

## Notes from the Eastern HRM Region Communities Economic Development Network

### Steering Committee Conference Call

September 12, 2014 10:00 to 11:00 am

#### Community Representatives:

- Verna Higgins, Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association
- Sandy Moser, Sheet Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce and Civic Affairs
- Deirdre Dwyer, Musquodoboit Harbour and Area Community Development Association
- Karen Traversy, Lake Charlotte Area Heritage Society

**Advisor:** Robyn Webb, Director, Labour Market Development, Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP)

#### Background:

This conference call was the fourth in a series of calls and meetings following up on a March 29, 2014 public planning meeting process for the Eastern Region of HRM including Eastern Shore communities from Lawrencetown- Porter's Lake in the west to Ecum Secum in the east and Musquodoboit Valley to the north.

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1. Notes from the August 1<sup>st</sup> conference call were reviewed and approved for posting on the GHP website with one correction, the spelling of Senator Tom McInnis's last name.
  2. Gina Dunn from Porter's Lake is forming a community ratepayers group for Porter's Lake and would like to participate in the Eastern HRM Region Community Economic Development Network. Karen Traversy will follow-up up with her regarding the October meeting (see agenda item #7, below).
  3. Finalization of the Network organization governance template

Darren Hirtle, community Development officer with HRM had provided us with a generic template to guide our operations and decision-making. He also provided comments on the draft document we had prepared using his template. A revised document is attached incorporating his comments and our September 12<sup>th</sup> discussion. Major points included: clarification of the name: Eastern HRM Region Communities Economic Development Network; need to distinguish between the Network (all organizations) and the Steering Committee for the Network; addition of a conflict of interest clause; addition of a clause regarding the need for preparedness of members for meetings and willingness to undertake tasks; and, choice of decision-making approach - majority vs consensus (consensus was agreed to given the collaborative nature of the Network).

**Note:** The decision to use "economic development" in the name of the Network may require further discussion in the context of the Strategic Plan resulting from the March 2014 community planning meeting. While there was a focus on the need for jobs and new businesses in the region, there was also

a great deal of discussion around sustainable development and respect for the environment as well as the need for community infrastructure and services.

4. Denise Van Wychen, the consultant who had prepared the Eastern HRM Strategic Plan following the March 2014 public meeting, has suggested that the Network consider undertaking a project to develop a community profile including investment readiness and economic development plan as part of its work. This has been done in other municipal areas in the province including East Hants. This type of project would require application for a grant. This suggestion will be discussed at a future meeting in the context of existing Network priorities: rural transportation; cellphone and internet access and Bay of Islands eco-tourism designation (STEP process). Karen Traversy will send a link to a similar initiative being undertaken by business and community leaders in Lunenburg County: <http://thechronicleherald.ca/thenovascotian/1220198-county-takes-stand-in-the-now>
5. Bay of Islands STEP (Strategic Tourism Enhancement Program) project update was provided by Sandy Moser. The application is being made through the Destination Eastern and Northumberland Shores (DEANS) Association to ACOA. Other support will be provided by NS Economic and Rural Development and Tourism and Halifax Municipality. The funding will be used to hire an ACOA-certified consultant and facilitator to guide a planning process including background research and a community consultation process. DEANS will manage the contract which will also be overseen by a steering committee of community representatives. Over \$5000 in funding has been raised from Eastern Shore businesses and community groups in support of the required community contribution for this project. A summary of the status of this initiative as of September 9, 2014 is attached.
6. Verna Higgins reported on progress with rural transportation funding applications in the Musquodoboit Valley. Funding for rural transportation has also been awarded to Sheet and Musquodoboit Harbours. Robyn Webb offered to follow-up with Eastlink regarding the possible extension of their internet and cellular service in the Eastern HRM Region.
7. The next meeting of the Network Steering Committee will be held at Memory Lane Heritage Village in Lake Charlotte (5435 Clam Harbour Road) on Wednesday, October 22, 2014 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. with a public information session to follow until 7:30 p.m. Dee Dwyer will chair the meeting.

#### Attachments (2)

- (i) Revised Governance template
- (ii) STEP Update (Sept. 9)