



**Town of Sidney – COVID-19 Recovery Task Force Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 08, 2020 – 2:30PM Zoom Meeting**

Present: Mayor C. McNeil-Smith (Chair), Councillor B. Fallot, David Calveley, Glenys Cavers, Steve Duck, Graden Sol, Denny Warner

Regrets: Kirsten Norris, Morgan Shaw

Staff: Randy Humble, Chief Administrative Officer, Brett Mikkelsen, Fire Chief, Alison Verhagen, Senior Manager of Current Planning / Recovery Director, Paula Kully, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 2:35.

2. Territorial Acknowledgement

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by G. Cavers, seconded by G. Sol, that the Agenda be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

4. Still to be determined suggested next steps for the Task Force Committee

a. Submission by D. Calveley

David provided an overview of the intent of his submission:

- Check in with businesses now that we are several months out from the initial pandemic response.
- Seeking budget of one lump sum rather than continually coming back to Council for budget request, for actions to take based on survey. Suggest \$30,000.
- Suggested conducting an information-sharing workshop with businesses.
- Use this to build a bigger and better picture of what business in Sidney looks like now, what it may look like in 6 months, 12 months, etc.
- Council should refer long-term planning to the EAC to look at a long-term strategy.
- BCEDA has developed an economic recovery & resiliency toolkit that would be useful.
- A long-term strategy for economic recovery would help with the OCP review.

Discussion:

G. Cavers: questioned what impact the pandemic will have on the OCP. R. Humble assured that we are moving forward in a modified format but the focus is on a robust, engaging process. A. Verhagen noted that the Town is seeing confidence in the economy with significant numbers of new business licences and few closing.

B. Mikkelsen: Reminded the task force that initiatives should be parallel with other the other 3 pillars - community, culture, economy and anticipating a second wave.

A. Verhagen: Noted that the EOC recommended conducting a second business survey 6 months after the first that was conducted during the pandemic. The outdoor seating areas question could be part of the survey. In regards to budget, we need to identify what it will be used for. The EAC may be a better conduit for this project. Alison also noted that social connection, mental health and community wellbeing are the top factors facing people at this time and that if council approves the business survey, there will be a desire from the community to provide a budget for community wellbeing as well. Advised that there are no immediate plans for follow up survey but would be happy to move forward with it in collaboration with chamber.

D. Warner: Confirmed that businesses taking part in the survey were advised a second would be conducted in about 6 months. It would be advantageous to ask some of the same questions for comparison purposes along with some new. The contractor used for first survey would be good for continuity purposes. Cost of the first survey was for time spent making calls.

R. Humble: Suggest that moving forward, the Task Force my convert into something like SEAG, which has been a highly successful model for information sharing and support.

Moved by David Calveley, seconded by Steve Duck that the Task Force recommends that Council consider providing a budget of \$30,000 to a working group of the Task Force or the EAC to be used as they see necessary to contract, survey, and report on how businesses can be supported in response resiliency and recovery.

CARRIED

Moved by David Calveley, seconded by Denny Warner, that Council task the EAC with preparing and implementing a long-term economic strategy following a detailed planning tool to develop road map.

CARRIED

Next meeting two weeks from today.

5. Adjournment

Moved by G. Cavers, seconded by G. Sol that the meeting be adjourned at 3:45 pm.