

WestShore Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting
WorkLink Employment Society
Wednesday November 16, 2022 at 5:00 pm
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

- 1) Call to Order Ingrid Vaughan
 - Having established that a quorum of members was present, Vice-President Ingrid Vaughan called the AGM to order at 5:15 pm and invited Executive Director Julie Lawlor to speak

- 2) Acknowledge Coast Salish Nations Julie Lawlor
 - Julie acknowledged with gratitude that the activities of the WestShore Chamber of Commerce take place on the traditional and unceded territories of the Esquimalt & Songhees Nations, the Sc'ianew Nation and the T'Souke Nation

- 3) Approval of the Agenda Ingrid Vaughan
 - a) Motion for approval

Motion to approve the Agenda:

Moved: Paula Blazina, Coastal Community Credit Union

Seconded: Kelly Darwin, Seriously Creative/Hawke Media Canada

Motion: Carried

- 4) Minutes of 2021 AGM Ingrid Vaughan
 - a) Having presented the minutes of the 2021 AGM, Ingrid asked for a motion for approval

Motion to approve the Minutes of the 2021 AGM:

Moved: Lori Frank, Lori Frank Mediation & Consulting

Seconded: JRR (Reg) Létourneau, Island Tigers Energy Corporation

Motion: Carried

- 5) Minutes of August 17, 2022 members' meeting Ingrid Vaughan
 - a) Having presented the minutes of the August 17, 2022 members' meeting, Ingrid asked for a motion for approval

Motion to approve Minutes of the August 17, 2022 members' meeting:

Moved: Paula Blazina, Coastal Community Credit Union

Seconded: Janelle Anderson, Combined Insurance

Motion: Carried

- 6) 2021 Financials Dana Adams, Fleming and Company
- a) Dana Adams presented the 2021 financials, speaking of the WestShore Chamber's financial position. The WestShore Chamber was eligible to access the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and the Canada Emergency Business Account. These programs largely offset the Chamber's 2021 operational deficit of \$36,930, with a resulting shortfall of just \$414.00 of revenue over expenses.

Following Dana's presentation, Ingrid asked for a motion to approve the 2021 financials.

Motion to approve the 2021 financials:

Moved: Mike Reilly, Gaining Altitude Financial

Seconded: Janelle Anderson, Combined Insurance

Motion: Carried

- 7) Report on 2022 Financials, year to date Clark Lawrence
- Treasurer Clark Lawrence provided an update on the Chamber's progress in 2022 to September 30th (Appendix One).
- a) After presenting the 2022 Financials to September 30, Clark called for a motion to appoint Fleming and Company for the 2022 review engagement

Motion to appoint Fleming and Company for the 2022 review engagement:

Moved: Paula Blazina, Coastal Community Credit Union

Seconded: Janelle Anderson, Combined Insurance

Motion: Carried

- 8) Report on 2022, year to date Julie Lawlor
- Please see Appendix Two below for the Executive Director's report.

- 9) President's Annual Remarks Ingrid Vaughan
- Please see Appendix Three below for the President's report.

- 10) Nomination of 2023 Directors Ingrid Vaughan
- a) Acknowledgement of departing directors
- Ingrid acknowledged and thanked those directors who were finishing their terms at December 31st: Sarah Alasaly (not present), Michele Hansen (not present), and Annette Siewertsen. Ingrid also acknowledged those directors who had left earlier in 2022: Paula Blazina, Chris Burdge, and Rachelle Dallaire (not present).
- b) Acknowledgement of 2022 directors standing for election
- Ingrid acknowledged current directors Janelle Anderson, Kelly Darwin Vice-President Elect, Adam French, Lori Frank Secretary Elect, Clark Lawrence Treasurer Elect, JRR (Reg) Létourneau, Winston Michell, Mike Reilly, and Ingrid Vaughan President Elect who are standing for election for 2023.
- c) Introduction of 2023 new nominees
- Ingrid introduced new nominees Linda Mackie, James Ramsbottom and Danica Straith.

d) Motion to elect 2023 directors

Motion to elect 2023 directors:

Moved: Sheila Airey, RDF Group

Seconded: Paula Blazina, Coastal Community Credit Union

Motion: Carried

11) Swearing in of Directors

Doug Kobayashi, Mayor of Colwood

Mayor Kobayashi asked the Directors to repeat an oath to faithfully and truly carry out their responsibilities as Directors. [This oath was taken from the bylaws, which date back to the WestShore Chamber's incarnation as the Juan de Fuca and District Chamber.]

12) Any Other Business

Ingrid Vaughan

Having established that there was no other business, Ingrid called for a Motion to Adjourn.

Motion to Adjourn:

Moved: Kelly Darwin, Tabatha Golat, WorkLink Employment Society

Seconded: Annette Siewertsen, SeaStar Coaching/RRU

Motion: Carried

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm

Ingrid Vaughan, President

Julie Lawlor, Executive Director

Appendix One

Treasurer's Report

I have served as Treasurer for the Westshore Chamber for the past two years and have the pleasure of presenting the Chamber's year-to-date financials to the end of September 2022.

Financial and Cash Flow Position:

I would like to start by thanking Julie and her team for their good work this year under what continue to be challenging circumstances.

I am pleased to report that the Chamber remains in a stable financial and cash flow position following the pandemic, with assets totaling \$197,000 at September 30, 2022. An increase of nearly \$10,000 from the same date last year.

Assets

Of the \$197,000 assets balance, approximately \$143,000 is cash on hand. However, it is important to also note that of this cash balance, \$60,000 comes from a Federal Canada Emergency Business Account Loan. The Chamber plans to pay back \$40,000 of this loan by the end of 2023, at which time we expect the remaining \$20,000 of the original loan advanced will be forgiven. Of this loan forgiveness, \$10,000 was reported as income in each of the 2020 and 2021 financial statements.

Liabilities

The Chamber's liabilities, excluding the CEBA loan, totaled \$90,000 at the end of September 2022, as compared with \$65,000 at the same time last year. The increase is due primarily to a greater amount of unearned membership revenue being held at year end which will be recognized as revenue in future months when earned as services are provided.

Revenues

Year to date, overall revenues to the end of September were \$255,000, a significant increase of \$66,000 from prior year, due primarily to the new Shop Local program as well as new advertising income sources.

Overall membership revenues increased over 4% from prior year driven by a 10.5% increase in the number of members from the same time last year to 371 members.

The Chamber has greatly benefited from the continued support of its stakeholders including our local municipalities which have maintained our fee for service arrangements which remain a critical source of income for the Chamber in this period of recovery from the pandemic.

We have also received significant funds from events such as the Best of the WestShore which was again a resounding success, bringing in more than double the revenue of the prior year, nearly \$25,000 on a gross basis, as well as through our corporate partner program from WorkLink Employment Society which has kindly hosted our AGM event today.

I believe it is important to note that revenues year to date include approximately \$3,000 in government subsidies and grants as compared with \$21,000 in the prior year to date. Julie has done a great job weaning the Chamber off of the temporary government support available.

Expenses

Year to date, overall expenses increased \$70,000 from prior year due to events activity picking up in 2022 and given that spending remained suppressed in 2021 due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, lockdowns, and other restrictions that were in place periodically during 2021.

A WestShore Business Resource and Relocation Go2Guide was also published which will add some costs in the year, although allowed the Chamber to provide a valuable resource for WestShore businesses while attracting important advertising revenues.

The Chamber expects expenses to remain largely in line with budget expectations over the remainder of the year.

Net Assets / Equity

The Chamber's activity year to date has accumulated a small surplus which adds to the Chamber's net assets, which totaled \$67,000 as at September 30, 2022. The Chamber remains lean, although optimistic about its future.

Overall Comments

Thanks to the continued support of the Chamber's members and stakeholders including our municipal Governments and community partners, the Chamber remains in a capable financial position despite a two-year pandemic and is headed in the direction of a sustainable future with a commitment to growing membership and the Chamber's role in our community.

Appendix Two

Executive Director's Report on 2022 to date

- I would like to start by acknowledging what a ride this year has been. Do you remember back in January, when we were unable to hold in-person events? And now, here we are at our first in-person AGM since 2019
- Throughout it all, I have been so thankful to interact on a daily basis with such lovely, lovely people. WestShore Chamber members, the board of directors, Chamber staff and my chamber colleagues across the province have been a pleasure to work with at every point. Thank you!
- I would like to gratefully acknowledge the fee for service funding we received in 2022 from the City of Colwood, the City of Langford and the Town of View Royal as well as the Camosun and UVic Co-op Programs.
- I would also like to thank WorkLink Employment Society, who came on board earlier this year as a Corporate Partner to support our work. Their support of both job seekers and employers continues to grow and grow, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone on the WorkLink team.
- No annual report of mine would be complete without thanking the Goldstream Gazette and Black Press team for their partnership with us on the Best of the WestShore Awards. Interest did not flag in spite of the vagaries of the pandemic, and we had more businesses on the voting platform than ever before. Voting was also up, with almost 33,000 votes across 44 categories, by comparison with 24,000 in 2021. Thank you to our Title Sponsor RDF Group Ltd and all of our Gold, Supporting and In-Kind Sponsors. The Awards Gala was held at Olympic View Golf Club on October 28th and included two impromptu charity auctions which raised \$2000 to be split between Our Place and the Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island, plus a standing ovation for outgoing View Royal Mayor David Screech. Thank you to Stacy Ross of CHEK for being our MC!
- Working in partnership with Think Local First, in January we launched a six-week "Pledge Local 2022" campaign to encourage the creation of year-round local spending habits. This work was made possible by a \$53,500 grant from the Government of Canada's Strategic Activities Program, administered by the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, and delivered through the BC Chamber of Commerce
- In the spring we launched our Business Resource + Relocation Go2Guide initiative, a reboot of a publication that the Chamber had last provided in 2013. Copies were mailed to all members in September, and distribution across the WestShore is ongoing
- For the municipal elections, we held three online All Candidates Forums via Zoom webinar. Online was chosen rather than in-person to allow as many people as possible to access the forums, which were recorded and posted on the WestShore Chamber's YouTube channel. We had 100 or below attend each evening, but as anticipated the recordings were well-received with 556 views for the View Royal event, a thousand for Colwood and 1400 for Langford. We also partnered with Black Press to produce a video of SD62 Trustee candidates in the Belmont zone, which had just under 200 views
- As of today, we have 376 members, which is 40 more than we had at this time last year. While I'm delighted to report this increase as we come out of the pandemic, as a membership organization we never want to be complacent. Please do keep providing us with your very useful feedback so that we can make sure we remain relevant to you
- Our Chamber Ambassadors program expanded in 2022 and I'd like to acknowledge our member Ambassadors Insurance Agent & Advisor Ana Bjelica, Jim Bryant of Wellnessnews Choices for Healthy Living, and Derrick Sketchley of Island Savings, a division of First West Credit Union. We'll acknowledge the Chair of the Ambassadors a little later in the agenda
- Last but not most definitely not least, I'd like to close by acknowledging Chamber staff. As Executive Director, I often get credit for the excellent work of the staff team, and I'm here to tell you that I am as nothing without them. Please join me in thanking these exceptional human beings: Thom Klos in the role of Membership Sales & Support, Membership Ambassador Martin Newham, and Membership & Office Coordinator Araceli Smart.

Appendix Three President's Report

Well, here we are, after two years, finally all in a room together again. This year began with a lot of uncertainty, still masked and distanced and not gathering very much, still feeling like we were “IN” the throes of COVID. But things slowly started to unwind, melt, and feel open again. We began having mixers again, we held our Best of the WestShore Awards live and in person, and will also be doing the most popular party of the year – Christmas at Hatley Castle in person as well. In some ways, “normal” is returning.

But for a lot of businesses, “normal” is still a long ways off, and most of us who are watching labour trends, are asking if there will ever be a normal – even a new one. Everyone is struggling with the ongoing labour shortage and difficulty finding people to fill jobs – all jobs – and shifts in people’s attitudes about what they want and expect from their employers, it seems a “shift” doesn’t quite accurately define the amount of ground that has moved. And we’re all feeling it. This was a year of polarity where many aspects of COVID divided people in ways we never could have imagined. Within businesses, families, governments and institutions, the divide was huge and affected relationships both in our businesses and in our personal lives.

What we also saw in abundance in 2022 was agility, adaptability and creativity as well as leadership growth for many business owners and managers. These will continue to be important skills as we navigate a fast-changing world. As a Chamber, agility is our MO. At every turn we are responding to what we see and hear in our community and finding ways to be valuable, relevant and supportive of our members.

If any word jumps out at me as I watch the trends and hear what’s being discussed by future watchers, it’s that 2023 will continue to be a year of CHANGE. Recent municipal elections showed us another wave of change. In some cases, minor, and in others, monumental. As we anticipate more change, it’s even more important for us all to be open to new things, accountable to others, and ready to support and lend a hand.

On a personal note, I’d like to thank this amazing group of leaders on the WestShore Chamber board who have worked side by side to navigate all that 2022 sent our way. This year we’re in a highly unusual situation of having a 50% turnover on our board into the new year. But we’re looking forward to continuing to work together and to welcoming new voices and perspectives. We developed an ambitious strategic plan this year with a focus on economic development and rethinking the way we do things. Exciting times, and more change ahead! And, on behalf of the board, we want to acknowledge our tireless staff, the heartbeat of the Chamber, and we are so grateful to have such a committed group of professionals supporting our members on the front line.

Finally, thank you – our members – for your support of the Chamber. You are our “WHY”. Supporting a vibrant business community on the WestShore is possible because of your participation, so thank you for commitment, enthusiasm and energy – and for the great work you do in each of your businesses to build and support the fabric of our community. With hope and positive spirits, we look forward to an evolving business landscape in 2023 and to continuing to partner with you in excellence and success.