

Disclaimer: These minutes were prepared as a reasonable summary of the essential content of this meeting, not as a transcription.



Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting

February 6, 2025, 2:00 PM

Meadows Room

12007 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 2B5

Voting Members: C. Ameli
R. Baldiconza*
K. Bathurst
R. D'Souza
P. Gordon
C. Hamm*
T. Hopcott
J. Kok, RM Chamber of Commerce Representative
S. Robinson*

Council Liaisons: Councillor Evans
Councillor Meachen (Alternate)

Regrets: L. Hall
A. Jaschke
K. Marion

Guests: J. Hientz – Executive Director, Fraser North Farmers Market Society
P. Price – Executive Director, BC Blueberry Council
E. Rodriguez – Marketing & Public Relations Manager, BC Blueberry Council

Staff: C. O'Byrne, Manager of Planning (Chair)

Recording Clerk: T. McCaw, Administrative Services Supervisor

1. CALL TO ORDER

C. O'Byrne, Manager of Planning, acknowledged with respect and gratitude that the City of Pitt Meadows is located on the traditional, unceded territory of ᑭᑭᑭᑭ (Katzie) First Nation who were stewards of this land since time immemorial.

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM.

2. LATE ITEMS

5.3 - Buy Local Promotional Idea

5.4 - Local Agricultural/Economic Matters

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the February 6, 2025 Economic Development Advisory Committee agenda as amended.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

There was general consent amongst the Committee to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2024 Economic Development Advisory Committee as amended.

C. Ameli - added into Regrets column for Oct. 3rd meeting.

**R. Baldiconza joined the meeting at 2:07 pm.*

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Blueberry Festival

Economic Development Advisory Committee members and invited guests P. Price, Executive Director, BC Blueberry Council [BCBC], E. Rodriguez, Marketing and Public Relations Manager [BCBC], and J. Hientz – Executive Director, Fraser North Farmers Market Society [FNFMS] discussed the level of interest in a local Blueberry Festival and whether there are community members or organizations that would be interested in organizing and coordinating the event.

Some of the highlights included:

- Support was given by the BCBC & the FNFMS for the idea of hosting a Blueberry Festival in Pitt Meadows;
- BC Blueberry Council noted their ability to provide supporting materials and contact information for packers, distributors and growers for this event; and

- Comments and details were shared around Berry Fest in Abbotsford and ways to host a Blueberry Festival in Pitt Meadows.

** S. Robinson exited the meeting at 2:10 PM*

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- Questions were raised around the suggested timing for a festival (P. Price suggested the end of August – beginning of September which would allow for more products available for purchase);
- Questions were raised around public outreach through the BCBC (P. Price confirmed that they typically focus on growers, packers, and exporters);
- Discussions were held around possible locations and which day of the week could work best as well as potentially coordinating an event with the farmer’s market (J. Hientz indicated the FNFMS may be able to help organize a pop-up blueberry-oriented farmer’s market on a Sunday);
- Questions were raised around the Berry Fest in Abbotsford, the size, potential costs, and sponsorship;
- Branding, marketing, budget, costs, and the overall purpose of the event was discussed;
- Questions were raised around the level of support from local growers and packing houses; and
- Discussions were held around the next steps with the Committee in support of a working group to refine the scope and planning for a Blueberry Festival.

** S. Robinson rejoined the meeting at 2:24 PM*

5.2 Engagement & Priorities Committee Meeting

C. O’Byrne, Manager of Planning, presented an overview of a potential April Engagement and Priority Committee [EPC] meeting topic regarding tourism in Pitt Meadows.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- The suggestion was made that golf courses, biking, agri-tourism, paddling, the Airport and the new aviation museum be added into the EPC topics;

- A recommendation as made to connect with the Parks department in order to gather usage statistics and locations of visitor hotspots; and
- Various ways for promoting tourism and economic growth in the community were discussed.

5.3 Buy Local Promotion Idea

C. O'Byrne, Manager of Planning, led an open discussion on ideas to encourage residents to buy local products and support local businesses.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- A question was raised around the expected launch date for the new online directory of businesses in Pitt Meadows (Staff confirmed that the directory will be come available in the next few weeks - ideally finalized in March);
- A suggestion was made that Committee members could personally share online through various social media platforms posts supporting local businesses in Pitt Meadows; and
- Questions were raised around how many businesses licences the City has issued, if there has been an increase or decrease in numbers, and what the industrial vacancy rate was for commercial spaces (Staff confirmed that there has been an increase of issued business licences since last year and that the vacancy rate is low for industrial spaces within the community).

5.4 Agricultural/Economic Matters

C. O'Byrne, Manager of Planning introduced the topic brought forward by Committee member S. Robinson encouraging members to provide thoughts and feedback.

The Committee participated in a discussion with the following main themes noted:

- A question was raised around the recent increases in Development Cost Charges [DCC's] that have been implemented by Metro Vancouver;
- Taxation, income tax, and increased costs to local farmers were discussed; and

* C. Hamm - exited the meeting at 3:36 PM

- The North Lougheed Area, redevelopment in the urban core, and infill development was discussed as ways to increase and diversify the local tax base (Staff confirmed that the Harris Road Complete Street Feasibility Study will be shared with this City committee for input).

5.5 EDAC Action Item Tracker

C. O'Byrne, Manager of Planning, provided an overview on the Action Item Tracker.

The Committee did not engage in any further comments or discussions on this agenda item.

5.6 EDAC Application Tracker

C. O'Byrne, Manager of Planning, provided an update on the Application Tracker.

The Committee did not engage in any further comments or discussions on this agenda item.

5.7 2025 Committee Recruitment & Membership Expiration

T. McCaw, Administrative Services Supervisor, provided a verbal overview on the 2025 Committee Recruitment Campaign, highlighting applications will be accepted online or in person at City Hall from January 27th - February 23rd with openings on seven (7) different City committees.

The Committee did not engage in any further comments or discussions on this agenda item.

6. ROUNDTABLE

The Committee participated in a roundtable discussion. There were no formal motions or recommendations put forward.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM

*The next **Economic Development Advisory Committee** meeting is scheduled for **April 3, 2025 at 2:00 PM.***

Certified as correct:

Tatiana McCaw,

Administrative Services Supervisor