



Minutes of Economic Development and Culture

October 17, 2023, 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
Chair S. Brown, Dufferin Board of Trade
J. Patterson, Orangeville BIA, left at 9 a.m.
J. Small, Public Member
L. Horne, Orangeville Real Estate Board
M. Vinden, Business community, virtual, left at 9:30 a.m.

Staff Present: H. Savage, Gen. Mgr., Community Services
K. Lemire, Mgr., Economic Development & Culture
B. Lusk, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order

Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

2. Disclosures of (Direct or Indirect) Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

2023-016

Moved By J. Patterson

That the minutes of the following meeting are approved:

2023-09-19 Economic Development and Culture Committee Minutes

4. Presentations

4.1 2023 Annual Report - Economic Development and Culture Committee

K. Lemire provided a report on the status of all the Economic Development and Culture office deliverables outlined in the 2023 Work Plan. She said most of the events were now complete except for the upcoming Economic Outlook Breakfast on November 1 and the Orangeville & Area Job Fair taking place on October 17.

K. Lemire said continuous sectoral updates from each of the members provide valuable insight of trends, opportunities and challenges happening in the community which helps the EDC office more effectively address business needs.

She reported that staff continue to review existing communication strategies and tools to use on webpages and social media platforms to improve delivery of initiatives and information to the public.

K. Lemire reported that four local artists attended the unveiling of their work installed on the 2023 Utility Box Public Art collection in October. There are thirty-four utility boxes with art installations since the inception of the program in 2016.

K. Lemire said a report on the accomplishments from the 2023 Work Plan and the committee's proposed Work Plan for 2024 will go to the November 13 Council meeting. She said the committee has an opportunity to highlight the work completed in 2023 and then present plans for 2024 and she asked if a member would be willing to address Council.

Chair S. Brown agreed to speak on behalf of the Economic Development and Culture Committee.

Note: B. Lusk to provide delegation form and support to S. Brown.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

5.1 2024 Work Plan - Economic Development and Culture Committee

K. Lemire presented a draft 2024 Work Plan for consideration of the members. She said the suggested deliverables build on work completed in 2023 and allow for flexibility and improvements in 2024.

She said the EDC office will support the promotion of the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) with the Planning Division taking the leading role. She said the EDC committee representative on the Community Improvement Plan Committee will be expected to provide updates on progress.

K. Lemire said that more business outreach activities to increase engagement with the local business community is a direction that all members can participate in to develop stronger community ties. Pending approval of a 2024 capital request for the development of a new Economic Development and Culture Strategy, outreach may also be tied to strategy development. Members offered ideas to meet with groups by industry sector to initiate relevant discussions about business needs and Town resources.

K. Lemire outlined a tentative 2024 event schedule which includes a Job Fair, an Economic Outlook Breakfast, an Arts and Culture event, and various SBEC events.

Staff and the Arts and Culture Working Group will support utility box artwork installations starting with the annual Call for Artists in Spring, 2024.

K. Lemire said that the Town has a Parks, Special Events and Film Productions By-Law in place now. The development of a Film Permit application process is underway and is expected to launch in 2024 to encourage filming in Orangeville. She stated that establishing a process with improved communications will provide better service.

J. Small said that film production agencies appreciate the convenience of a one-stop shop application that provides a quick turn-around and that fees are acceptable to cover added services. She also said that film productions provide positive tourism and economic development spin-offs to the community.

5.2 Skilled Trades

Members discussed opportunities to introduce young people to available career choices in the skilled trades field.

S. Brown said that Dufferin Board of Trade will host a Dream Dufferin Career Pathways event on November 9 targeted at introducing grade 8 and high school students to job options in skilled trades.

L. Horne said that if students were given an opportunity to see inside the businesses in the area, they may better understand their options and consider local careers in skilled trades.

K. Lemire said that the Work Force Planning Board offered an annual Manufacturing Day program that bussed students to tour local companies. She said during Covid, virtual tours became available.

J. Small said that small businesses struggle with the costs associated with training and the reduced production of hiring unskilled labour.

H. Savage said that the provincial government has introduced a new mandatory technological education credit for Ontario high school students that are entering grade nine in September 2024.

5.3 Member updates

J. Patterson said that the BIA Board is reviewing parking lot developments as property owners face an increase in the BIA tax levy. He said the Board will discuss a proposal for rezoning of 55, 65 and 75 Fourth Avenue (Fairgrounds property).

J. Patterson reported that a meeting with members of the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival, and Council representatives discussed the expected attendance of the event celebrating the twentieth anniversary in 2024. They addressed concerns for increased safety measures and support for downtown businesses.

J. Andrews said that Council is reviewing a draft budget for 2024, and explained the potential increase due to absolute requirements and infrastructure needs will be strategically assessed in the community's best interests, but that an increase is inevitable.

J. Andrews reported that Council has identified two rail spur properties near Centennial Road as surplus land and potentially available for sale.

J. Andrews said the Homelessness Task Force acknowledges the absence of affordable housing. He said that solution-based amendments to the Official Plan come with servicing implications when building tiny homes or allowing additional units on residential properties.

H. Savage said that two Official Plan amendments will soon be presented to Council introducing up to three garden units on residential properties. She said the Province supports developers with new incentives, but the developers do not necessarily pass the savings onto the homeowners.

Municipalities are challenged to maintain services due to the loss of the development charges that are waived for the developers.

S. Brown said that the DBOT partnered with Dufferin County tourism to create videos that will promote area businesses and the available Hub space.

S. Brown reported a successful Play Local Golf Tournament organized by DBOT in August.

He said Dream Dufferin Career Pathways on November 9 is a new event combining the Dream Dufferin Skilled Trades show and Career Pathways to highlight in-demand careers to Dufferin youth.

L. Horne said currently there are ninety residential listings on the market making this the highest inventory at any one time in recent years. She said of eleven condominiums for sale, there are two with conditional sales.

She said that borrowers are paying \$600 for every \$100K borrowed at the current mortgage rates. L. Horne said that agents require higher security deposits when making an offer of sale on behalf of their clients.

She said there is a low supply of rental units for both residential and commercial properties. Residential leases range in price from \$1,600 to \$3,900 per month.

J. Small said that the Canadian Arts Presentation Fund (CAPF) has reduced funding back to 2018 levels across Canada. Municipalities will no longer get as much funding to support all festival requests. She said festivals such as the Orangeville Blues and Jazz will need to budget themselves to be more sustainable in future.

J. Andrews said the economic impact from a festival is something that is considered when reviewing applications for municipal funding support.

M. Vinden said the repayment deadline for businesses who received CEBA loans during the pandemic is extended to January 18, 2024 for partial loan forgiveness.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Announcements

B. Lusk provided two options suggested by the Clerks Division to fill the vacant position on the Economic Development and Culture Committee.

Note: Clerks will be advised that the Chair and Vice Chair would like to review the existing applications to fill the committee vacancy.

8. Date of Next Meeting

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.