THE CHAMBER.

GREATER VICTORIA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Board Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2025

Attended: Christina Clarke, James Gatsi, Kris Wirk, Rose Arsenault, Jessica Stigant, Captain (Navy) Kevin Whiteside, Josue Dubon, Frumsa Ibrahim, Elizabeth Brown, Corey Gillon, Mary Lou Newbold, Spencer Walker, Ashka Wirk, Bruce Williams, Ashley McCartie (staff), Julia Banks (staff).

We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory we are meeting today, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Motion to approve the agenda with the following changes: point 3.e. under the CEO Report updated to *2025* Business Plan Development Update; point 4. a. iii. changed to an update on the development of the 2025 advocacy priorities, remove motion to approve as priorities are not ready for approval.
MOVED by James Gatsi SECONDED by Rose Arsenault CARRIED

Motion to approve the minutes from the previous Board meeting as presented.
MOVED by Rose Arsenault SECONDED by James Gatsi CARRIED

1. Chair Report
    a. Chair looks to 2025 as The Chamber moves into the new office and the upcoming change with the CEO's departure. Chair is really pleased with how 2024 wrapped up with the final KPI outcomes and budget results. Expect to have a year focused on stability as The Chamber staff, Board, Committees, and members adjust to the changes 2025 brings.
    b. Chair shared that the CEO job posting is now live. The final job description will be confirmed based on the core competencies of the role and the successful candidate's experience and unique skills. CEO has had people reach out directly and he is directing them to Two Willows Consulting for information about the role.
    c. The chair reviewed the Committee reporting plan for 2025 with the Board and all agree to the schedule of reporting for each committee.

2. CEO Report
    a. Engagement with stakeholders
        i. Cruise ship drop off location is a challenge and is impacting the economic impact of cruise ships for local businesses and retail. They currently drop at Empress and don't head up into Government St and into Chinatown. Met with the City of Victoria to suggest a drop off location farter up Goverment St. requiring it to open back up to bus traffic.
        ii. DGV Mixer was a success at the Oak Bay Beach Hotel.
        iii. Met with Lane Trotter, President of Camosun College to discuss the financial strain many post-secondaries are experiencing due to the recent restrictions on international students. They are looking at potentially combining programs and making substantial budget adjustments.
        iv. The new Administrative Assistant and Member Representative joined the Chamber in December and are doing well. The Senior Manager of Engagement has resigned to pursue a new opportunity and we will be changing the role to be a Marketing Coordinator role. Applications are open until February 14.

v. CEO is speaking with the BC Chamber Executives about media training and how to get exposure. Three other Chambers in the province are closing their physical doors and going virtual.
vi. Rocket Doctor has contacted The Chamber to help them find an office space. Have a new model to provide direct care doctors to the community.
vii. CEO is participating in the Gustavson Student graduation ceremony at the end of the month as a speaker
viii. Meeting with the JEDI Minister Gibson this Friday
ix. Looking forward to the Board Dinner tonight.

b. Upcoming events include
c. Chamber Office Move is underway. The Chamber is moving equipment and furniture from storage into the new space today. TecNet is setting up and installing all work stations and the server on Thursday and Friday. Kitchen is being installed by the landlord on February 4th. Final carpet replacement is set for the end of February with the final furniture arriving for installation after that.
d. Reviewed the 2024 KPI results which were strong. In developing the 2025 KPI's the Management team will be looking at each KPI to ensure it is still relevant and valuable as a measurement tool. We will have a focus on promoting chamber benefits, build on the idea to connect with 50+ member businesses to get their staff more involved and finding a contact within each business to champion their membership and train them on maximizing their membership.
e. The 2025 Business Plan is underway but delivery to the Board has been delayed by the move. The Senior Management team plan to have it updated by the end of February.

Action Item: Add virtual February Board Meeting to review and approve the 2025 Business Plan and Advocacy Priorities. Add discussion on tariffs to the agenda and see about inviting a Canadian Chamber staffer to join us.

3. Committee Reports
   a. Executive & Governance Committee
      i. Chair would like to review the External Board Appointments to determine where we have reciprocal relationships and understand the opportunities we have but are not fulfilling. Needs ongoing management to ensure this is being refreshed. Develops our relationships and offers opportunities for Board members to expand their impact.
      ii. Committee Terms of Reference – Ambassador Chair reviewed the changes to the Ambassador ToR, no changes were made to the Executive and Finance & Audit Committees

Motion to approve the Terms of Reference for the Ambassadors, Executive and Finance & Audit Committees as presented.
MOVED by Rose Arsenault SECONDED by Elizabeth CARRIED

      iii. 2025 Advocacy Priorities are not ready for approval and will be included in the February meeting. More work is happening on the 2025 priority areas and the Public Policy and Advocacy are developing position statements.

b. Finance & Audit
    i. Chair presented the year-end financial report for 2024. Committee discussed tariffs and the potential impact they will have on our members.
    ii. The Treasurer presented the final 2024 financial statements. The Finance and Audit Committee met on the previous Friday to review the financials but did not get into the investment policy details as the portfolio manager was unable to attend and plans to attend in March. Overall, for 2024 the financial results were good. Net operating income was budgeted at a loss of $14000 and ended at positive $85,000 due to changes in event expenses and staffing changes. The Committee plans to review the accounts receivable reporting to determine what additional or more robust reporting we can do. Committee also discussed adding cyber security to the next meeting to discuss current safeguards, development options, and best practices.

Motion to approve the 2024 year-end financials as presented.
MOVED by James Gatsi SECONDED by Kris Wirk CARRIED

    iii. Annual audit scheduled to begin February and will be completed mid-February. It is going well so far.

c. Ambassador Committee Chair reported on the changes being made within the Ambassador Committee. Committee members are exploring with Chamber staff how they can support member stewardship and retention efforts. Chair and Co-Chair will be hosting Networking 101 on February 4th. Hailey Masters will be joining the Ambassador committee.

d. Emerge Committee Chair reported that the committee has several new faces – Shaun Cuglietta from Forge Technical Services, Neil Parkinson-Dow from Canadian Coast Guard, Jessy Savage from Victoria Digital Marketing. The Mentorship program has relaunched this week. Intake for mentors and mentees runs until February 15th. First event for the cohort will be March 11, then reconnect June 18 and final event in November. Community engagement sub-committee are working on other initiatives to highlight and engage our non-profit members. Communications team is rebuilding their team and plans for engagement on social media.

Motion to move in camera
Moved by Kris Wirk Seconded by Jessica Stigant CARRIED

Motion to move out of camera
Moved by Christina Clarke Seconded by Jessica Stigant CARRIED

Motion to Adjourn
MOVED by Christina Clarke SECONDED by Jessica Stigant CARRIED

Next Board Meeting – February 25, 7:30 – 9:00am virtual

Presentation & Q&A from SIPP – 9:00 – 9:30am

Secretary

Chair