

**TOWNSHIP OF BILLINGS**  
**Economic Development Committee**  
**MINUTES**

May 12, 2021, 7:00 pm

Electronic Meeting (Zoom Meetings)

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sharon Alkenbrack (Chair), Suzanne Darlaston, Councillor Sharon Jackson, Diane Larocque, Tracy Paris

**Staff:** Todd Gordon, Economic Development Officer

**REGRETS:** None

**Members of the Public:** None

**1. Opening of Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by the chair. The Chair acknowledge the death of EDC member Rick Rusk, and his contribution to EDC, Kagawong & Billings, and Manitoulin Tourism through the MTA and other work and organizations. His community service will be remembered

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Diane Larocque; Second by Sharon Jackson:

That the agenda for the May 12, 2021 meeting be accepted as written. Carried.

**3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**

None

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

Motion by Diane Larocque; Second by Suzanne Darlaston :

That the minutes of the April 14, 2021 meeting be accepted as presented. Carried.

**5. Delegations**

None

**6. Council Update Report**

Chair Alkenbrack provided a brief overview of the previous Council meeting (Regular Council meeting of May 4th, 2021).

**7. Financial Report**

No EDC-related revenue or expenditures since the previous meeting (April 14, 2021).

**8. EDO Update**

The EDO provided updates on the following topics

- a. Main Street Project

**9. Old Business**

**a) Community Planters/Benches – Discussion**

More planters have yet to be placed. There are many available for adoption by the Parks, Recreation, and Wellness Committee (and others) Summer students have been levelling the new planters and lining with landscape cloth. Shrubs are being held at JD garden centre. Soil is yet to be distributed to the planters. We have a plan for solving the watering needs for the SCB/Old Mill planters.

**b) Billings Promotion Strategy – Discussion**

Brief discussion. The EDO is expecting a draft from Kendra Edwards soon. The EDC needs to follow-up with Kendra

**c) Poetry Boxes - Discussion**

The Chair did more research and has a good idea of what should be purchased and implemented, at least

for 2021. Discussion of the art-tree idea. Committee consensus that a tree near the Park Centre should be used. A method of providing paper for art, as well as a method of hanging the art on the art tree was discussed and consensus reached on implementing it. The chair and committee member Diane Larocque will monitor to see how the art tree is used. The approach can be modified as needed.

**d) Jabbawong Story-Telling Festival – Discussion**

The committee discussed the ongoing uncertainty about holding the event, given the pandemic situation. However, there was consensus in holding the festival this year, if possible. Planning and implementation will continue for now. If necessary, the festival can be a completely outdoor event, with appropriate pandemic protocols in place. The festival days/times will be Saturday July 17th, 11 am to 2:00 pm, and Sunday July 18th, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Sunday will have a children’s story focus. The committee is still working on children’s story presenters.

**10. New Business**

**a) Billings 2022-2025 Strategic Plan: Process and EDC Input**

The EDO had presented material for committee consideration related to the 2022-2025 strategic plan development process, including a discussion of vision and mission statements, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. There was brief discussion about the importance of strategic planning, and the importance of it. However, the committee agreed to take more time for individual reflection on contributions to the strategic plan as EDC members and members of the committee. The topic will be on the agenda for the June Meeting

**b) Economic Development as a Concept - Discussion**

The EDO commented briefly on having completed the OMAFRA mini webinar series on Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E). The committee agreed to turn to more a more dedicated pursuit of broader economic development goals and approaches once through the summer season.

**11. Correspondence**

None

**12. Information**

None

**13. Recommendations to Council**

None

**14. Next Meeting:** June 9, 2021, 7:00 pm, Zoom Meetings

**15. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. on a motion by Diane Larocque.