

MINUTES of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** of the **DISTRICT OF MISSION** held in Rooms 4 & 5 at the Leisure Centre at 7650 Grand Street, Mission, British Columbia, on November 4, 2009 commencing at 4:30 p.m.

Council Members Present: Mayor James Atebe
Councillor Terry Gidda
Councillor Paul Horn
Councillor Danny Plecas
Councillor Mike Scudder
Councillor Heather Stewart

Council Members Absent: Councillor Jenny Stevens

EDC Members Present: Linnea Battel
Carlo Billinger
Liz Clay
Mark Evered
Oleene Herman
Bob Mackovic

Staff Members Present: Glen Robertson, chief administrative officer
Dennis Clark, director of corporate administration
Sharon Fletcher, director of planning
Stacey Crawford, economic development officer
Christine Brough, administrative clerk

The Mayor welcomed the economic development commission (EDC) members and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review the current status of economic development in Mission and to discuss future plans and direction.

1. REVIEW OF OPERATING STRUCTURE

Review of economic development structure and review of October 6, 2009 resolution to adopt proposed changes to the EDC Terms of Reference

Stacey Crawford provided an overview the current structure of economic development in Mission, noting that the economic development officer's mandate is to promote economic development, tourism and film for the District of Mission. Mr. Crawford provided the following summarized comments:

Filming

- Filming activity in B.C is anticipated to decline by approximately 30% in British Columbia in 2010 due to tax credit advantages recently introduced in Quebec and Ontario; and
- Fraser Valley Film Cooperative (Chilliwack, Harrison/Kent and Mission) is working to mitigate this loss and capitalize on filming opportunities created by industry interruptions in Vancouver caused by the Olympics.

Tourism

- Mission is well placed to make significant gains in tourism by attracting residents of Metro Vancouver and visitors to Vancouver for day-trips to the area with a primary focus on the unique natural and outdoor experiences of the region and a secondary focus on the cultural and heritage assets of the community;

- The recently completed Mission Tourism Plan identifies twenty-seven tactics to promote tourism with the following four having been adopted for immediate action: a new tourism specific brand for Mission, an E-newsletter, a tourism specific website and refinements to the local Visitor's Guide published by Black Press;
- In terms of structure, the economic development officer assists the tourism committee, which operates under direction from the Chamber of Commerce.

Economic Development

- The main priority for the economic development department is the retention, attraction and expansion of the industrial and commercial business sectors within Mission in order to diversify the district's tax base while creating jobs for its residents;
- Future employment growth in Mission needs to focus on industrial/professional/business service related jobs to provide greater stability to the local economy;

2009/10 Major Initiatives

- employment lands strategy;
- hotel market analysis/recruitment;
- initiate business retention program;
- continue to facilitate development within the Silver Creek industrial park;
- waterfront; and
- Stave Lake interpretative forest.

Mr. Crawford concluded his presentation and opened the meeting to comments and questions from the other attendees.

Councillor Horn questioned whether the film component of the economic development officer's mandate represents an effective use of the limited financial and manpower resources available to the department.

Mr. Crawford stated that, in his opinion, the creation of a more streamlined film policy, combined with improved networking capabilities, has the potential to yield positive results while reducing the demands on his office.

Liz Clay recommended that, given the limited time available, the economic development officer might want to consider advertizing in film magazines and contacting the unions for improved networking potential.

Linnea Battel stated that tourism is a significant economic driver in the region and that she would like to see greater investment in the industry.

In response to a question from council, Mr. Crawford confirmed that in his opinion the existing structure with tourism efforts coordinated by the tourism committee under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce is the best approach. He noted that decreased funding opportunities will be a challenge over the next couple of years.

Bob Mackovic requested taxation information for the downtown area and offered to provide statistics on the number of people employed in the downtown core.

2. REVIEW OF CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Economic development discussion addressing diversification of the tax base, commuter workforce and attracting new investment

A discussion was held on the role of the economic development commission and on ways to improve communication between the commission and council in order to more effectively utilize the talents and expertise available.

Mayor Atebe stated that council recognizes the importance of economic development to the future of Mission and has increased the number of commission members to fifteen in order to expand the human resource base of the group. He stressed the importance of enlarging the circle of engagement, both within and outside of the community, in order to better meet the challenges of the decades to come.

Carlo Billinger noted that the decision to increase the number of commission members has been well received.

In response to a question from council regarding the commission's ability to produce measurable outcomes, Carlo Billinger acknowledged that while the commission has achieved a great deal over the past six years, it has not always been effective in communicating its successes to council or the community at large. He also observed that there have been times when the commission could have provided valuable insight on council initiatives but were not given an opportunity to do so.

Council indicated that it would welcome opportunities to meet with the commission and recognized that the advisory role of the commission is in need of clarification and that a mechanism may be needed to ensure that consultation takes place. The economic development officer was directed to work with the commission to identify potential improvements to the existing system.

Councillor Horn clarified that council would be receptive to both solicited and unsolicited feedback from the commission.

Oleene Herman stated that it has not always been clear to commission members what their role should be and that the recent direction and clarification from council is appreciated.

Mayor Atebe thanked the members of the economic development commission for their volunteerism and their contribution to the community.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Gidda, seconded by Councillor Horn, and

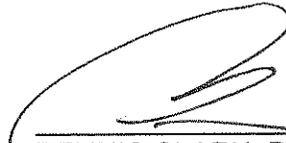
RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.



JAMES ATEBE, MAYOR



DENNIS CLARK, DIRECTOR OF
CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION

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