

Southwold Economic Development Committee

Southwold Economic Development Committee

MINUTES

Wednesday May 25, 2016
3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, Fingal

PRESENT:

Acting Chair:	Councillor Peter North
Voting Members:	Cathy Bishop Valerie Cron Chris Meyers
Non-Voting Members:	Katherine Thompson, Elgin County Justin Dias, Elgin County Jeff Sheridan, Elgin Business Resource Centre
Resource:	Kim Grogan, Treasurer Rachel Goodhue, Summer Student
Guest:	Ross Burgar, Southwold Communities in Bloom

ABSENT:

Voting Members:	Deputy Mayor, Ian Chard Jack VanderKooy Ernst Hoffsuemmer
-----------------	---

1. Call to order

- The Acting Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Confirmation of Agenda

3. Approval of minutes from April 27, 2016 meeting (previously approved by e-mail)

Moved by Cathy – Seconded by Valerie: Minutes of April 27, 2016 were reviewed and approved.

CARRIED.

4. Business arising from those minutes.

a) **Southwold by Tractor update** - nothing provided.

b) **How to increase the percentage of younger volunteers on both our committees of Council and other volunteer organizations in the Township -**

The Committee discussed ideas regarding the topic such as contacting guidance departments at local high schools and providing a letter of recommendation to volunteers. Discussed issues including the timing of the meetings, available time for families with small children already committed to volunteer in programs their children are involved in, and accessibility and transportation to meetings. To discuss defining the target of “younger volunteers” at a future meeting.

5. New Business

a) **Elgin Business Resource Centre Update** - Jeff provided the committee with details on the 2nd annual Enterprise Elgin Business Development Competition to be launched Tuesday August 2, 2016 at the Keystone Complex. The launch event will include a small business expo. The competition is open to businesses in Elgin or looking to relocate in Elgin and helps with the development of business plans, marketing strategies etc. The finalist will present their plans in October 2016.

EBRC will be holding a full day workshop on business plan development and updating on June 16, 2016 at the St Thomas EBRC from 9 am to 3 pm.

- b) Elgin County EDC Update** - Elgin County Economic Development is hosting a seminar, "Selling Elgin", at Kettle Creek Golf Club on June 8, 2016 from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. focusing on the market outlook for real estate development in Elgin County. Valerie inquired as to whether having a booth/display at the event was possible. Justin will provide a response to the committee by email. Justin also announced the approval for an Elgincentives grant to The Bluffs Golf Club for signage in Southwold. Information was provided on the Business Retention and Expansion Program. Elgin County, in partnership with the Elgin Federation of Agriculture, is undertaking an agricultural survey in the County to determine what is being grown and produced in Elgin County. The County business directory is under development and Katherine will create a link on our website of a filtered list of those businesses located in Southwold. Peter congratulated Katherine and Justin on the release of the new Elgin tourism promotional video and the success of the Elgincentives program. The County summer students are staffing kiosks in Port Stanley and Port Burwell and the County tourism van for the summer. Valerie inquired about having Southwold brochures at Elgin events and in the Elgin Tourism office. Note: Brochures were provided to Katherine after the meeting.
- c) Canada 150 Update** - Valerie and guest, Ross Burgar discussed suggestions for Canada 150 during the Communities in Bloom update.
- d) Communities in Bloom Update** - The 2015 CIB Judges suggested consideration be given to the formation of a Heritage Committee to focus on the historical aspects of the community. Ross Burgar was in attendance to discuss the newly formed Heritage Committee, their members and their recent endeavours including the development of brochures, a website and facebook page. The goal is to bring historical information together and share historical knowledge in Southwold. Ross shared the exciting news that starting on July 1, 2017 the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa will feature an exhibit on European settlement of Southwold Township. This exhibit provides the Township with a great opportunity to promote Southwold. Ross suggested a Canada 150 opportunity to enlist the aid of a Public Relations Specialist to expand this great news, to promote positive awareness and to influence economic development within the Township. Ross emphasized the importance of seizing this opportunity and posed the question "What will be done with the artifacts when the exhibit closes?" Peter shared that Council is soliciting ideas for Canada 150 Celebrations and encouraged the submission of ideas.

Moved Valerie - Seconded Cathy: That the Committee request Council's support in the hiring of a Public Relations firm to capitalize on the opportunity to promote the Township of Southwold in response to the July 1, 2017 exhibit at the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa and pursue any funding opportunities to support the promotion of Southwold.

CARRIED.

- e) Improving signage on Spring/Fall clean-up bins** - The spring recycling program was very successful with a total of 15 bins collected. Unfortunately, the bins contained paint cans, chemicals, asbestos and other hazardous materials. Chris suggested that policing bins is the only means of ensuring that only acceptable materials are dropped off. Chris recommended having better signage

to ensure that the community is aware of what materials are not acceptable and also suggested having Fingal as the only drop off site for future programs. The committee discussed the need for proper household hazardous waste disposal options for residents. Peter discussed potential partnering with St. Thomas in the use of their transfer station for Southwold residents and other options being investigated. Chris advised that he will investigate costs for a household hazardous waste day.

- f) **Minutes of May Meeting of the St. Thomas Builders Association** - Peter reviewed the minutes of the St. Thomas Elgin Builders Association meeting and discussed the association's Trades Appreciation Banquet on June 7th, 2016. Peter discussed the need for Council to be invested in economic development of the Township and confirmed that the Talbotville development is moving forward.

6. Other Business

- **Canada 150 Submission suggestion** - Valerie and Ross suggested the playground park in Fingal become a Heritage Park with the inclusion of metal sculptures of a threshing machine manufactured by McPherson & Glasgow Foundry and/or a prehistoric Mastodon, plaques to recognize Township of Southwold history and walking paths with a footbridge over the ditch with appropriate landscaping. Ross suggested including a reproduction of wrought iron fence manufactured by McPherson & Glasgow or a display of the actual fencing, currently at the Fingal Cemetery.
- Cathy announced that this will be her last meeting as a member of the committee. Justin announced that his contract with the County is almost over and Kate will be returning for the next meeting.
- next meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.

Moved Chris- Seconded Cathy: Meeting adjournment at 4:30 p.m.

CARRIED.