

BRUCE MINES AND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Tuesday, May 03 2016 – UNION PUBLIC LIBRARY – 8:00 A.M.
WEBSITE: www.brucemineschamber.com
Email: info@brucemineschamber.com

Present:

Larry Peterson – Peterson & Peterson Law Firm
Jim McCulloch – Retired
Pat Peterson – Bruce Bay Cottages & Lighthouse
Michael Peever – Mae-Ger Treasures
Rick O'Hara – Town Councillor
Brian Torrance – Torrance Custom Interiors
Cheryl MacKay – North Channel Current
Heidi Werner – Wooden Boxes
Lory Patteri – Town Mayor
Michelle Martin – Employment Solutions

Guests:

None

Regrets:

Edith Orr – Desbarats Farmers Market
Lois Hart – Registered Psychotherapist
Arlene Romberg – Wyz-Gyz French Fries

Call to Order:

Michael Peever called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

Past Minutes:

Motion: Larry Peterson + Cheryl MacKay that the minutes of March 01, 2016 as amended and April 05, 2016 be adopted - **carried**

Treasurer's Report:

Motion: Larry Peterson – Jim McCulloch that the Treasurers report be adopted as presented – **carried**

Canada's Centennial 2017:

There is a need to start thinking about the Centennial Celebrations 2017. There is a need for a committee to start working on this project and prepare for funding applications. Mike and Heidi and Jim will start the process.

Motion: Jim McCulloch + Heidi Werner that Heidi Werner, Mike Peever and Jim McCulloch organize a committee for the 2017 Centennial- carried.

Community Day + Cruisin Car show:

Heidi Werner is working with a committee to make Community Day a major event with live bands, games of chance. The Chamber will donate money used for both events.

Volunteer Fair:

What about putting on a volunteer get-together over a BBQ of burgers, etc. and invite the younger (and older) members of the community to come out and get involved.

North Channel Marine Tourism Council:

Jim McCulloch reported the Annual Conference on April 15 & 16, 2016 – it was an excellent meeting. The report is attached to these minutes. Facebook is the major medium but it requires a designated person to update the information – 2 hours a week.

North Channel Marine Tourism Council is planning to develop a Facebook page which Bruce Mines would take advantage of. On average boaters spend \$200.00 per day at port. Jim showed the Marina Shopping Bag with various fliers in it. Jim is also on the Board of Directors.

There is a need to get the local coupons to Jim before May 20th to put into Marina Bags.

T Shirts:

Heidi contacted the 3 suppliers for the T shirts – a supplier has been chosen based on quality and price. The design is the great lakes design with the heart marking Bruce Mines.

Round lettering for *Bruce Mines*
Comment – *nicer than.....*

Motion: Jim McCulloch + Michelle Martin – that the Chamber adopt the above.

Barter in Bruce Mines:

There is a need for more vendors – hours 9:00 – 3:00 p.m.

There is a need for food in the Community Hall – coffee and sweets on an honour system. There are 15 tables already spoken for. Table fees are \$10.00 Set up is this Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. at Community Hall.

Green Expo:

Heidi Werner reported that 48 feet of exclusive dedicated space to Chamber members. The budget is \$200.00 for the booth – banner 72 x 30 - \$125.00 – 2 signs @ \$50.00, table cloths – total budget \$675.00.

Pat said the Chamber has red table skirting which may be useful. The Library may have numerous white table cloths used for the Library Gala.

Motion Pat Peterson + Brian Torrance that the Chamber donate \$675.00 to the Green Expo project - **carried**

***** past minutes which are still relevant *****

Green Expo:

Edith Orr reported on Sat. July 23, 2016 The Green Expo will take place at Johnson Township Community Centre from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m..

The Green Expo originated in 2009 and continued annually through to 2014 to promote exciting environmental projects. In 2015 the organizing committee decided on a new direction and “Sustain Algoma Expo” was born. This fun family event promotes living sustainably and features a diverse variety of exhibitors, kids activities and local food with a focus on sustainable Algoma Communities.

Edith recommended the Chamber purchasing a table to promote numerous businesses and local attractions on the one table. Brian Torrance + Cheryl MacKay + Heidi Werner have agreed to organize this event.

Memberships:

Arlene Romberg reviewed past 4 years of memberships – to date our paid up memberships are ahead of past years – many memberships come in late spring and early summer when businesses open for the season.

PayPal:

We should think about adding a tab to the Chamber website for “paypal” and another tab for “donations” for the business scholarships, etc. Arlene will be in touch with George Cragg about web designs

Marina Brochure:

Jim McCulloch reported and presented the brochure of the Marina. Special thanks to Pat Peterson and George Cragg for their valuable contributions. Special thanks also to Jim McCulloch who did a tremendous amount of work to put the brochure together.

Placemat Project:

Pat Peterson reported that the Town and the Chamber shared an advertisement in the placemat and it has been submitted to Edith Orr. Special thanks to George Cragg for designing the advertisement.

Edith Orr reported that the draft is now going to the designer – there is a need of photos. Pat recommended Edith go to Picassa at Bruce Bay Cottages & Lighthouse for numerous water themed photos.

Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition:

Edith Orr reported on Thurs April 21st Coastal Wetlands in Algoma District

Rydal Bank Historical Society:

Jean Hershey sent in the following report:

The Rydal Bank Historical Society will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 5 at 4:00 at the Rydal Bank Community Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend. Guest Speaker will be Connie Bennett who will relate memories of Rydal Bank and Area and discuss connections to Rydal Bank found in the Bruce Mines Museum.

The meeting will be followed at 5:30 by a Potluck Supper.

The Annual Church Service at the Rydal Bank Church will be June 5 at 7:00. Everyone is invited to attend this service in the beautiful setting of this 108 year old Heritage Building.

Margaret Cameron will officiate at the meeting and Vivian Shuttleworth will play the organ.

Please mark your calendar now.

Algoma Kinniwabi Tourist Association:

Pat Peterson reported there is no report but I believe one advertisement is still not paid for Arlene and Mike were looking into it.

Johnson Farmers Market:

Edith reported that the Town is willing to support this event.

The Bruce Mines Market is mid-week – Wednesday for July and August – some of the Johnson Farmers would be interested in participating in Bruce Mines mid-week and Johnson on Saturdays

Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce:

Pat Peterson reported that the Soo Chamber is now on Facebook to you can “like” them and receive their upcoming events

Grant Application Program: *(post meeting)*

Valerie Harting sent an email to Larry Peterson offering her experience, time and talent is preparing Grant Applications for any organization who wishes to apply. This is one offer the two Historical Societies and the Chamber cannot afford to let slip by.

Arena:

No report

Donation Boxes:

They are in – signs promoting the CASS business student scholarship is being made up.

French Fry:

No report

Artisan Market:

No report

Insurance:

No report

Library

No report

Welcome Package:

No report

GeoThermal:

No report

Policy & Procedures: (old report)

Arlene and Pat have been working on roughing out a Policy and Procedures for the Chamber . Larry reported that he is checking out Abuse Policy from other organizations in order to create a policy for the Chamber.

Web Site: (old report)

Arlene Romberg is working with George Craig on updating the Chamber website.

Membership:

No report

Simpson Mine Shaft:

No report

Bruce Mines Historical Society:

No report

Royal Canadian Legion:

No report

Lions Club:

No report

Executive

President – Arline Connell

Secretary – Carol Rickard

Treasurer – Patsy Golec

Meetings held 1st Thursday of the month from September to June at Light Haven, 7:30pm.

SnoGlyders:

No report

President - Chris McMillan phone number is 705-941-8700 and email anglerchris@bell.net.

Agricultural Society:

No report

Horticultural Society:

No report

2016 officers are: Betty-Jean Smith as President; Paula Matheson as Vice-President and Maggie Willis Secretary-Treasurer. Interesting stats: membership for 2015 = 73 which is 26% higher than previous year AND our volunteer hours increased by 30% - enthusiastic momentum in our group.

North Channel Geocache Event:

No report

ADSAB:

No report

Miscellaneous:

None

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, June 7th, 2016 at the Union Library at 8:00 a.m.

Executive Meeting:

TBA

Adjournment:

At 9:05 a.m.

“Trip Report”

North Channel Marine Tourism Council 29th Annual Conference April 15 & 16, 2016 Blind River, Ontario

Attending to represent Bruce Mines and Bruce Mines Chamber of Commerce, Pat Peterson, Jim McCulloch

Friday evening, Registration & Welcome session:

Introductions by Stan Ferguson (chair):

Stan welcomed all with the positive message that water levels are up, fuel prices are down, and spring breakup has come early. We should be ready for a very busy season. As well, the US/Cdn exchange rate is very favourable, and we should be able to draw tourists from the US in record numbers. All-in-all, this summer is coming together for a very good tourism season on the North Channel!

- Stan introduced Janet Bauer, representing Boating Ontario and Carol Caputo from Algoma Country – Tourism Northern Ontario. Both to give presentations on Saturday.
- Marg Hague gave a quick update on the status of the ‘Shopping Bag’ advertising program. 850 bags produced, 16 sponsors will get bags for distribution and 300 will be stuffed with advertising for Roy Eaton to distribute at the Toronto Boat Show and from Little Current.

Open Discussion:

- Stan raised the issue of US communities outside of the Great Lakes catchment area are seeking permission to draw municipal water supplies from the Great Lakes. (the Waukesha Water Diversion Project) NCMTC will be looking at avenues to support the fight against allowing this, as, even though water levels are presently high, this would set precedent and would be problematic in future low water years.
- Debbie Grant introduced herself, she is a member of Killarney Municipal Council. She shared with the group her ‘good news story’. The Killarney Mountain Lodge owners were preparing for their second season in business, they had increased business at the Killarney Mountain Lodge to double its previous levels and have this year, also purchased the Sportsman’s Inn. They are aggressively advertising and investing in the two signature Killarney resorts and are well on their way to a second record year with reservations well ahead of past years’.
- The MNR has recently (two weeks before the conference) passed regulations that require MNR permits for ALL dock construction and repair. This is in addition to municipal building permit requirements. It appears that dock work is already being delayed because the permits, procedures, costs etc are not yet determined and all work is on hold until the processes are worked out.
- Ken Kennedy related Blind River’s experience with the TSSA inspections of their municipal marina fuel system. Changes demanded by the TSSA cost \$100,000 to bring their fuel system into compliance. While this seems a lot to continue to provide fuel at the marina, it would have cost \$80,000 to remove the system. His caution to other municipalities was that they should be aware of the issues and costs and have funds in reserve for the possible repairs.
- There are identifiable tourism trends, “Package Tours” are becoming more important, “Boaters like to boat with boaters”. There are opportunities if the NCMTC (and others) could pre-package rendezvous, self-guided tours, regattas and packaged travel experiences. This would give us an opportunity to broaden the North Channel focus on the Killarney/Little Current/Benjamin Island core to a broader area, encompassing the whole of the North Shore and Manitoulin Island.

Open Discussions continued through dinner and resumed afterwards with Stan leading a discussion on ‘how can we do better in our marketing?’

- The NCMTC marketing has focused heavily on the “Shopping Bag” for information distribution and on sponsoring Roy Eaton’s presentations at the Toronto Boat Show.

- Carol Hughes noted that the NCMTC is not effectively utilizing existing contacts or networking as well as they could.
- A substantial proportion of the boaters that come to the North Channel, come from the US and the Council's marketing to the US market could be better.
- Today, some 80% of people start their trip-planning on the internet and more effort should be put into internet advertising. (see more on Saturday's Social Media Workshop)

Saturday 16 April

Michael Mantha, MPP Algoma, Manitoulin spoke on:

- His optimism for a very successful season on the North Channel. Water levels, fuel prices and the strong American dollar are all favourable for a strong tourist season. He is hoping for an especially good summer, in part because he will be cruising the North Channel this summer himself.
- His efforts to protect the steel industry
- TSSA issue, recognized that the sometimes 'draconian' enforcement by TSSA inspectors has been a problem. His powers to intercede on the municipality's behalf are limited, but he has sometimes been successful. He urged us to contact him if we were faced with onerous demands from the TSSA regulators, as he may be able to negotiate some additional time to work towards compliance.
- MNR Dock Permitting issue, had not heard of this yet, but would look into it.
- Waukesha Water Diversion Project; this is a request by a community not in the Great Lakes Basin, to draw municipal water from the Great Lakes. There are other water conservation opportunities and alternate sources available to this community, albeit at higher cost, and the government feels that this is just the easy way out for this community and it would be precedent setting, leading to increased low water problems in the future. The provincial government has no official role in the decision making, but he urged the NCMTC and the waterfront communities that could be affected by low water levels to petition the government to defend our water rights and stop diversion of water from the Great Lakes.

Janet Bouer, Boating Ontario

- Directory of Marinas, Boat Dealers, Destinations and Boating Safety is distributed at Ontario and US boat shows
- Boating Ontario is a partner of the Toronto Boat Show, discounts on booths for members
- 'Discover Boating' program designed to get people started in boating, hosting in water event etc.
- 'Student Training' program – designed to provide training and safety courses to students working at summer jobs at private and municipal marinas. Spanish training dates are May 28 & 29.
- Boating Ontario hosts a conference November 27 to 29, in Collingwood for everyone connected with Boating in Ontario; Boat & Engine Manufacturers, Marinas, Tourist Destinations
- Boating Ontario is working to develop tools to accurately measure the economic impact boating in all its forms, there is currently no reliable economic impact tool. Current best estimate is that **\$200 per boat per day** is injected into the local economy in various forms, docking, dining, provisioning & shopping 'hard data' is difficult to obtain and without that, it is difficult to target the right audience and justify advertising expenditures

Bernadette Lindsay, Tourism Northern Ontario (area 13 A, Spanish & East)

- Provided an Overview of Tourism Marketing Efforts of TNO
- Bruce Mines is in area 13B, represented by Carol Caputo
- TNO attends 8 trade shows/year
- Produces advertising campaign, commercials, books distributed at outlets such as Brewer's Retail, under the "Big" badge. i.e. "Big Adventures" "Unbelievably Big, Unbelievably Close"... Major effort to get people from the major population centers (read Toronto) out to Northern Ontario destinations such as the North Channel

Dave Patterson, Social Media Workshop

This was the major presenter at the conference, 80% of today's consumers make travel decisions based on internet searches. Internet presence is by far the most effective and cost effective marketing tool available to tourist destinations. Way too much information on how to accomplish this to summarize here!

- All NCMTC members should use and encourage the use of a common hashtag (ie #northchannel) it creates a 'group' and collects large amounts of content in a common (large) field. Large groups are viewed more often, found more easily and come up more frequently when a search is performed.
- All municipalities / marinas / businesses should have a Facebook page, linked to each other, affiliated businesses and competitors alike. A large group with a lot of connections is more effective in reaching people looking to travel.
- All websites / Facebook pages etc must be updated with the right media on a regular and frequent basis to be effective. There are programs that can schedule your posts to keep sites updated frequently, but it is important that as much content as possible is uploaded at the appropriate times.

The Conference was followed by the **Annual NCMTC Business Meeting**.

- A new Board of Directors was elected (including Jim McCulloch) with Stan Ferguson re-elected as Chair
- Meetings will be held monthly, 1/4ly meetings will be held in Spanish, alternate months will be via teleconference.
- A number of Committees were set up, to look at developing Economic Impact Tools, Marketing and Social Media.