

(Draft) **Minutes**

**Flesherton & District Chamber of Commerce General Meeting
Wednesday, May 9th, 2007**

Call to order: President **Hugh Parkinson** called the meeting, at the Village Inn Restaurant in Kimberley, to order at 7:09 pm, welcoming members Barbara MacKay, Barbara Pearn, Stewart Halliday, Jim Halliday, Judy Stephens, Jock Robinson, Marianne Marino, Colleen Boer and guest Nat Coraci, the President of the Dundalk Chamber of Commerce.

Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Moved/seconded by Jock Robinson/Barbara MacKay that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as presented. **Carried.**

Correspondence: Group Insurance Statement
CIBC statement
Telephone and Internet bills
Advertising Invoices
Key Times Newsletter

Treasurer's Report: Bank Balance: \$561.15
\$1,800.00 in escrow.

Committee Reports:

Advertising: Committee Chair is **Barbara Pearn**. Anyone with an interest in or aptitude for advertising, graphic arts, design or marketing is invited to join this committee. No significant ad expenditures are planned at the moment.

Beautification: The Chamber looks after the Christmas wreaths and tourist banners that grace our hydro poles in the village, and we have applied to the Flesherton Community Foundation for funds to complete the wreath project; we are 6 wreaths short. Any surplus funds will go towards adding or replacing tourist banners. We have not heard from the Foundation as yet.

Community Awards: Committee Chair **Lynn Silverton** and her committee have completed most of the planning for this annual event, taking place on Monday, May 28th at the Kinplex. The South Grey Museum will again use this evening to raise funds through a silent auction. Many nominations for Citizen of the Year, Senior of the Year, and Business of the Year were received and the winners are: **Citizen of the Year - Don Hodder, Senior of the Year - Joan McGee** and **'Archie Bernard Memorial' Business of the Year - Local Colour**. Congratulations to these three, and thanks to all for the excellent nominations.

Downtown Business Improvement: This committee has been instrumental in the creation of the Flesherton Flurries and Flesherton Fling sales events, and meets to address specific issues and opportunities unique to the Flesherton downtown core. It will address issues such as tourist-related events, signage, parking, zoning, etc. New committee members are encouraged.

Gateway: This new committee will take a long-term look at options and opportunities regarding the creation of a tourist information center in Flesherton, and the reinforcing of our location as the "Gateway" to the Beaver Valley and Grey County. Committee Chair is **Barbara MacKay**.

Membership: This committee addresses the ongoing challenge of attracting and keeping members. There are several new benefits to membership and an information kit will be sent to all prospective members at the same time that renewal notices are sent to current members. We now boast 99 regular and associate members. **Hugh Parkinson** and **Barbara MacKay** co-chair this committee.

Municipal Liaison: Committee Chair is **Stewart Halliday**. He reports that a public meeting is scheduled for May 17th regarding a water business initiative from 'Paradise Springs'.

Split Rail Festival: Committee Chair is **Hugh Parkinson**. This committee is also anxious for new members, with

an eye to maximizing the impact of the popular Split Rail Festival on the whole Flesherton and district business community. The Festival takes place on Sept. 22 and 23rd this year.

Tourist Information Booth: Committee Chair is **Marianne Marino**. The tourist information office will be closing at the Masonic Lodge building, as they have rented it to a new tenant. We are exploring another venue and/or structure for the tourist booth.

We have applied for a salary subsidy for, and will advertise for, a summer student to person the booth this tourist season.

Website: Committee Chair is **Barbara Mackay**. Webmistress **Barbara Pearn** updates and manages our website; HYPERLINK "<http://www.flesherton.info>" www.flesherton.info. Chamber members are encouraged to use the site, recommend it, send news and info to it and contribute to the blog. Barbara has compiled pricing for the possible inclusion of a feature that would allow Chamber members to personalize and expand their "own" web page as part of their listing in our Business Directory.

Old Business:

Multi-Chamber Co-op: An informal group made up of Chambers of Commerce in Grey and Bruce counties has been formed and meet on a regular basis. We are a relatively new participant. A special Open House took place in Hanover on May 10th.

Flesherton Fling: This inclusive and interactive sales event will take place on Saturday May 19th across the village, and will invite visitors from near and far to "Celebrate the Senses". Posters are up across the area, and information is available at our Chamber website.

Restaurant/Dining and Accommodation Guide: **Jane McKenzie** and **Barbara MacKay** have undertaken an updating of the popular guide that we first produced a few years ago.

They have canvassed area eateries and B&B's etc to get an updated list and proofreading is underway with the goal of having it completed for the May Victoria Day weekend.

Gold Rush Days: **Barbara Pearn** and **Jim Halliday** brought an update on the events planned for the annual Gold Rush Days in Eugenia on July 14 and 15. They include a Gold Hunt, with a real gold coin as the ultimate prize, and a Chili Cook-off, with a challenge extended to local businesses and service groups etc. to face off for bragging rights.

Gateway Initiative: **Hugh Parkinson** introduced the (not so new) idea of working towards a new tourist center in the village, to position Flesherton as the "Gateway" to the Beaver Valley, our long-standing slogan, and **Barbara MacKay** added that it should be broadened to include Grey County. There was much discussion about the possibilities at the Genoe property, the future of the library, the ideal geographical suitability of Flesherton as a 'hub' for many outdoor and tourist based activities, etc. **Stewart Halliday** voiced his interest in seeing us include the development of an 'eco-center' in future plans.

It was agreed that this will be a worthwhile long-term initiative, that funds currently in escrow might be used for this project, and it could be discussed at our June 're-mandating' session.

New Business:

The passing of long-time Chamber member and former Secretary **Bill Brown** was acknowledged. A live floral arrangement was sent to the family from the Chamber, on behalf of our members, and a thank you card was received from Marina Brown on behalf of her and her family.

STARS in Business Awards: Plans have begun for another Stars in Business awards competition and celebration. The gala will take place in November, and all Chamber members are encouraged to nominate worthy candidates. Nomination forms are available from the Chamber office. As a result of winning our local 'Archie Bernard Memorial' Business of the Year award for 2006., Local Colour will be nominated for a STARS award by our Chamber.

Tourist Booth:

Much discussion took place, and several suggestions were made regarding a new tourist information kiosk; it was agreed that we would explore pricing and availability from Jonsteel (a metal version - \$2,700.), a company called

Urban Shed, in Dundalk, Stoneridge Cabinets in Flesherton, and the Mennonite community. It was agreed that the main corner of the village was an ideal spot and we will confirm with Glenn Boynton that we can again use that space.

Tourism Support: Hugh Parkinson will contract Grey County, through Tourism Manager Bryan Plumstead and /or Finance Committee Chair David Fawcett to determine the level of tourist support we might avail ourselves of for future tourism initiatives.

Parking and Zoning: The Chamber will write letters to Grey Highlands Council and Grey County Transportation, regarding parking and zoning complaints received in the village of Flesherton.

Adjournment: 9:00 pm. with thanks to Helen at the Village Inn Restaurant for staying open to accommodate us.
Moved/seconded by Jock Robinson/Barbara Pearn

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 13th, 2007 at Hickling House, 25 Sydenham Street, Flesherton. This “**See you for the Summer**” meeting is going to be an **INFORMAL** gathering to have some fun, and discuss what our Chamber’s strengths and weaknesses are, what we should be doing...where we should be going...etc. followed by a great barbeque (We’ll supply the salad and the spuds! }

So plan to join us: Bring your vision!
Bring your creativity!
Bring your open mind!
Bring your harmonious spirit!
Bring your own meat!
Bring your own bottle!