

TOWN OF FORT FRANCES
Economic Development Advisory Committee

MINUTES

September 9, 2019

The meeting of Economic Development Advisory Committee of the Town of Fort Frances was held in the Committee Room, Civic Centre on September 9, 2019 from 11:40 a.m. to 12:40 p.m.

PRESENT: J. Cumming, Chair, Mayor J. Caul, Chief W. Windigo, D. Eldridge, K. Firth, D. Kircher, K. Ballard, M. Caron

ALSO PRESENT: D. Brown, CAO, G. Gillon, RRFDC, L. Mose, MNDM, R. Thoms (93.1 The Border), K. Lawson, Deputy Clerk/Committee Secretary

REGRETS: Councillor J. McTaggart, J. Gillon, T. Drysdale, Consultant, RRFDC

1. Call to Order - 11:40 a.m.

2. Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof - none identified

3. Approval of Previous Advisory Committee Minutes

3.1 June 3rd, 2019.

Firth-Kircher: THAT the minutes from the June 3rd, 2019 regular meeting be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

4. New Business

4.1 Crossroute Forest (ESFL) Update.

- Mayor Caul and D. Brown advised that the Town continues to work to protect the local supply of wood and to ensure that all wood previously earmarked for the Fort Frances mill remains in the district, in hopes that a potential operator can be found to restart the mill. She said Council is continuing to work with Minister Rickford in attempts to get things done. Mayor Caul felt that those discussions had been positive but to date nothing has been received in writing and this item remains at the forefront of Council's agenda. She said that she understood that Minister Rickford and Minister Yakabuski intended on having further meetings on the issue but has received no word on the outcome of any such discussions to date.

4.2 Municipal Strategic Plan Update.

- Mayor Caul and D. Brown updated committee on the plans respecting the Strategic Planning sessions for town Council, senior managers and Town committees/stakeholders. Jordan Forbes, HR Manager will be facilitating the sessions and discussion booklets will be forwarded shortly.

4.3 Mill Update.

- Mayor Caul expressed concerns with the purchaser of the mill and the restrictive covenants which have been placed on the purchase of sale. She stated that she has not had any recent discussions with developer Justus Veldman. Mayor Caul expressed concerns that some pieces of heavy equipment have been removed from the mill property.

5. Standing Items

5.1 Review - April 1, 2019 EDAC Brainstorming Session - Driving Economic Growth as revised. Chief Windigo spoke briefly about two of the businesses that Little Otter Economic Development LP owns in Fort Frances (Taggs for Sports and McTaggarts)

and the challenges which came about as a result of the homeless shelter being situated on Scott Street. He discussed the financial concerns surround increased shoplifting and also consumers fear of those persons frequenting the shelter. This has been a common problem for those businesses operating on Scott Street. He advised that the building formerly housing the shelter has been purchased and plans are underway for its use. He expressed concerns about rumours that a substance abuse and treatment centre is looking to be situated on Scott Street. D. Brown spoke briefly about the development of the Community Safety and Well Being Plan. Committee made two small revisions to the Brainstorming Session spreadsheet (create better retail atmosphere in community and systemic health issues). This working document remains a standing discussion item.

5.2 Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) Committee (update will be deferred to next meeting).

5.3 Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Update.
- G. Gillon advised that there has been no news on this pilot project at this time.

6. Information:

6.1 Northern Policy Institute - Northern Projection - Rainy River District.
- these materials were provided as information. The Chair requested that all members should take the time to read the materials found within. He requested that a discussion item for potential strategies to expand educational opportunities be added to the next regular agenda.

7. Adjourn - 12:40 p.m./ Next Meeting Date - October 21st, 2019

Committee was advised that the next regular meeting which was scheduled for October 7th, 2019 would have to be rescheduled as the Town's Strategic Planning session is scheduled for that date. The new date of October 21st was confirmed by members.