



**MINUTES OF THE TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
Wednesday, June 02, 2021 AT 1:00 PM**

PRESENT

Chair Mayor D. Funk
Sheryl Worthing, Chief Administrative Officer
Lewis Jones, Director of Recreation
Meghan Olson, Tourism Coordinator
Val Anderson, Deputy Corporate Officer
Clint Lambert, Area E Director
John Nooski, BLNDC Representative
Laura Blackwell, Community Representative
Logan Wilson, Non-profit Representative
Robert Charlie, Tourism Business Representative
Michael Riis-Christianson, Area B Director
Kai Epkens Non-profit Representative – left at 1:17 due to connectivity issues

GUESTS

none

PUBLIC

3 members of the public

MEDIA

None

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Funk called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.
"On behalf of Council, I would like to acknowledge the traditional territories of the area's Six First Nations."

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded by the Committee:

TAC-2021-06-02: 01

THAT the agenda for the June 02, 2021 Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting is approved as presented.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

None

DELEGATIONS

None

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

Member Roundtable
Clint Lambert

- Poor internet connection.
- Lives at Grassy Plains

- Wants tourism to grow on the southside and Area E

John Nooski

- Will get ideas and disseminate information to the organization.

Laura Blackwell

- Publisher for Lakes District News, pleased to be on the committee.
- Has been a supporter of tourism in the area for many years.

Logan Wilson

- Born and raised in Burns Lake.
- Degree in tourism.

Robert Charlie

- Looking forward to making Indigenous tourism a larger part of the industry.
- Lots of potential for First Nations led tourism.

Nellie Davis

- Regional Economic Development Manager
- Responsible for tourism initiatives for the RDBN

Mike Robertson

- With Cheslatta Carrier Nation.
- The formation of this committee has excited the nation as they are involved in several tourism-related businesses.
- Tourism is a big part of our economic futures.

Michael Riis-Christianson

- Untapped tourism potential.
- Forestry will always be part of our economy; however, tourism will reduce our dependency.
- Developing Indigenous tourism products is essential for success.

Bryanne White

- Curious and excited to investigate the untapped potential in the area.

Mayor Funk

- Shares the excitement around tourism.
- Here because of the recommendations in the Economic Diversification Strategy.
- Looking forward to getting things done to develop the tourism economy.
- Has a tourism diploma.

REPORTS

Appoint the TAC Chair and Alternate

Recommendation:

TAC 2021-06-02: 02

THAT Mayor Dolores Funk is appointed the Tourism Advisory Committee Chair:

AND THAT John Nooski is appointed the alternate Tourism Advisory Committee Chair.

CARRIED

Terms of Reference (TOR) – *Chair Dolores Funk*

- Terms of Reference attached
- Attendees were asked if there were any changes they would like to see made.
- Confirmed that quorum was set at 5.
- Discussion of open seats on the Committee.
- Staff will send out the revised Terms of Reference to the committee.

Meeting dates and time – *Chair Dolores Funk*

- Discussion of proposed meeting dates.

It was moved and seconded by Council:

TAC 2021-06-02: 03

THAT the Tourism Advisory Committee meeting dates be set for the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm.

CARRIED

Tourism Plan Presentation – *Director of Recreation L. Jones*

- L. Jones gave an overview of the Tourism Plan.
- How we got here:
- From the diversification strategy, the tourism plan was developed.
- Looked at strengths and opportunities in the region.
- Looked at post-COVID travel.
- Highway 16 corridor is an asset.
- Develop an icon, a reason for people to stop.
- Risk assessment from the plan was assessed.
- Lack of leadership and product development.
- Barriers were discussed.
- Marketing and messaging can be strengthened.
- Future Strategy steps were discussed.
- Each area has specific goals that are laid out, there are pillars for each strategy.
- Leadership groups were discussed, including the formation of this Committee.
- Tourism marketing overview was given.

- Partnerships between tourism providers are key.
- Village of Burns Lake logo was shown.
- Staff will send out the village's Brand Story document to committee members, and it will be included in the binders.
- Situational opportunities such a post-Covid travel, pipeline workers in town.
- Festival strategy was noted.
- Comment from committee members regarding festival in the north-west.
- Smoke on the Water music festival was suggested at Talon Point for future years.
- Hotel occupancy numbers are high; hopefully, they recommend our area once the pipeline is completed.
- Mike Robertson updated progress on the Kenny Dam Release Facility project; the water release facility will release water into the Nechako River. Negotiations are ongoing as to the volume to be released. The Nechako canyon is 5 miles of dry riverbed. The project will recreate a 5-mile white water river as it once was. There are numerous opportunities for trails. Talk of a zip-line across the canyon.
- Mike also suggested, World's largest canoe paddle!
- Build the largest canoe paddle will draw tourists to the shore of Francios Lake. Need to collaborate and have another large paddle in Burns Lake. It would be made of aluminum.
- Cheslatta hauls 100 to 120 boats a year into the park; there is room to increase the capacity and tourists to Tweedsmuir Park.
- Historic trail networks connected many communities. Onerous to keep up, but they are the backbone asset for tourism.
- Fishing resort, putting high-end teepees at the Pondosy Bay site. To get people out into different areas of the park.
- The paddle is one of the universal assets of all peoples.
- Discussion of the 'world's largest' ideas.
- Bannock Festival was suggested.
- The paddle could promote local artists.
- Paddles for house numbers.

NBCTA – Covid-19 tourism Impact Report – *Tourism Coordinator Meghan Olson*

- Northern BC Survey Results March 2021 were provided.
- Northern BC Survey Results Dec/Jan 2021 were provided.
- Provincial Survey results were provided.
- NBCTA survey was discussed; the March survey highlights COVID's impact on the tourism industry.
- From Dec to March, more businesses are reporting lower impacts due to COVID.
- Year over year change in revenue is on the upward trend.
- The provincial summary shows for the province, Meghan will send the link to committee members.
- Most firms have taken on debt due to COVID.
- NBC has the lowest debt for tourism businesses when compared to other communities in BC.
- COVID has changed travel patterns has seen higher usage at places like Kager Lake and Hudson Bay.
- The survey has a gap as it does not reflect volunteer-operated facilities.
- Discussion of tourists coming to the area for the first time due to COVID.
- Camping space needs to be developed around the lake, Burns Lake south was discussed and the development of that area.
- Discussion of the decrease in the number of campsites available in the area.
- The forestry campsites are becoming full well before weekends.
- The Alcan campground at the Spillway has been closed for two seasons, it will open on June 15, 2021.
- Discussion of LORS and making sure there is an invitation to attend meetings.
- Honeysuckle gardens have 25 spots and are only open for pipeline workers under an RDBN Temporary Use Permit

It was moved and seconded by Council:

THAT the Northern BC Tourism Report be received.

CARRIED

Tourism Work Plan – *for information*

The following was provided:

- General Tourism Work Plan
- Area B Actions
- Area E Actions
- First Nation Collaborative Actions
- The plan was provided to committee members, it is a working copy and can be changed as required.
- Will start working on the mobile VIC project.
- Discussion of wayfinding signage
- First meeting regarding the marketing initiatives plan.
- Discussion of survey emailed today to committee members.
- Data collection was discussed and what type of information is useful.
- Discussion of finding out why people are here.
- Access to the lake, Talon Point will be finishing off the pit house project, a dock and washroom facilities, which will provide access to the lake. The boardwalk project idea was discussed.
- The properties were secured with a reason, to share with the public. The pithouse is open to the public.
- Important to stick with the plan and have measurable goals.
- Need to be efficient with time, keep the meetings to within one hour.

TAC 2021-06-02: 03

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded by the Committee

TAC 2021-06-02: 04

THAT the June 2, 2021 meeting be adjourned at 2:21 pm

CARRIED


 CHAIR


 CORPORATE OFFICER

Certified to be a true copy of the minutes of the Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, June 02, 2021.