

**SWOTC Board meeting  
December 13, 2022, 2022 at 10:30 a.m.  
Red Barn Brewing, Blenheim, ON**

**Present:** Denny Vervaet, Aileen Murray, Peter Rigby, Craig Goyetche, Kelly Provost, Troy Loop, Susan Judd, Jennifer Flynn, Lindsay Wilson, Irma Joeveer

**Regrets:** Andrew Meyer, Jen Moore - SWOTC

**Resources:** Janet Jones - MTCS; SWOTC - Joanne Wolnik, June Nussey, Megan Carman, Kelleagh Alexander, Emma Rowley, Jatinder Uppal, Ana Baxter

**Chair Aileen Murray** called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

Thanks were extended to Denny for hosting. Congratulations to Jennifer Flynn for her new business, Lindsay Wilson being elected as Deputy Mayor for Ingersoll. Welcome back to work to June Nussey.

**Land Acknowledgement**

**Confirmation of Quorum**

**Conflict of Interest** - none declared at this time.

**Agenda** – in camera session will take place after the approval of the agenda. Moved and seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Carried.

Moved to '*In Camera*' at 10:50 a.m.

Came out of '*In Camera*' at 11:10 a.m.

Moved and seconded to accept the October 18, 2022 minutes as circulated. Carried.

**Business arising from the minutes**: no items

**Ideas and Observations:**

- People/tourists are going out of their area to travel but rumour is that in 2023, travel will be local.
- Business impact – weekend busy but corporate during the week has not returned.
- Labour shortage
- Still seeing spend but not big ticket spend
- Events – attendance down but spend is higher from those attending.

**Finance & Audit report:** Peter Rigby

- No financials for end of November.
- Transitioning from one accounting firm to another firm. With the transition, we will be switching from Sage accounting to Quickbooks online. Anticipated to transition over in January 2023.

- Tourism Relief funds (TRF) – have received \$8 million of the almost \$11 million for the program. Projects are to be wrapped up by December 31, 2022. The final reports for projects are slowly coming in.

Moved and seconded to accept the Finance and Audit report. Carried.

**Planning and Evaluation report:** Troy Loop

- Committee met, reviewed and looked at the 2023-24 Business plan. A schedule for committee meetings was prepared to coordinate with reports to the Ministry.

Moved and seconded to accept the Planning & Evaluation report. Carried.

**Business Plan Review**

- Overview – looking at where we are at in the industry, what are the changing demands. Operators are doing what they love which draws tourists/people to their businesses.
- Travellers – forecasted highlight – recession coming, labour shortage, people prioritizing travel over goods, inclusive businesses, sustainable travel, search windows are shorter
- OSW putting increased focus on business engagement
- Focus on our strengths, keep what is working well
- Industry communications
- Assets inventory
- Overall organization effectiveness

Goals of Plan – engagement, re-engagement, show how operators are part of the industry and OSW is here to support them.

Budget – prepared with a 6.9% increase to the core funding. The Ministry has not indicated there will be any increase to our funding in 2023-24 fiscal.

Discussion – we have an opportunity to inform operators that the partnership funding is available. What are the impacts of the marketing campaigns? What is the tracking?

Suggestion to connect with Destination Ontario to see what they use as metrics. Should we help the operator get to booking since we are sending people to the businesses?

The staff will go back and tweak the plan to be presented at the January meeting for approval.

Directors would like to see a recap at the next meeting of where the extra funds (6.9% increase) will be directed.

Moved and seconded to accept the business plan as information. Carried.

Aileen thanked Joanne and the team for the work done on the strategic plan and the business plan.

**Governance report:** Craig Goyetche

RFP for a Board policy review was posted and closed on December 1, 2022.

No proposals were received.

Budget was too low for scope. Committee will be work with a couple of companies to review the budget and appropriate scope. The plan is to have the policy review underway by the end of the fiscal (March 31/23)

Early January Craig will be reaching out to each director to see if they are continuing on the Board. One director will be retiring from the board in June 2023 due to end of 2 terms on the board.

Moved and seconded to accept the Governance report. Carried.

**Executive committee:** Aileen Murray

Operations review is underway and more information will be available in January

Moved and seconded to accept the Executive committee report. Carried.

**Operations report:** written report

TRF report – 20 projects are completely done and more to be completed by the end of December. Progress report requirement has been beneficial to keeping the projects on target or know if adjustments could/need to be made.

Moved and seconded to accept the operations report. Carried.

**MTCS report:** Janet Jones

- Progress report was submitted and being reviewed by the Ministry
- RTO Guide update to come
- Actual to budget not required by Ministry but is a good practise to see where things are financially.
- Expect similar allocation as present fiscal – look at other increases or places for funding
- 2023 Festival & Event grant available again. Not sure what the name of the grant will be.
- COVID legacy – the FedDev money has created some good projects
- Consider if hotels are at 70% capacity with sports tourism and full on weekends, are we promoting weekend activities?
- Labour shortage – fewer hotel cleaning staff. Should we temper expectations due to fewer housekeeping staff.
- Suggestion to find alignment with other Ministries. For the July Board retreat could add revenue generation on the agenda.

**Other Business** – none

**New Business** – Thanks to Denny for hosting

**Next meeting** – to be held before January 15 to resolve and approve the Business plan. The plan is to be submitted to the Ministry by January 15, 2023.

Another Board meeting to be held on January 24, 2023 to review financials and other matters.

Moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

**Meeting adjourned** at 1:45 p.m.