

**SWOTC Board Meeting
January 30th, 2024, at 10:30 a.m.
Zoom, Virtual**

Present: Aileen Murray, Kelly Provost, Peter Rigby, Craig Goyetche, Troy Loop, Irma Joeveer, Aggie Armstrong, Darren Winger MHSTCI

Regrets:, Denny Vervaet, Jeff Jack, Stephen Tooshkenig, Lindsay Wilson

Resources: OSW - Joanne Wolnik, Ana Baxter, Jen Moore, Emma Rowley, Megan Carman and Alayna Simpson.

Chair Aileen Murray called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m. with land acknowledgement.

Confirmation of Quorum Confirmed.

Conflict of Interest - none declared at this time.

Approval of Agenda

Craig motioned and Kelly seconded to approve the agenda. Carried.

Approval of Minutes:

One motion for both December 14th and January 9th
Irma motioned and seconded by Peter. Carried.

Business Arising:

None.

Ideas & Observations

Less people operating in the 'off' season, less people out and about.

Many cancel notices about festivals (Irma) – we're unsure of the cause. Three in the last week of festivals, two biggest music festivals in Manitoulin were cancelled.

Lack on funding from sponsorships – on all fronts.

Passengers from USA is still only at 70% capacity since COVID in Sarnia.

Tourism Toronto 93% of pre-covid. Industry partners that are hurting more than others are the hotels/motels/accommodation businesses. They are still struggling trying to bring people into the facilities.

Expectation that Airbnb usage may be coming down due to additional fees like cleaning.

Ana with accommodations – occupancy is in lower trend. Forecast of where the nation will be, 2023/2024, forecast looks way down.

Reports

Treasurer's Report

Peter delivered treasurer's report. Balance sheet – acct's receivable, up as of 2022. Payments are coming in from government.

Interest earned, waiting to hear if they want that money back, though this is the last year that we must pay interest back to the province. They will allow us to keep and use for operational purposes.

Motion to accept by Irma, Craig seconded. Carried.

Finance & Audit Committee

Reviews have cost us additional funds. It's recommended that we include a forecast of funds and allocate part of the reserves to go towards by-law upkeep. Committee to discuss creating an annual review when the workplan is created. If changes need to occur, then it will be acted upon.

Governance Committee

Craig has stepped back into the Chair position, with a thank you to Kelly for her leadership the last 7 months.

Governance review is almost complete. The committee met with Catherine – looking through the draft and get it ready for Mar 4th board meeting.

Looking to fill 3 director positions as Irma, Lindsey and Kelly are at the end of their terms. The skills matrix will be updated and sent out. Director recruitment will open March 4th.

Selections ahead of May board meeting

Planning & Evaluation

Ana and team are setting things in motion to figure out challenges for industry folks, census to create a consensus. What do we want to learn? Before conference – can follow up with Troy & P&E

The date should be set earlier for retreat and note it in the recruitment package.

Operations Report

Joanne delivered operations report.

Ministry of Tourism Update

Business plan - RTO 1 was the first one to submit!

No update on the audit. No news is good news.

Announcement in early spring so festivals aren't panicking for funding. The plan is that they are working hard to get the money out early this year.

Other Business:

None declared

New Business:

None declared

Next Meeting: March 4th, Sarnia, Location TBD 3pm-5pm at the hotel.

Alayna will send out location of next BOD meeting prior to the date.

Irma motioned and Aggie seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:44 a.m. Carried.