

DISTRICT OF SOOKE

Sooke Economic Development Commission

Meeting 34, April 8, 2009
7:00 p.m. Municipal Meeting Room

Committee Members Present:

Councillor Herb Haldane
Wayne Nowak
Scott Gertsma
Jeannette Wilford
Bryan Mooney

Absent: Councillor Sheila Beech, Alexander Chandler

Staff: Evan Parliament, Chief Administrative Officer
Lisa Urlacher, Council Clerk
John Zarembo (Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce)

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with the addition of the following:

- Sooke Adventure School – Scott Taylor
- Greater Victoria Development Agency

2. Scott Taylor, owner of 5549 Sooke Road, expressed concerns as to commercial property taxes and asked for consideration of a tax break for the portion of the property that is operating the Sooke Adventure School. It was explained that the School program operates seven months of the year and that the remainder of the year that portion of the property operates under Rush Adventures. A discussion ensued involving questions from the Commission and Staff. After discussion the Commission agreed to the following recommendation:

MOVED by Mr. Gertsma, seconded to direct staff to write a letter to BC Assessment Authority supporting a review of the property classification based on the property's type and use attributable to each class. **Staff**

CARRIED

Ms. Wilfred will contact an arbitrator at BCAA for more information as to the process of appealing property classification. **Jeanette**

Mr. Parliament stated that he would investigate how the adventure school is taxed in Squamish. **Evan**

Mr. Taylor discussed the concept of floating yurt development with the Commission.

Mr. Nowak asked staff to add the Sooke Adventure School link to the Advantage Sooke website. **Lisa**

3. **Adoption of Minutes:**

The minutes of March 25, 2009 were approved as amended on page 1.

Business arising from minutes:

Survey Question

The Commission discussed the business survey and asked that staff investigate the email contacts from the business license data base and that the Chamber distribute the survey via Survey Monkey to their membership. Mr. Zarmebea will investigate additional distribution through a mail-out or the Sooke News Mirror. After discussion the Commission agreed to add the following additional question to the business survey:

**Lisa
Alexander
John**

- What can the Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce do to help businesses succeed in Sooke?

District Staff Meeting

The Commission members provided positive feedback as to the meeting with the District of Sooke development Staff and asked that similar meetings be scheduled 2-3 times annually.

Lisa

The commission suggested that a News Release issued by the chair be sent out in regards to the SEDC/Staff meeting and that a new industrial park is pending.

Lisa

4. **2009 Workplan / Budget**

The Commission discussed the draft work plan and budget and the following two items were added to the Measurable and achievable work plan for 2009:

- Schedule a meeting with Development Services staff at the District of Sooke 2-3 times annually.
- Create an orientation package for Sooke Economic Development Commission members.

The Commission agreed to forward the 2009 Workplan / Budget to Council.

To Council

5. **Town Site Inspection (Senior Housing Developers)**

The Commission discussed targeting retirement residence facilities for independent, supportive and assisted living and agreed by consensus to the following:

To direct staff to draft a letter to distribute to Senior Housing Developers as to opportunities in Sooke and arrange tours with appropriately zoned land owners. Flight and accommodation will be negotiated. The Commission asked to be consulted via E-mail.

Staff

The committee asked that Ayre Manor Society be consulted regarding assistance. It was suggested that David Stocks be invited to an upcoming meeting. **Lisa**

The Commission asked that a Press Release be announced regarding the SEDC initiative. **Staff**

The Commission asked that Ayre Manor be features on the Advantage Sooke Website. **Lisa**

The Commission discussed the opportunity to invite Educational Institutes to view potential development sites.

The Commission discussed a site portfolio for the film industry and it was noted to consider advertising in a film magazine. **Lisa**

The Commission asked that the film policy be brought forward for discussion at an upcoming meeting. **Lisa**

7. Greater Victoria Development Agency

Mr. Parliament provided an overview of the GVDA. The GVDA facilitates and promotes development in Greater Victoria and strongly support regional Economic Development. Mr. Parliament explained that Sooke has two very marketable areas; High-Tech and Marine Industrial. Mr. Parliament stated that he has volunteered to help the GVDA with regional logistics. The Commission discussed the type of occupants at the Vancouver Island Technology Park and asked staff to invite Dale Gann, Vice-President to meet with the SEDC. **Staff**

Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Certified by:

Scott Gertsma
Chair

Evan Parliament
Chief Administrative Officer