



**Brockton Economic Development Committee
Minutes
Monday, June 15, 2020
Zoom Virtual Meeting
12 pm**

Voting Members

Dan Gieruszak – Chairman	Present
Mayor Chris Peabody – Ex Officio	Absent
Dean Leifso – Councillor	Absent
Lindsay Hill – Business Improvement Area	Present
Carl Kuhnke – Institutional Representative	Present
Mike Dupuis – Agriculture Representative	Present
Matt Rapke – Community Representative	Present

Non-Voting Members/Staff

Sonya Watson – CAO/Clerk	Present
Paulette Peirol – Community Development Coordinator/Secr.	Present

Advisory Members

Rose Austin – Saugeen Economic Development Corp.	Present
Tina Rupert – VPI Working Solutions	Present

Others Present

New EDC members Matt Rapke and Lindsay Hill, Walkerton BIA manager, were introduced.

1. Call to Order/Attendance

The meeting was called to order by D. Gieruszak at 12:03 p.m.

2. Acceptance of the Agenda

Moved by K Hutcheon, Seconded by C. Kuhnke

That the agenda for the June 15, 2020 Brockton Economic Development Committee be accepted, with the addition of an update from S. Watson regarding the Brockton day care and summer camp programs and input from the committee.

CARRIED

3. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof.

None

4. Delegations

None

5. Passing of Minutes

5.1 Brockton Economic Development Committee Minutes, February 20, 2020

Moved by M. Dupuis, Seconded By C. Kuhnke

That the draft minutes of the February 20, 2020 Economic Development Committee meeting be approved.

CARRIED

5.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

None

6. Business Items

6.1 Brockton Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan – Draft for Review

P. Peirol presented the draft Covid-19 Economic Recovery Plan to the committee, with updates on the status of each item.

6.2 Bruce County Task Force

S. Watson and R. Austin are members of the task force. They updated the committee on actions taken to date, including business surveys, tax deferrals, loans, sustainability grants and other programs for businesses adapting to COVID-19. Bruce County has earmarked \$1.7 million for COVID-19 recovery programs, including \$750,000 in loans to be administered through the SEDC. The task force has approved short-term, medium-term and long-term priorities.

Bruce County has allotted \$30,000 in Spruce the Bruce grant money to businesses in each municipality, to be used by the end of August. It is also working to expand rural broadband, S. Watson reported.

The SEDC has approved approximately \$100,000 in loans to date, covering six businesses.

6.3 Walkerton 2020 Commemoration Update

P. Peirol said the Walkerton 2020 Commemoration was cancelled due to COVID-19, but a Walkerton Legacy Fund was established with Community Foundation Grey Bruce, with \$2,500 from the Municipality and \$5,000 from the Walkerton Clean Water Centre. A scholarship will be awarded each year to a local student pursuing a career in environmental studies and clean water management. Staff responded to numerous media inquiries about the 20th anniversary of the e-coli water crisis, and much of the coverage was positive, mentioning the planned commemoration, the progress of the community, and the Legacy fund. Some coverage focused on the need for continued vigilance in safeguarding clean drinking water and source water protection.

C. Kuhnke noted that the Ontario Municipal Water Association organized a webinar for water professionals and others, featuring former Justice Dennis O'Connor, James Smith, chief of drinking water at the time of the crisis, and Ed Houghton, the first person on the scene in Walkerton in May 2020. C. Kuhnke was also a panelist. The webinar, called Remembering and Never Forgetting the Walkerton E. coli Tragedy, can be accessed through YouTube at <https://bit.ly/32lgleK>.

The Owen Sound Sun Times also ran a six-part feature on clean water management.

S. Watson thanked staff and C. Kuhnke for their hard work on the water crisis anniversary.

6.4 Airport Update

D. Gieruszak said the runways are being kept open for air traffic but the restaurant is closed. 200 acres of airport land is being used for crops to raise revenue. The airport commission is looking for ways to finance larger fuel tanks for jets, to buy in bulk, sell at a lower cost and increase revenue.

7. Reports

7.1 BIA Report – Lindsay Hill

L. Hill updated the committee on the BIA's COVID-19 related activities to support businesses, such as "In It Together Walkerton" posters, a radio ad, take-out delivery campaign, a shop local web page with the Municipality, and the distribution of masks, sanitizer and gloves to over 70 local businesses. The BIA also hosted an Easter contest, Mother's Day gift guide, and Father's Day campaign and is organizing a drone "flyover" of the downtown for Canada Day.

C. Kuhnke noted that reusable cloth masks are available to non-profits through Canada Sews.

7.2 Community Development Coordinator Report – Paulette Peirol

P. Peirol gave an update on the downtown street banner project, patios for downtown restaurants, assisting business owners with COVID-19 measures and programs, and e-newsletters and video updates from the Mayor.

7.3 Saugeen Economic Development Corporation Report – Rose Austin

R. Austin said the economic development officers in the region are doing a wonderful job, sharing best practices and keeping their communities informed.

She said the SEDC is assisting with the Bruce Sustainability Fund and a grant program that will offer businesses up to \$1,500 for PPE to help them reopen.

She noted the Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) offers small business a zero interest loan of up to \$40,000 that is 25% forgivable if paid by December 2022. There is over \$900,000 in this fund, and more than half is used up already. Money flows through the SEDC.

The SEDC is also working with Launch Pad in Hanover to offer youth entrepreneurial webinars, one day a week for 5 weeks. It is also working on a grant application "Resiliency, Resurgence & Recovery" for Bruce, Grey and Wellington counties.

7.4 Brockton Day Camp

D. Gieruszak outlined the difficulties involved with the municipality offering a high level of services during a pandemic while protecting staff and children and meeting provincial guidelines. He said the committee's views, from an economic standpoint, were valuable in this matter, as the day care and day camp assist employers and employees.

S. Watson said Brockton wants to be a leader in this, and has a plan in place to run a camp for 16 children, but recommends that it not run this summer, as the risks to staff and children outweigh the benefits. A discussion by the committee followed.

Committee members expressed the economic need for the day camp to operate to support parents, but the committee unanimously agreed the risks due to the pandemic outweighed the benefits of offering the camp.

Tina Rupert left the meeting at 1 p.m.

Moved by M Dupuis, seconded by M. Rapke

That the Economic Development Committee accept the reports as presented.

CARRIED

8. Finance/Budget

8.1 2020 Budget - Economic Development

\$10,000 has been cut from the Economic Development budget due to COVID-19, as the business awards program, Greenock swamp tours and Walkerton 2020 commemoration event were cancelled. BIA funding for tourism promotions was also cut.

S. Watson said there is money to support natural gas projects.

She noted that the purchase of a 3.9-acre parcel in the East Ridge Business Park is expected to close in December.

C. Kuhnke said the WCWC is working with Infrastructure Ontario and the environment ministry on a new project, also in the East Ridge Business Park, where the WCWC is located.

9. New Business

M. Dupuis asked about hemp farming and CBD oil inquiries.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

Next meeting: Monday, July 20, 2020
Virtual meeting to use Zoom platform