

Pemberton Area Economic Development Collaboration Meeting Notes

April 3, 2018 – 9:30am – 12:00 noon, Pemberton & District Community Centre

Chair: Graham Turner

Notes: Lisa Richardson (on behalf of the Pemberton & District Chamber of Commerce)

In attendance:

Jill Brooksbank, Communications and Grants Coordinator, Village of Pemberton

Russell Mack, Director, SLRD Electoral Area C

Kerry Mehaffey, Chief Executive Officer, Líl'wat Business Group

Jeannette Nadon, Communications and Grants Coordinator, SLRD

Lucinda Phillips, Administrator, N'Quatqua

Graham Turner, President, Pemberton & District Chamber of Commerce, Retail Operations Manager for Lil'wat Business Group

Karen Ross, Councillor, Village of Pemberton

Richard Toperczer, outgoing Regional Manager, Regional Economic Operations, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Wendy Koh, incoming Regional Manager Regional Economic Operations, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Lori Henderson, Director, South Coast Region, Regional Economic Operations, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Mark Mendonca, President, Tourism Pemberton

Regrets:

Sheldon Dowswell, Administrator, Lower Stl'atl'imx Tribal Council

Agenda:

1. New Introductions

Welcome to Wendy Koh, the new regional manager for Economic Development for the Lower Mainland, based in Vancouver. Wendy is a recent arrival to BC from Ontario and has experience working in various Ontario government roles, with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Ministry of International Trade and Ministry of Economic Growth. She has worked in culinary tourism sector, wine tourism, Niagara tourism and cycle tourism.

This gathering today was convened to introduce Wendy to the Collaborative, and her goal is to learn about the organizations represented, what manageable goals might be achieved this year, and how the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) can facilitate/shepherd these processes, through funding, or otherwise.

Lori Henderson acknowledged the work Richard Toperczer has done for this region, in the interim absence of a regional manager.

2. Review last meeting minutes.

The Minutes of March 7 meeting have been circulated and shared beyond this Collective.

The group confirmed that the Minutes/Notes will be public, and housed on Data Portal. As the group in the early stages of sharing the Minutes/Notes publicly, it was suggested that we develop a process for how the group reviews the minutes/notes, before they're made public, to ensure no confidential information is publicized unintentionally. This process will be incorporated into the Terms of Reference.

- Recommend that attendees verbally flag anything that is sensitive or shared in confidence
- Recommend to please give people a week to review the minutes and scan for anything sensitive
- Assume in advance the minutes will be made public – so onus is on individual to identify any concerns within a week of receiving minutes
- Maintain same format
- Recommend to place ACTIONS summary at end
- As an information sharing group, a lot of information is included in the notes – lean towards informational updates versus bare bones minutes

Two actions are outstanding from the March minutes. As a tool, all actionable items will be summarized at the end of the document.

Outstanding actions from March 7 below have been migrated to the ACTIONS summary at end of notes:

- Sheldon Dowsell to share contact information for TTQ (Douglas' economic development organization), Samahquam and Skatin with Graham
- Graham Turner to extend invitations to above to attend Collaborative, as suggested by Sheldon
- Lucinda Phillips to connect with Graham Haywood (SLRD) to share his learnings on invasive species information and N'Quatqua's proposed boat washing station

3. Terms of Reference final review

The group discussed some copy edits and approved the Purpose as stated:

“The purpose of the Task Force is to share information, building relationships and collaboratively explore and facilitate economic development opportunities within the Pemberton Area”

The Village of Pemberton and SLRD representatives will take the Terms of Reference to their respective councils/Boards for information, and seek a resolution supporting ongoing commitment and attendance.

ACTION: Jeannette Nadon to forward corrected document to Wendy Koh, with corrected spellings for stakeholders, and a draft term noting that minutes/notes will be shared within 5 days of meeting, and people will have 5 days to review, and correct, before notes will be made public

ACTION: It was agreed to split off the second page in the Terms of Reference into a separate document as notes are not part of the Terms of Reference

4. Quarterly Updates

Karen Ross: Village of Pemberton got **\$5.3 million for infrastructure upgrade** for downtown, with new sidewalks, and (publicly available) high level draft concept designs. Downtown will transform visually and become a welcoming gateway. The desired timeline is completion by Fall 2019, with potential for Spring 2020 overflow.

The innovative component is the storm-water management system – bioswales and rain gardens, and a kind of milk crate catchment system below all trees, that will hold and retain stormwater lessening need for irrigation. Grant will also ensure replacement of aging water infrastructure downtown.

There has already been community consultation around the Downtown Enhancement Plan and Frontier Street Master Plan, which inform this concept, so the community outreach will focus on advising people about the final concept and the construction impacts.

Jeannette Nadon: The **Pemberton Valley Recreation Trails Master Plan Update** process is currently underway, and entering community engagement phase. The project team will provide their Master Plan Update draft and findings, at an Open House Monday April 9, 7pm – 9pm at the Community Centre, as well as at Ullus for Lil’wat Nation members, at a later date. Team will also later meet PVTA, PORCA, horse community.

Surveys will be launched next month, and hope is that all trail users, motorized and non-motorized will learn about the plan. One objective is to get a handle on unauthorized trail building and get community on board with there being a process for developing trails.

The group noted that trails are a big part of community culture and an economic development driver for both recreation and tourism.

Also of note, next Wednesday April 11, 6:30 – 9:00, the SLRD is hosting a **Public Information Meeting about the Electoral Area C Zoning Amendment Bylaw No 1549-2017.**

Mark Mendonca: Working on Winterfest Powder Festival, and may be seeking funding to pull that together, as Tourism Pemberton sees a lot of potential to drive winter traffic through such an event.

Graham Turner:

Work on developing the Data Portal is underway, in the hands of Pemberton web developer Custom Fit Online. The tool prepared to aggregate the key data sources is a Google sheet, that all stakeholders could update, with a commitment as to what data they can provide. A report library will also be incorporated

ACTION: Lisa Richardson to share the Google sheet with group, so people can commit to their data pieces.

The Chamber website is also being refreshed.

A March 22 breakfast meeting with the BC Chamber of Commerce's CEO identified several issues for the region:

- A real need for data in certain areas – daycare spaces and needs, a potential surge in school population, transit issues (buses not full, but they don't run to accommodate shift workers).
- A desire for access to lobby CN Rail for use of the rail line.
- Broadband and quality internet is issue. Bell and Shaw got a \$1.9 million grant to run fibre from Whistler to Cache Creek, adding one more wire to the region.
- Agriculture and Land Use concerns expressed at the breakfast meeting were directed to the SLRD meeting
- What's the vision for the Industrial Park? As it becomes busier, there are increasing and incompatible uses – dance studio vs marijuana facility
- BC Chamber of Commerce annual Collective Perspective Survey is newly released and Graham will share that with all
- Identified a serious lack of commercial space in Pemberton

- BC Chamber has newly released a Mind Reader app, to collate specific data from across province, and in communities

It was noted that the province is increasingly interested in economic-related data and what kinds of data communities might need to help inform their economic development planning, how the increasingly robust data from the Census can help communities. The Ministry has access to the ESRI Community Analysis tool, and perhaps some applicable stats could be pulled from that to help inform the Data Portal.

Jill Brooksbank:

The Village of Pemberton has issued an **RFP for Friendship Trail bridge**, closing April 14.

A zoning and sign bylaw open house for the community to review draft of bylaw is the key opportunity to provide input and shape the bylaw. April 17, 4pm – 7:30

Jill Brooksbank and Graham Turner both sat on a working group to finalize the **Sea to Sky Planning Area Destination BC document** – great process, commonalities found throughout such a large region thanks to excellent facilitation – and Graham and Jill were able to flag local issues like Joffre overcrowding, and the importance of ensuring that agricultural tourism and First Nations tourism actually benefits the key stakeholders (farmers, First Nations)

The Planning Area for that document runs from North Vancouver and Sea to Sky, to D'arcy and Lillooet – one of 14 planning areas, that Destination BC is developing very specific plans for. The working groups are now completed. Draft may be available in the summer.

Also of note, lifelong volunteer, former Mayor and past Chamber of Commerce Secretary, Shirley Henry received a BC Achievement Award.

Kerry Mehaffey:

The Ts'zil Learning Centre still on schedule. Lil'wat Gas Station will hopefully break ground next month with a goal of being completed Feb 2019. These two major projects will transform Mt Currie's downtown core.

Lucinda Philiips:

N'Quatqua received a Rural Dividend grant to increase production and improve the current fish (trout) hatchery.

Easter weekend's floor hockey tournament held at Ullus brought 18 teams from all over BC, and filled every accommodation in town.

N'Quatqua have also been approved to undertake a water assessment on IR 1 and to look and see if they can expand on new subdivision and how that affects D'arcy residents.

Lucinda Phillips has ordered all canoes, kayaks and paddleboards, and hopes to be ready for rentals as soon as water is swimmable! Some basic upgrades will need to be made to the existing structures on Indian Beach, to store the rental equipment.

The 1911 church was deconstructed.

5. Explore the work from past meeting notes and Areas of Interest

- a. Ec Dev Building Blocks Summary – Feb 2016
- b. Ec Dev Collaborative Meeting Minutes – June 2016
- c. Ec Dev Collaborative Summary – May 2017

Graham Turner led the group through a review of the preliminary work that brought us here. The succession of meetings has tangibly led to

1. The establishment of this Collaborative,
2. The identification of a Data Portal as a mutually beneficial project.
3. A list of projects/ideas/opportunities that may or may not already be on various stakeholders' workplans.

It was noted that it can be challenging to find projects that the entire table can latch on to, for fundable, shared, collaborative projects. Wayfinding could be a common ground.

This led to a discussion about what, if the group could raise \$10,000, to secure \$120,000, we would fund?

6. Rural Dividend spring intake discussion – “the big ask”

The group brainstormed ideas/opportunities:

- Wayfinding – quality signage to bring people into town, identify various assets
- An Economic Development Strategy - Líl'wat and N'Quatqua both have economic development plans, but this Collaborative has never developed a regional plan or an economic development plan or understanding. We need a regional strategy that could include wayfinding, branding, tourism, and other sectors. “Plans aren't sexy but they create a foundation that we've worked on together and that we can all use as a platform to move forward.”
- A customer service training program
- Selfie stations

- Branding of the area/region – a project that would benefit from the perspective of an outsider, who might identify assets and draws for visitors/investors that residents wouldn't necessarily. (As in the Columbia Basin where residents were surprised by the finding that the #1 appeal was safety and security.) Brand envisioning could help the group identify **what do we want Pemberton to be known for?** Adventure Begins Here? A Brewery/distillery/Taste Pemberton direction?

A plan, (the likes of which was recently done in Slocan Valley, touching every sector of local economy), should not cost more than (rough estimate) \$30,000, which would require a local investment of \$3000.

Alternatively, the best momentum for the Collaborative might be gained in tackling some more low-hanging fruit from the ideas generated in May 2017, to continue doing good incremental work and demonstrate the value of the Collaborative.

ACTION: Wendy and Richard to put together costed proposals so the Collaborative could explore:

- Business retention and expansion strategy (Project Manager could interview forest based business, ag based business, tourism based business, service sector, home based businesses, and take feedback on challenges and opportunities, and build a work plan that would address those needs/wants/growth opportunities at the sector level. Get a sense of what each of those sectors are worth.
- Housing Strategy (like Revelstoke)
- Day care strategy
- Community Economic Development Strategy (where community values and identity explored and articulated as foundational work to economic development and branding, ie Slocan)
- Branding strategy
- Wayfinding strategy

ACTION: Lori/Wendy to pull together some profiles from similar sized communities and what they're doing in business retention and expansion

Other Big Picture Insights:

The summer release of the Destination BC report might also make the case for big picture thinking around tourism and how to spin off that.

It was noted that only the Village of Pemberton issues business licences, so it's hard to assess the importance or scale of home-based businesses in the SLRD. A corridor-wide

business licence, that works in Pemberton, Whistler and Squamish has been raised before, but would be beneficial to many businesses operating in the corridor.

It was noted that a Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy is underway in Squamish and the consultant would be willing to add on Whistler/Pemberton, if the money could be raised.

Wendy will be meeting with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture to better understand the game plan for the region's Destination Planning (and how some of that provincial rethinking might impact the ALR regulations.) Wendy will be able to share that direction back with us.

ALC review is also unfolding as we speak.

Ministry is preparing a Rural Economic Development strategy, due to come out this summer, with a strong preference towards community economic development.

Considerations for the Rural Dividend Fund:

- It's important to identify who is the eligible applicant and who should lead the project – for an up to \$100,000 project for a single applicant, it's an 80% grant, with \$10,000 cash, \$10,000 in-kind contributed from the applicant. Caveat is the applicant needs to have reviewed or audited financials.
- Community Futures or Sea to Sky Community Services are also potential applicants, as they have audited financials
- Perhaps Village and Chamber would do a joint presentation re proposal to Council, and see if Village of Pemberton would be lead on application, as Village may not be applying for anything in next intake
- SLRD would not likely be lead, as that would inhibit them from applying for funding for other Areas or projects in region
- No date yet announced for next intake – best to proceed and prepare for a May intake
- An application, that includes branding and wayfinding, could be viewed strongly because of the collaborative table, and the way it helps build the regional capacity to actually implement initiatives
- Collaborative members will want to inform leadership of proposed course of action on Rural Dividend – so ideal to have a report/costed proposals to share, within 2 weeks (by April 17)

7. New Business

Possible topics and presenters for next meeting? Forestry, agriculture

No specific action discussed, as next meeting will likely be focused on Rural Dividend strategy and opportunity.

8. Actions

ACTION from March 7:

- Sheldon Dowsell to share contact information for TTQ (Douglas' economic development organization), Samahquam and Skatin with Graham
- Graham Turner to extend invitations to above to attend Collaborative, as suggested by Sheldon
- Lucinda Phillips to connect with Graham Haywood (SLRD) to share his learnings on invasive species information and N'Quatqua's proposed boat washing station

ACTION from April 3:

- Jeannette Nadon to forward corrected Terms of Reference document to Wendy Koh, with corrected spellings for stakeholders, and a draft term noting that minutes/notes will be shared within 5 days of meeting, and people will have 5 days to review, and correct, before notes will be made public. Separate second page of notes out of final Terms of Reference
- Lisa Richardson/Chamber to share the Data Portal Google sheet with group, so people can commit to their data pieces.
- Lisa Richardson/Chamber to connect with Wendy Koh on what data the province can access to help inform the Data Portal
- Graham Turner to share the BC Chamber's Collective Perspective report with Collaborative members
- Kerry to share contact information about the new internet service/fibre line with Jeannette
- Lori/Wendy to ask Small Business Ministry about mobile business licencing
- **Richard/Wendy to prepare a transition report/proposal and recommendations to prepare Collaborative for the Rural Dividend May intake, by end April.** This would include costed proposals so the Collaborative could explore pros and cons of applying for funding for:
 - Business retention and expansion strategy (Project Manager could interview forest based business, ag based business, tourism based business, service sector, home based businesses, and take feedback on challenges and opportunities, and build a work plan that would address those needs/wants/growth opportunities at the sector level. Get a sense of what each of those sectors are worth.
 - Housing Strategy (like Revelstoke)
 - Day care strategy

- Community Economic Development Strategy (where community values and identity explored and articulated as foundational work to economic development and branding, ie Slocan)
- Branding strategy
- Wayfinding strategy
- Lori/Wendy to pull together some profiles from similar sized communities and what they're doing in business retention and expansion
- Chamber to explore what would be required to have audited financials to be the lead applicant
- Wendy to share information about the revised Rural Dividend when available

Next quarterly meeting:

Wednesday, July 4, 9:30 – noon, Lil'wat location to be determined. Ts'zil or Ullus.

Anticipate an earlier meeting once we hear about funding date for Rural Dividend, to review Richard's report/recommendations, settle on approach.

9. Meeting Adjourned at 12:05pm