

**Corporation of the District of Maple Ridge
ECONOMIC ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Economic Advisory Commission, held in the Blaney Room at Maple Ridge Municipal Hall, 11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, British Columbia, on Thursday, June 30, 2005 at 7:30 a.m.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Ernie Daykin	Councillor, District of Maple Ridge
Guy Flavelle	Community at Large
Ken Galpin	Community at Large
Peter Janis	Community at Large
Racine Barbour	Community at Large
Terry Wilding	Tourism Representative

STAFF PRESENT

Jim Rule	Chief Administrative Officer
Rick Laferriere	Business Retention & Expansion Officer
Jayne Aster	Administrative Assistant

REGRETS

Kathy Morse	Mayor, District of Maple Ridge
Glen Watson	Home-based Business Representative
Steve Pelton	Community at Large
Mark Taylor	Arts Representative
Dennis Kinsey	Community at Large

1. Call to Order & Introductions

There being a quorum present, Jim Rule called the meeting to order at 7:37 a.m.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOVED BY: E. Daykin
SECONDED BY: P. Janis

That the Agenda for June 30, 2005 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Adoption of the Economic Advisory Commission Minutes of Regular Meeting

MOVED BY: E. Daykin
SECONDED BY: P. Janis

That the Minutes of the Economic Advisory Commission May 26, 2005 Regular Meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

4. *Selection of Commission Chair and Co-Chair*

Jim Rule opened the discussion of assigning a Chair and Co-Chair for the Commission and what the duties entail. There was a call for nominations.

MOVED BY: R. Barbour

SECONDED BY: E. Daykin

That Guy Flavelle be Chairperson and Peter Janis be Vice Chairperson of the Economic Advisory Commission.

CARRIED

5. *Delegations or Presentations*

5.1 *Economic Development Activity Update*

Rick L. gave a Power Point presentation on the Economic Development Department's recent activities. Rick broke down the presentation into four main categories.

- Business Retention & Expansion
- Film Activity
- Linx BC
- Branding

Business Retention and Expansion: Rick gave an overview of the E-Synchronist software and his activities in conducting business surveys, as well as future plans to focus on other business sectors and regions. These include two main areas of focus: the downtown revitalization and Maple Meadows Business Park.

Along with the surveying process, Rick takes care of in-house business consulting, business start up and support for entrepreneurs, drop ins, and counter traffic. Rick meets with people to help them determine the viability and success of their ideas, or helps them develop their business strategy. The department provides full information on government programs, financial information, demographic and community information, basic business start up and development support, human resources and employment issues.

Film Activities: Rick gave an overview on the filming tax credit zones and where Maple Ridge lies within those zones and how this affords us a unique position. The film industry brings significant new dollars into the community while they are here. The

department took on the roll of film office in January. Jayne A. is the principal contact and film liaison to local productions. The department reviewed and clarified the existing process, took on the coordination of these productions, and established a relationship with the Film Commission.

The department increased some fees and established other fees for municipal properties. Collections of location pictures and descriptions of properties are being developed for an information package to give to scouts. The department has issued 30 film permits as of end of month yesterday. We have experienced a number of return visits of production crews because of our ability to process them more efficiently.

Rick and Jayne will be working with the Film Commission and our finance department to develop accounts and a model of economic impact on the community.

The commission discussed information updates and press releases of filming activity to the local papers. Some like to be showcased, some like to keep it quiet especially with big stars, but reports can be made on a regular basis, especially after a production has passed through. Rick spoke about the Golden Ears Motion Picture Group, a local film network group made up of film people who live out here. They meet to discuss the creation of new projects on a regular basis and host events such as script readings, and script and project development. There are plans for a local film showcase event and an RFP for a documentary on the Maple Ridge museum has been presented to them.

The commission discussed the Simpover building, which is being leased by Insight Studios for several local productions. Rick noted that one location manager moved out here a year ago because they love being here. Rick discussed how we need to work closely with the Youth Centre, the ACT, and how we oversee the use of the courthouse.

The commission further discussed the department's website development and continued with a discussion of facility and location fees, educating business and residents in dealing with film productions as we want them to come back.

Linx BC: Rick gave an overview of Linx BC, stating it is an investment attraction group. It is a partnership of nine communities that we joined in 2004. Linx BC was established for the purpose of attracting call centres, to pool resources and come up with location information that site selectors need, for the purpose of identifying and attracting call centres into the Province. They also want to replicate the model for other industries.

Rick reviewed and described the new investment attraction focus areas of Linx BC. There is a focus on agri-food, advanced manufacturing, tourism products, as well as continued involvement in contact centre attraction. Advanced manufacturing is value-added manufacturing for a variety of industries including aerospace, wood remanufacturing, ship building components, construction products, etc.

As a group they identified sectors that they felt were going to be successful for their community.

Leading Edge BC is the technology attraction arm, going through the same process. It is not community based, but more internal to their industry.

Rick reviewed the development time line stages of Linx BC, the research and development of an action plan, it's implementation, and how that will unfold over this year. The province is to provide additional implementation funding. Communities need to be investment ready.

Branding and Marketing: Rick reviewed branding and marketing, noting there is a need to establish a clear positive image of Maple Ridge that can be sold to investors – ie. not 'the happiest place on earth' but more about investment relevant focus. Once branding is established, then we do the website development, and community profile which can be put into a magazine format that can be PDF-ed and used for other advertisement development.

Other ongoing projects: Rick briefly reviewed other ongoing projects beginning with the downtown revitalization project and how the commission will be discussing this at a future time with the Smart Growth people. There are ongoing meetings with investment developers, and working with business groups and community groups. There is a plan to develop a sports tourism strategy.

Ken G. spoke of globalization, regional states as apposed to a nation state. Discussion occurred around the linkages between Vancouver and Seattle as one regional group. Opportunities exist to do work with the US firms in the Seattle area and other neighbours to the south.

Rick commented that with the shift in Linx BC, site selectors from the states were not brought up. This year the focus was on local commercial real estate people who get the phone calls form people looking.

The Chair thanked Rick for his presentation and the commission moved on to the RFP.

6. Current Projects

6.1 Approval of Economic Strategy RFP

Rick L. distributed the RFP thanking the group for their feedback noting we are going to change the date and that the \$30,000 project should give us enough capital to work with in terms of getting all the information we need. In regard to distribution, we've gathered a list of B.C.-based contacts.

Jim Rule noted we may take out irrevocability clause as it may be a problem.

With that amendment the RFP will be distributed to Economic Development Association of B.C. and individuals.

Guy F., Peter J., Ernie D., Jim R. and Rick L. will be reviewing these as they come in to determine who has the best possible work for Maple Ridge, meeting with key candidates, etc. with a timeline of the end of the month as the deadline for submissions, then reviewed in the first or second week of August.

It was noted the Guy will be on vacation first week of August.

The commission discussed the rehashing of information already done in the area and the desire for fresh eyes and new things brought to the table. Rick noted that we have significant changes coming to the community, the upgrade of the Pitt River Bridge, the new Golden Ears Bridge, and that this will change community dynamics significantly.

MOVED BY: P. Janis

SECONDED BY: R. Barbour

That the amended RFP be approved and send for distribution to appropriate parties.

CARRIED

Jim Rule left the meeting at this time.

7. *New Business*

7.1 Bio-Diesel Opportunities

Terry Wilding gave an presentation on the imminent ban on the storage of manure in its present form for all the dairy farmers to be in compliance with the Kyoto Agreement. Manure leaches methane gases and nitrous oxide and spreading manure on fields in its raw state exasperates this. Legislation will be coming down that will ban this and manure will not be able to be stored on farms. This will have a huge impact on the animal husbandry industry.

The anaerobic treatment of manure takes out all noxious substance and leaves a substrate that is environmentally friendly.

Terry believes the municipality should lend its mind to putting up a bio-gas factory – currently there is one in Winnipeg and two in Quebec. Regionally, there are 3000 cows (including in Pitt Meadows) and you need 400. Cost is about 1.2 million for a bio diesel facility. The gas is run through an engine to produce electricity. BC Hydro is obligated by legislation to buy it from you if you produce excess power. A feasibility study is in hand describing the entire process.

The commission discussed the opportunity noting it is a good fit for promoting ourselves as a 'green' community, and discussed possible interested investors such as milk producers, also noting we will draw all the work from the other side of the river. There are land considerations and incentives like tax deals that may attract the right investor.

The commission also discussed the wood chip program and if this could be strategically place with it.

MOVED BY: T. Wilding
SECONDED BY: R. Barbour

That Rick Laferriere does research on bio-diesel opportunities and to also bring in wood chip program information for discussion at the next meeting.

CARRIED

7. *Committee Reports - Nil*

8. *Correspondence - Nil*

9. *Next Meeting*

The next meeting is scheduled for the fall, following selection of the consultant to develop the strategy.

The commission discussed the need to review the meeting schedule due to EAC members' conflicts.

10. *Adjournment*

MOVED BY: R. Barbour
SECONDED BY: P. Janis

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Chairperson
/ja