



**Town of Sidney - Economic Advisory Committee  
MINUTES**

**Friday, September 25, 2020 – 10:30 am to 12:00 noon  
Zoom Meeting**

*EAC Meetings are video recorded and posted on the Town's website at:*

[http://www.sidney.ca/Business/Economic\\_Advisory\\_Committee.htm](http://www.sidney.ca/Business/Economic_Advisory_Committee.htm)

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**Present:** Brad Edgett (Chair), Councillor Chad Rintoul, David Calveley, Alyssa Gerwing, Stasia Hartley, Deanna Mathewson, Jennifer Michell, Doug Walker, Denny Warner,

**Regrets:** Rod Hunchak – Victoria Airport Authority, Annilee Armstrong, Frank Austin

**Staff:** Randy Humble - CAO, Paula Kully – Recording Clerk

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Meeting called to order 10:32 by Chair

**1. Review and approval of the Agenda**

*Moved by Denny Warner, seconded by Stasia Hartley, that the Agenda be approved as distributed.*

**CARRIED**

**2. Review and approval of the July 10, 2020 Minutes**

*Moved by D. Calveley, seconded by D. Warner, that the Minutes of the July 10, 2020 meeting be approved as distributed.*

**CARRIED**

**3. Committee Membership - verbal update to the EAC from Councillor Rintoul**

Councillor Rintoul advised that In light of the resignation of Barbara Cina, Council has decided to fill her position through the regular committee recruitment process. This begins with advertising for committee volunteers in late October early November with new committee members being installed in December.

**4. Review of the Council resolution referred to the EAC for comment: "That staff be directed to research options to winterize sidewalk cafes and lineup spaces."**

General discussion:

- D. Calveley advised that the Task Force was notified that the town had only received two inquiries from local businesses for winterizing outdoor spaces.
- B. Edgett offered to have the BIA canvas their members regarding this kind of support.
- R. Humble advised that staff has begun internal discussion with a report to council to come forward in October. Randy raised section 25 of the Community Charter that prohibits municipalities from providing supports to individual businesses. Possible supports could include the reduction of red tape; for example, eliminate the need for development permits for the

installation of awnings. This is something council can do by resolution. However, there are certain things the Town cannot overlook or do; i.e. provide funding.

- The Town should provide direction on what businesses can and cannot do.
- West Sidney has already been taking direction from the BIA in regards to signage.
- It is cost prohibitive to winterize for many local business.

*Move by D. Walker, seconded by A. Gerwing, that the EAC recommends that Council instructs staff to work with the SBIA and Chamber to reach out to local businesses in order to solicit feedback on what might be deemed helpful and appropriate options to winterize outdoor spaces and, in doing so, provide the SBIA and Chamber with a summary of options that might be possible and within the legislative parameters of the Community Charter (Section 25 – Prohibition Against Assistance to a Business).*

**CARRIED**

## **5. Review of COVID-19 Recommendations/Challenges Lessons Learned.**

Roundtable discussion:

- Several members raised the issue of internet capacity, which has gone to Council. Council concurred and some meetings have taken place with Telus and Shaw regarding better access within the municipality and it has been brought forward in the strategic plan.
- D. Mathewson recommended that the item, which recommends to “encourage people to follow the requirements of the EOC and PHO but there is no need to go beyond...” be removed from the list as the Committee had decided not to include it. (This did not go to council.)
- D. Calveley feels economic recovery could be improved upon with an economic development strategy. A lesson learned may be that the community needs an individual to liaise with business groups and provide more focus on West Sidney and Harbour Road. A forum is needed for businesses to share information that goes beyond personal protective equipment but can share lessons learned and best practices.
- J. Michell suggested more inclusion with West Sidney and strategies undertaken by the BIA and Chamber.
- B. Edgett noted that Winspear/Sidney has gained national recognition for their recovery initiatives in regards to organizing small concerts etc. it is important for business to take the lead.
- D. Mathewson stated that the best support they are getting from the BIA and Chamber is the constant reminder to the public that we are open for business, we are safe, and we are here and Sidney is a place people can come and feel safe.
- Denny noted that the Chamber’s networking sessions are still ongoing and they are focused on businesses sharing information. Denny and Morgan are in contact almost daily and there is close collaboration. Denny stressed that we need to do a big push for Christmas to ensure people keep supporting local as this season will be a make it/break it situation for many local businesses.
- Collaboration within the various business sectors is a recurring theme.

**General Roundtable to close meeting:**

- A. Gerwing: SEAG meeting - many events are being planned with an online pivot and safety measures for others.
- D. Mathewson: Is looking for feedback from the tourism sector. (Brad will have Morgan contact her). They saw some growth in June to August. Net sales were down over 64%. They are organizing popup mini markets in their area.
- D. Walker: The travel industry is hurting.
- J. Michell: the manufacturing sector is dealing with secure PPE and things are moving along well. She has concerns next year may see impact.
- S. Hartley: health care staffing is a challenge and the increase in demand for homecare is significant. They are working to train people and are having to pay out a lot of overtime. People working in the service industry can transfer over to homecare.
- C. Rintoul: expressed his appreciation to the committee members for their time. He has many take a ways from today and recognizes the Town's dependency on the BIA and Chamber. He wants to see the Town be as supportive as possible to local businesses.
- D. Warner: the Chamber is organizing an all candidates forum due to the early provincial election call. They are also working on a *shop local campaign* to show people all the options available. Tourism operators have been a mixed bag. Some are doing well others like Butchart Gardens are not as they are dependent on international visitors.
- R. Humble: reminded the committee that the OCP kickoff event is on Saturday at the Winspear and you can register in advance on the Town's website.
- B. Edgett: Morgan (BIA) and Denny (Chamber) work together on a daily basis providing continuity and support to local business. The BIA needed to do a lot of pivoting; they now have a pool of funds available, as previous advertising dollars that were allotted to projects that could not be undertaken due to the pandemic are now available. The BIA is looking at bringing a food deliver services to the Peninsula. They are also in contact with BIA BC and other BIAs to share and learn.

**6. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned 11:43 pm