

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, July 22, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee convened on Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:	Councillor Chris Wilson, Chair (arrived 7:27 p.m.) Councillor Brent Asmundson, Vice Chair Marko Dekovic Lillian Kan Cody Muhle Mladen Plecko Njeri Watkins (arrived 7:25 p.m.) Georgiy Sekretaryuk Michael Hind, Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce
REGRETS:	Catherine Williams, Douglas College Coquitlam Campus Kathy Banner Emma Friess J. Brad Marko Kevin Volz Araz Rismani
STAFF:	Jim McIntyre, General Manager Planning and Development Danny Bandiera, Manager Information and Communication Technology Curtis Scott, Acting Manager Economic Development Eric Kalnins, Tourism Manager Brent Galpin, Telecom Services Manager Ashland Selby-Brown, Information Clerk

Councillor Asmundson, assumed the role of Chair at this time (7:00 p.m.).

CALL TO ORDER

1. Welcome and Roundtable of Reintroductions

The Chair welcomed returning members and called upon the General Manager Planning and Development to introduce the Acting Manager Economic Development.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2. Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, March 4, 2020

The Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

3. QNet Fibre to Business Pilot

The Manager Information and Communications Technology provided introductory comments relative to the QNet strategy to support Coquitlam's businesses.

The Telecom Services Manager provided a presentation entitled "QNet Fibre to the Business Pilot" and referred to slides titled as follows:

- What is QNet?
- How does QNet Work?
- QNet Today
- What is the QNet Fibre to the Business (FTTB) Strategy?
- FTTB Pilot
- FTTB Business Pilot – Mayfair Pacific Reach Industrial Park
- Next Steps

The Manager Information and Communications Technology provided a presentation entitled "Free Public Wi-Fi" and referred to slides titled as follows:

- Background
- 19 Parks & Civic Facilities with Free Wi-Fi
- Next Steps

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The desire to recognize the positive impact of free public Wi-Fi on the community
- The desire to compare the cost of the current and the upgraded park Wi-Fi strategies
- The desire to provide enhanced Wi-Fi availability at a fair cost for local businesses
- The desire to explore the cost effectiveness of free public Wi-Fi
- Concerns with respect to providing fibre to areas not in the current business pilot
- The understanding that QNet was adopted into the Information, Communications and Technology Department and falls under the City of Coquitlam's management
- The details of the business pilot in comparison to similar initiatives of other municipalities
- The desire to reduce capital expenditures and reduce lease rates for local businesses requiring enhanced Wi-Fi availability
- The desire to utilize existing street light infrastructure to reduce costs
- The desire to partner with developers to determine business requirements and measures to reduce the cost of fibre implementation
- The desire to determine the cost of implementation for a new business
- The desire to determine if significant cost saving is sufficient as an incentive for new businesses to locate to Coquitlam
- The desire to determine if a cost reduction is available only to current Coquitlam businesses or if it is also available to businesses who relocate

- The belief that QNet availability is an incentive attract high-tech business ventures to locate to Coquitlam
- Concern with respect to the belief that Coquitlam lacks office space
- The desire to focus on industrial business locations with multiple tenants

Njeri Watkins joined the meeting at this time (7:25 p.m.).

Councillor Wilson joined the meeting at this time (7:27 p.m.).

- The desire to explore areas of expansion after the pilot period
- The desire to focus on underserved areas to enhance business capabilities
- The desire to allow areas without access to fibre to have cost effective access

Councillor Wilson assumed the role of Chair at this time (7:33 p.m.).

4. Approved 2020 EDAC Work Plan – Fresh Perspectives Commentary

The Acting Manager Economic Development provided introductory comments relative to the status and priority of each item in the Approved 2020 Economic Development Advisory Committee Work Plan.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The desire to determine a timeline to address outstanding work plan items
- Support for the work of the Technology Sub-Committee

5. Economic Development COVID-19 Action Plan & Committee Roundtable

The Acting Manager Economic Development and the Tourism Manager provided introductory comments relative to the action plan to support Coquitlam's local businesses amongst evolving COVID-19 health regulations and provided a presentation entitled "Economic Development COVID-19 Action Plan & Committee Roundtable" and referred to slides titled as follows:

- Agenda
- Who Responded?
- Business Size
- COVID-19 Impacts
- What Did We Hear
- Supporting Business Recovery: Communication, Promotion & Marketing
- Temporary Patio Expansion Opportunities
- Local Business Spotlight & Awareness
- Canada Day & Summer Concert Series Promotion
- Local Consumer Behavior Research
- Questions & Roundtable Discussion

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The impact of COVID-19 on Committee Members
- The desire for alternative action plan initiatives that are informed by community input
- Concern regarding typical work culture transitions into remote work atmospheres

- The belief that the alternative City programming that has been made available to residents has had a positive impact
- The impact of COVID-19 on mental health
- The different work place dynamics adopted during COVID-19
- The desire for satellite office space to entice businesses to locate to Coquitlam
- Concerns related to a possible reduction in the demand for office space with the promotion of remote work
- Concerns related to mental health and isolation when working from home
- Survey results from local Coquitlam businesses with respect to post pandemic business plans
- The distribution of remote work opportunity availability between larger and smaller businesses
- Concerns related to transitioning employees between work and home
- The desire to encourage businesses to reduce commuting by utilizing satellite office space
- The belief that corporate culture and workplace socialization is important
- The desire to facilitate an open forum discussion of the challenges faced during COVID-19 by local business owners
- The desire for an open opportunity to share and engage local businesses on their ideas and solutions during COVID-19
- Concerns with respect to the belief that employees of large corporations prefer to receive CERB payments rather than return to work

6. Sub-Committee Check-in / Discussion for Next Meeting

The Chair provided introductory comments relative to the Committee Members who previously expressed interest in the Technology Sub-Committee and opened discussion for any other potential Committee Members who would like to volunteer to participate.

In addition to the individuals who volunteered to participate on the Technology Sub-Committee on March 4, 2020, Georgiy Sekretaryuk volunteered to participate on the Sub-Committee.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The potential for the Sub-Committee to coordinate a meeting separate from the Economic Development Advisory Committee
- The desire to change the primary focus of the Sub-Committee as a result of COVID-19

OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair invited Committee Members to openly discuss any additional items.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The desire to share educational opportunities that arose during the pandemic
- The desire to explore the technological solutions developed in response to the challenges presented by the pandemic

- The desire to recognize the ICT department in their efforts to support remote work
- The adjustments made to further support online services at Coquitlam City Hall
- The efficient technological response by staff members
- The desire to continue to improve technological advancement within the City

NEXT MEETING DATE – November 25, 2020

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFIED CORRECT

CHAIR

Ashland Selby-Brown
Information Clerk