



Minutes of Economic Development and Culture Committee Meeting

April 9, 2024, 8:00 a.m.

Electronic and In-Person Participation - Economic Development and Culture Committee

**The Corporation of the Town of Orangeville
(Chair and Secretary at 200 Lakeview Court, Upper Level)
Orangeville, Ontario**

Members Present: Councillor Andrews
L. Horne, Orangeville Real Estate Board
J. Patterson, Orangeville BIA, 9:30 left mtg.
J. Small, Public member
S. Waqar, Public member, virtual

Members Absent: D. Morris, Dufferin Board of Trade, regrets
M. Vinden, Business community, regrets

Staff Present: K. Lemire, Manager, Economic Development & Culture
B. Lusk, Administrative Assistant
M. Jamieson, SBEC Co-ordinator

1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order by Councillor Andrews at 8:04 a.m.

1.1 Resignation of the Chair S. Brown

EDCC Members accepted the resignation of S. Brown, DBOT representative.

1.2 Appointments of Chair and Vice Chair

Councillor Andrews volunteer to take on the position of Chair for the committee with the resignation of Chair S. Brown. The committee members were in favour.

He then extended an invitation to receive nominations to fill the Vice Chair position. J. Patterson accepted a nomination, and the committee members were in favour.

2024-003

Moved by L. Horne

That the Committee appoint Councillor Andrews for the position of EDCC Chair.

Carried

2024-004

Moved by Councillor Andrews

That the Committee appoint J. Patterson for the position of EDCC Vice Chair

Carried

1.3 DBOT member introduction

Councillor Andrews introduced D. Morris, Executive Director of the Dufferin Board of Trade, as the new DBOT representative on the EDC Committee, replacing S. Brown. D. Morris has been a committee member in the past and will bring her experience again to this role.

2. Disclosures of (Direct or Indirect) Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Land Acknowledgement

Councillor Andrews said that the community has a new not-for-profit organization called The Brave Canoe whose mission is to bridge understanding and bring revitalization of Indigenous history, culture and traditions within Dufferin County.

Councillor Andrews then acknowledged the treaty lands and territory of the Williams

Treaty Nations and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. He also

recognized that Dufferin County is the traditional territory of the Wendat and the Haudenosaunee, and is home to many Indigenous people today.

4. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

2024-005

Moved by J. Small

That the minutes of the following meeting are approved:

2024-02-13 Economic Development and Culture Committee Minutes

Carried

5. Presentations

5.1 Small Business Enterprise Centre Overview

M. Jamieson, the Co-ordinator of the Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) in the Economic Development and Culture office presented an overview of the Small Business Enterprise Centre.

M. Jamieson described how the SBEC works with the EDC office and explained how his experience as a business owner qualifies him to offer relevant guidance to SBEC clients. He said that 90% of businesses operating in Orangeville are small business, reinforcing the importance of the SBEC's services to our community.

Since joining the SBEC, he has worked diligently to build relationships with entrepreneurs by establishing two unique mentorship groups. The Concept to Commerce program guides participants through the fundamentals of starting a business and the Forum Group is a support group to established business owners. It provides peer mentorship and a platform for members to discuss various challenges in a confidential and trusting environment.

M. Jamieson said that the SBEC also delivers Starter Company Plus and Summer Company, two Provincially funded programs that offer grants and support. He said \$40,000 in grant funding was circulated to small business owners in 2023 in Orangeville and surrounding areas.

In addition, the SBEC provides individual business consultations, registration assistance, and networking and training opportunities for small business owners.

This year, the SBEC launched an Awareness Campaign to promote services available to support local businesses.

M. Jamieson said a featured event Ask the Experts Expo on May 8 will provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs and small business owners to connect with experts in various fields and seek guidance and advice. The Economic Outlook Breakfast held in the Fall is aimed at providing insights and information about the economic outlook for the region.

M. Jamieson reviewed the funding model that contributes towards the \$258,250 annual cost for delivery of SBEC services which are free to clients. He said that the SBEC funding has remained stagnant many years and that advocacy from SBC Ontario, Big City Mayors, and the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus has drawn attention to that challenge. The 2024 provincial budget included some increases related specifically to Starter Company Plus and summer Company programs.

Councillor Andrews thanked M. Jamieson for his presentation to the committee and requested that he provide the same information at a future Council meeting.

6. Working Group Reports

6.1 Arts & Culture

K. Lemire said that the Call for Artist submissions are due on May 9 and that the working committee would be gathered to select the 2024 installations for the two Utility Box locations. She said that the working group would bring their report to the June 11 EDCC meeting.

L. Horne said that she would like to continue her service on the Arts and Culture working group.

6.2 Business Outreach

6.2.1 Working group member vacancy

Councillor Andrews said that the working group met in January to discuss planning stages for business outreach but did not meet in March. He said that he would like to establish a bi-monthly schedule for the working group and determine the best approach to move this forward.

J. Patterson accepted a request to fill the member vacancy.

L. Horne indicated that she would like to have another member replace her in this working group. Councillor Andrews said that he will ask members who are available to meet bi-monthly when the schedule has been established.

7. Items for Discussion and Reports

7.1 EDC Activity Report March 2024

K. Lemire announced that McSweeney & Associates has been hired to develop a new 2024 Economic Development and Culture Strategy and Action Plan. The project will be initiated in April and the EDC committee will be invited to participate at various stages of the project.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Letter of resignation from the DBOT representative

S. Brown advised the EDC Committee in an email on March 25, 2024 that he intended to resign as the Dufferin Board of Trade representative and that D. Morris has agreed to represent DBOT on the committee.

Councillor Andrews explained that DBOT appoints their own representative and therefore an advertised vacancy replacement is not required.

9. Announcements

9.1 Member Sectorial Update

Councillor Andrews provided highlights of recent Council activities which included appreciation for an Orangeville Tourism Strategy progress report by V. Sword and K. Lemire.

He said that a land purchase by Quality Cheese of the excess rail spur located beside 40 Centennial Road will be used for their business expansion.

Councillor Andrews said that a new Noise By-law passed by Council provides clarity and stronger enforcement measures.

Councillor Andrews reported that the Homelessness Task Force (HTF) will be dissolved at the April 29 Council meeting and the goals of the HTF will be moved up to the County level. He said that the Town will create a new

Affordable Housing Task Force to look at government partnerships and an asset inventory list of land provided by the Planning Division.

He said that the SHIP (Servicing and Housing in the Province) development at 236 First Street will host a grand opening on Friday, April 12. He said that 1200 applications were received for the twenty-six affordable housing units.

J. Patterson said that the BIA will roll out the regular spring and summer programs as in past years. He said that the expansion plans for Best Western and the opening of the new Hampton Inn in Mono is good news for event attraction. He said that the Bluebird Cafe and Grill recently opened The Nest, a new accommodation option in Orangeville.

He said that he attended the first Official Plan Steering Committee meeting on April 2 as the EDCC representative. He noted that the BIA is well represented on the committee.

K. Lemire noted a recent increase in the number of businesses for sale, particularly in downtown Orangeville and asked if the BIA had any insights on this trend. J. Patterson said that the BIA had no specific insights but suggested that each one has their own reasons. He noted that the cost of doing business has risen significantly, driven by increases to minimum wage and food costs.

L. Horne said that currently there are ninety-two residential listings and sixteen condominiums listings available. She said that in the past sixty days there were sixty-five residential and eleven condominiums sold. Despite this, she said it is still a sellers' market and housing prices are not declining despite low inventory.

She said that there are currently fourteen commercial listings, including nine businesses available for sale. Two of the commercial properties have conditional sales. In the past sixty days, she said one commercial property sold.

L. Horne said that banks are offering bi-monthly mortgage payments and longer amortization periods to ease the burden on housing affordability, but inflationary impacts far outweigh the challenges people are experiencing.

J. Small recently attended an Artsbuild Ontario webinar and shared insights learned about succession planning for the arts sector. She said that workforce attraction for skilled people in this industry are like other

sectors, but compensation and work schedules are often less attractive, leading to recruitment challenges. She said that the webinar also spoke to challenges related to sustaining theatre venues and assets. J. Small said diversification is often required to generate income and may include sharing office/building space between multiple partners and encouraging new uses outside of typical performance schedules.

S. Waqar commented on her experiences with the newcomer community and noted that there are often challenges connecting them with appropriate employment opportunities. She asked how skilled newcomers are being supported locally.

K. Lemire said that the Economic Development offices in Orangeville and Shelburne host two job fairs per year. She said that Georgian Career and Employment Services participate at the job fairs providing job seeker support. In addition, the Economic Development office partners with the Waterloo Wellington Dufferin Workforce Planning Board and there is a PolyCultural office in Orangeville that supports newcomers.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at 8 a.m.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.