individual lots throughout the municipality.

The Committee discussed small homes from a tourism viewpoint and recommended a joint meeting with the CRCA and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority concerning tiny homes be arranged. The meeting would focus on whether an opportunity similar to what Cabinspace has done can be viable in the area.

Malcolm Norwood, Associate Planner, was invited to share comments regarding tiny homes. Mr. Norwood stated that he has received a few inquiries about tiny homes, however they are from individuals interested on having them on large parcels of land. Mr. Norwood stated that if tiny homes are permitted on large parcels, that it decreases the land availability for larger developments.

Mr. Norwood stated that small homes are more suitable for urban areas where housing costs are high as it meets the need to have affordable housing. He continued to state that Rideau Lakes currently has affordable housing options available.

The Committee agreed with Mr. Norwood's comments and stated that a small home community would be the appropriate way to introduce small living and it could offer an opportunity to implement decentralized services.

The Committee stated that they would like to have small homes be on a future agenda under two separate items to discuss its feasibility as a housing alternative and as a tourism opportunity.

After discussion, the following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #5

Moved By: Arie Hoogenboom

Seconded By: Ron Holman

That the Economic Development Committee acknowledges the Small Homes discussion.

And further that staff be directed to speak with the CRCA and RVCA about the Cabinspace concept and explore developments and partnerships which would ensure community benefit from the model.

Carried:

The Committee observed a 15 minute break.

TRANSIENT ACCOMMODATION TAX

Mike Dwyer, CAO, reviewed the letter which states that the Transient Accommodation Tax is in place and that municipalities can decide whether to impose additional taxes on accommodation. Mr. Dwyer continued to state that any funds generated from the accommodation tax must be used for marketing purposes.

Mr. Dwyer recommends that the township wait on deciding whether to implement the taxation until staff can determine what other similar municipalities have done and what revenue it has generated.

The Committee discussed whether the taxation would extend to alternative means of accommodation, such as campgrounds, private rentals, and house boat rentals, should it be implemented in the future. They also discussed the challenge of ensuring private rentals adhere to the accommodation tax. The Committee also stated that the introduction of the accommodation tax offers the benefit of allowing increased tourism marketing of the area without relying on funds provided by Council.

The following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #6

Moved By: Arie Hoogenboom

Seconded By: Ron Holman

That the Economic Development Committee acknowledges the Transient Accommodation Tax update by Mike Dwyer, CAO.

Further that staff be directed to bring forward a detailed report on the Transient Accommodation Tax so the Committee can better understand the options.

Carried:

WELCOME PACKAGES

Alison Merkley, Administrative Assistant, provided a report about the Welcome packages currently being offered to new residents, and alternative ways to package the materials.

Mike Dwyer, CAO, also mentioned that the Committee should consider whether multiple packages will be freely offered to real estate agents or if they would be exclusively for new buyers.

The Committee agreed that the packages should only be provided to new residents on requests and agree that the packages should be given in a bag marked with the township logo. They further stated that packages should also be available at the library branches as some new residents will go to their local branch for local information. The Committee also suggested that the information within the Welcome package be available online.

Mr. Dwyer asked the Committee if staff should seek sponsors for the welcome packages to make them cost neutral.

The Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of requesting sponsors and decided to look for sponsors.

The following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #7

Moved By: Arie Hoogenboom

Seconded By: Claire Gunnewiek

That the Economic Development Committee direct staff to proceed with creating Welcome packages.

Further that staff explore making the packages cost neutral via a construction trades sponsorship sheet.

Carried:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

The Committee discussed the Economic Development Summit hosted by the Economic Development Office of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. The members stated their enjoyment of the event.

JANUARY MEETING

The Committee discussed whether to reschedule or cancel the January 2nd, 2018 meeting.

The following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #8

Moved By: Arie Hoogenboom

Seconded By: Cathy Livingston

That the Economic Development Committee January 2nd regular meeting be cancelled.

Carried:

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION GRANT PROGRAM

Mike Dwyer, CAO, provided a summary about the program which may grant funds to assist with transportation projects.

The Committee discussed potential programs that may be eligible for funding and their pros and cons.

BUSINESS ARISING:

BUSINESS RECOGNITION PROGRAM 2018

Alison Merkley, Administrative Assistant, provided a proposed timeline of tasks to be completed for the Business Recognition Program that will take place on Friday, April 6th at the Old Town Hall in Delta.

The following recommendation was duly moved and seconded:

RECOMMENDATION #9

Moved By: Claire Gunnewiek

Seconded By: Cathy Livingston

That the Economic Development Committee accept the timeline.

Carried:

“WIN THIS SPACE”

Alison Merkley, Administrative Assistant, stated that Kemptville has implemented a program that supports pop up shops and that the township should consider replicating their program.

Ms. Merkley also stated that she received an email with an article about using shipping containers as temporary structures for pop up storefronts.

Mike Dwyer, CAO, stated that exploring pop up shops has been included within the Committee’s draft budget and that staff will contact Kemptville for more information about their program.

Mr. Dwyer also stated that permitting shipping containers for commercial purposes may be permitted under certain circumstances and with proper approvals when required.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mike Dwyer, CAO, provided details about the Townfolio correspondence item, which is an online database that allows communities to be searched.

The Committee discussed remaining correspondence items.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

The Committee did not have any additional items to include on the next meeting’s agenda.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Chair declared the Economic Development Committee Meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m., until the next Regular Meeting.

Bob Lavoie
Chairperson

Michael Dwyer
Secretary