

Stratford Economic Response & Recovery Task Force

MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2021

Zoom Video Conference

Present: Joani Gerber, Julia Merritt, Jeff Orr, Mike Pullen, Joan Thomson, Rob Russell, Rebecca Scott, Zac Gribble, Janis Auster

Regrets: Joelle Lewis, Elke Bidner

Purpose

Incorporating immediate and long-term actions to support local industry, small business and the workforce across all sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic response and eventual recovery.

- 1) J. Gerber welcomed everyone and provided a general update regarding current Task Force activities and long-term planning.**
- 2) J. Thompson update on City services**
 - a) City buildings currently closed to public but are providing services online and via phone.
 - b) Transportation pilot continues.
 - c) COVID-19 outbreak in the Fire Department, following HPPH protocols.
 - d) City Council continues to meet virtually.
 - e) 2021 budget still under review.
 - f) Continuing with recruitment for several city jobs.

Comments:

- General discussion confirming curbside cones and parking hood distribution.
- R. Scott: BIA advocating for continued free parking until end of the month.
- Free parking also has its challenges.

- 3) J. Gerber reported on ongoing activities and review:**

- a) Preparing council report on outcomes of summer programs including patios, al fresco, etc.. We are looking to be proactive for summer 202; being mindful of finances for both city and businesses, space flexibility and activity requirements (i.e. Market Square) as well as inclusion of city businesses beyond core.

Comments:

- J. Gerber to prepare draft with Destination Stratford and BIA to then be reviewed with J. Thomson (plus clerks and Alison's team).
- Goal to prepare for February Council Meeting.

4) J. Merritt reported on Business Intelligence:

- a) Follow up on Lit Review Report

Comments:

- J. Gerber encouraged keeping this report moving and proposed SEED Co board to review it as well as STA, BIA boards in advance of giving to Council
- SEED Co., BIA and Destination Stratford to review document to define what organizations are already doing, where they have capacity and what the priorities are. Goal to come away with an action plan for recommendations.
- Discussion re: how to fund role to continue work. Envisioned someone who could drive the project and manage the community relations piece.

5) J. Gerber led discussion regarding committee:

- a) Pause on new member recruitment while we gain some more clarity.
b) Continue meeting every other week for the time being. Next meeting 1/21 at 3pm.