

Big White Chamber of Commerce Meeting Minutes
Wednesday 15th October 2014 – 5.00pm

Board Present:

David Webb (President)
Michael J Ballingall (Past President)
Mark Lofquist (Vice-President)
Jude Brunt (Secretary)
Marie Martin (Director)

Apologies

Leanne Foster
Don Hickson

Agenda:

Welcome Guests

Welcome to all guests, new guests from businesses Accurate Translations, Mountain Medical, Frosted Snowflakes, Snoday Skis and Board, Bean Scene at Big White, Property Care and Maintenance, ICare Property Maintenance, Peter McLeod, Billy's Waterworks,

Minutes Agreed at Last Meeting

Motioned by Mark - Seconded by Marie - All agreed.

Matters Arising from Minutes

No Matters that are not on the agenda.

Presentation by Angela Nagy, CEO – Green Step Solutions

The presentation by Angela from Green Step Solutions program was funded through BC Hydro and Fortis, she presented a free program for any commercial operations in Big White to have a energy assessments and reports on how to save energy.

The businesses that have signed up for this process next week are Happy Valley Day Lodge, VCM, Globe, and Blarney Stone. There will be qualified assessors to visit your business to assess how they can implement energy savings, report on how you can easily make the changes within your business. There are assessments for Water Tanks and boiler systems in residential properties and rebates are available. If you are interested in having your business assessed next week there is a sign up sheet to have someone visit your business. Property Managers and Strata Managers are also applicable for this program, so the assessors can visit the property on behalf of the owners.

Presentation by Bill Baird, Regional Director, Area E (TBC)

Deferred – Date TBA. Bill Baird is the representative for our area – there are 3 candidates standing for the November elections. Bill was going to attend our meeting today however he did not make it to Big White. The Chamber of Commerce have been approached by one of the other candidates and she is coming to Big White to visit next Wednesday – Jude will try to arrange for the 3rd representative to also visit Big White so we can speak to both candidates about how they can assist Big White.

Big White Chamber of Commerce has made a commitment to raise awareness of the elections and take it from 30 votes from Big White to a bigger number of votes - Non-Resident Property Owners CAN vote in this district – there will be forms on the Chamber of Commerce Website to download to vote in this district.

Correspondence

Correspondence from Peter Plimmer is in a point later in the meeting.

Reports:

Presidents Report

Nothing to report

Treasurer's Report

Apologies from Don, however we do have a report.

We have a balance of \$10,000 in the bank.

We have \$175 incoming this month, more members joined today.

Not a lot of action from last month in the treasurer's report - we have a future focus on cash flow and new members for this year.

Membership Report

We have 6 new applications this month

Kelowna & District Adaptive Sports Program - Powder Hounds

Snoday Sports – Custom made Ski and Boards.

Frosted Snowflakes

Peter McLoed Real Estate

Mountain Medicals

Accurate Translations

Motion to approve by Michael, seconded by Marie all approved.

Marketing Report

All members are listed on the website www.Bigwhitechamber.com please check your business on the website and let us know if you have any changes or up to date images etc.

We did have a log in password to view minutes of the meetings – we have removed that password so everyone can now view all minutes.

First breakfast meeting will be the last weekend of November and will be in a rotating location, to be announced.

Tourism Big White Society Update - Michael

The Tourism board consists of 5 board members, Jude, Mark, Michael, David and John.

The main incentive of the Tourism board for last season was to be able to collect the 2% hotel tax, this was collected last season and will also be collected this season.

The funds collected so far have been allocated, funds have gone towards Toronto Ski Show, a Gas Card promotion - if you book in the month of December you have a promotion to get \$25, \$50 & \$75 gas cards. Monies have also been used for the public transportation etc

Public Transport at Big White – Michael

Last season we were close to receiving funds from the government to run the Public Transportation. We were refused on the basis that if Greenwood or Rock Creek DID apply then the funds would have to go to those areas first! We believe that we should be able to receive funds and would like to be able to secure public transport for Big White all year round. Safety of the public is our main concern. Maybe we could have people send in photos of people walking on the roads in dangerous situations for further proof of the need for safe public transport.

New PR Agency – Business “story starters” needed – Jude

Tourism Big White along with Big White – Sam Geer from Avenue Communications has been appointed. Sam is very keen to start promoting Big White and get enthusiasm flowing for people to visit Big White particularly in December targeting Lower mainland and Washington area. Sam has a fresh view of the area and is promoting Big White from a Tourism perspective. Any story starter ideas please put forward. If you have a story then please submit by October 29th 3.30pm – Fees for PR are \$135 per hour so be prepared, proactive and timely. Content is the word of the world right now so we need well-prepared content. She is very tourism based however she has different angles – so who is interested in hearing about your story. We have to do our homework and get our stories in.

Online Events Platform for Big White - Michael

The events platform has been remodeled so Bigwhite.com will be reaching out to for more information on the events taking place in Big White. We have a focus of getting people out of their condos and out to the businesses. The new ticketing system will be in operation it is a system that will be automatic; you go through gates that open if your ticket is valid and Lift operators will check who you are on a screen in the ski huts. You will be able to renew your tickets online. We have very good relationships with Telus therefore we have very good internet service so we can now have a service that can handle 80,000 people on big event nights like New Years Eve.

Job Fair October 27th/28th –Jude

Just a reminder that the Chamber of Commerce does have a table at the Job Fair – this will be free of charge for the Chamber members to advertise for staff.

Christmas at Big White – Calendar of Events – Jude/Addy

There has been a Sub-Committee that consists of Addy, Jude and Theresa where they are creating a Christmas calendar of Events – Mainly a celebration of Trees and The Advent Calendar of Savings! Any business who would like to take part are to contact Jude.

Any business who would like to be involved is welcome to join in, you can have any theme to decorate your Christmas tree. If you have a business that you would like to promote and you don't have a business frontage there will be room for 4 businesses to have a Christmas tree to decorate in the VCM.

The Advent Calendar of Savings - There will be a free service offered on that day for the advert calendar. What would you like to promote as a free service and what date you would like to give your free service, this will be promoted via all the media streams so it could promote a lot of business – be ready!

The Christmas Eve Parade will go ahead as usual, if your business would like to be in the parade please inform Addy.

End of Season Operation vs Shutdown - Michael

This problem is not a new problem – we close the resort due to lack of interest not lack of snow – now that we have a Big White Tourism society one of our focuses is to fill the shoulder seasons.

By April we are up against the ski/board snow festival in Whistler, spring activities and other resorts. The lift companies will not put energy into promoting Spring events unless the community supports the lift company and puts some effort into this. We need restaurants and other businesses to support the shoulder seasons and be prepared to have full menus available etc. We need to find out how the community would support a shoulder season. Suggestions from the community – The Chamber should monitor which restaurants are willing to support the community in the shoulder season. Ideas are the Beer Festival, school ski camps, ski/golf or ski/bike for the spring. The Chamber will organize a meeting with the restaurants to find out how much support they are willing to give.

Big White Staff Orientation session for Chamber Staff - Jude

Happy Valley normally hosts a staff orientation for all Big White Staff and hosts another event, which is open to all staff members. This year the Staff Orientation event will only be available to Chamber businesses and their staff and there will be a cost of \$5.00 per person. This promotes the mountain and creates excitement with the new staff members who are not familiar with the mountain. This year the

event will be on November 25th – contact Emily Oxley with numbers of how many people you would like to send to the orientation.

Summer 2015 – what and when can we start promoting? Michael

The lift company is going into the mountain bike business so we have to deliver what we promise for the area – Big White Lift Company is spending serious money creating bike paths – Michael J says we are not sure as yet what the promise will be, however we know there will be a lift open and a beginner 11km bike trail and hiking trails. We are not sure as yet what we can actually promise but we are working on what we will be able to offer in regards to summer business. We need to collate the interest with our community and mountain businesses to see who is willing to commit to what in regards to the summer opening.

David visited Whistler to go biking to see what the experience was, the queues for lifts were massive; this is a win for most businesses to be open in the summer. We will work on promoting this.

One of Big White Lift Company plans is to have a destination resort hockey skating rink/operation in the future to have hockey camps at Big White. It is a multimillion dollar project which we would like to pursue however where do we receive the funding? This is a project for future discussion.

Community Hall Project – David/Jude

At the last meeting we put forward an idea of having a community hall project – The chamber wrote to Peter Plimmer to ask for permission to look at this project. Peter is in favor of this project; we just need to give more information and more of an idea what we are looking at. This can be reported at the next meeting.

Location of Church – Michael

There are around 50 people looking for church services at Big White so we need to find an area for people to have a service. Previous venues are no longer available for one reason or another – another good reason for a Community Hall and Service Area!

This season is proving difficult to find a venue, however we are aware that we need to be respectful - any ideas please submit to the chamber.

Opening Season Chamber Event – Michael

Chamber of Commerce in Kelowna has business after hours and breakfasts so Michael thinks we should have a chamber event as a meet and greet and mingle. There is always a need for as much communication as possible, so we should start with a mingler; November 17th is a 10 year anniversary for the Chamber of Commerce so this is for the businesses on the mountain. The board will put a date, structure and time together and advise...possibly December 1st.

China Strategy – Michael

Emerging markets in China and there are tremendous opportunities to come from China and they are skiers. So we have an emerging market that we could look at marketing opportunities and should look at this. As a community and Chamber of Commerce we should look at how we are going to promote this – are we going to have business signs in different languages? It costs a lot of money to promote to a foreign market so we have to understand what people think about this and think about a strategy to invite this in the future.

Any Other Business

We would like to create top 10 list of questions to present to the election candidates – forum 7pm next Wednesday. If we can pull this off this will be an open forum so we will let you know as soon as possible. This will be an open forum for the whole community not just members.

From the community we would like to know if you would like a Christmas tree let Jude know, PR stories and Job Fair information for the 27th.

Next meeting is set for Wednesday 19th November at 5pm.

Meeting closed at 6.25 PM