

July 19, 2023

**Berlin Economic Development Authority Meeting
Berlin City Hall – Council Chambers**

Present were: Vice Chair Peter Higbee, Dick Huot, Andre Duchesne, Dick Eastman, and Amber Bachner, Paul Robitaille

Excused were: Steve Halle and Bobby Hill

Others Present: Pam Laflamme, Director of Strategic Initiatives; Jan Zicha

Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at City Hall at 5:35 PM.

Approval of June 2023 meeting minutes

Mr. Robitaille made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 2023 meeting as presented. Mr. Duchesne seconded the motion. So moved, the motion passed with all in favor.

Financial Report

Ms. Laflamme did a brief summary of the financials – finance is doing yearend summaries, so we won't have financials to review until the August meeting, however as very little has been spent there is no change in our economic position.

Economic Development Strategy

Ms. Laflamme inquired about the status of the review of the website. It hasn't yet been completed. Mr. Robitaille asked to get the link so he could also review the site. We will continue this discussion at the August meeting.

Other

Mr. Huot asked a question about how we encourage and/or incentivize someone with a good idea to carry it out. This spurred a long conversation about how we could use the website to communicate messaging, who we should link to for information, etc. There was discussion about the market, how we attract businesses, how we can sell ourselves, and what the most likely sectors are that will see growth.

There was concern expressed for the forestry sector and the current state of the wildfires in Canada and the impact on those businesses that rely on timber. There was a conversation about how the board can support new businesses or existing ones that might want to expand. It was decided all board members should take a look at the website and provide input and we'd continue this discussion at the August meeting.

Member Comments

None

Public Comments

Mr. Zicha inquired about the status the cross-state rail project that would be tourist oriented rail between Portland and Montreal. Mr. Higbee shared that there hasn't been much progress. Mr. Zicha shared his thoughts on rail and how it could benefit the area and feels there should be more emphasis on promoting rail in our area.

Nonpublic

Mr. Huot made a motion to go in to Nonpublic Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (d) Land Matters, and seconded by Mr. Robitaille, roll call vote was taken, motion passed.

Mr. Robitaille made a motion to exit nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3, II (d) Land Matters seconded by Mr. Eastman. A roll call vote was taken, the motion passed.

Land Matters were discussed, no votes were taken.

Other

None

Adjourn

Ms. Bachner made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Robitaille seconded the motion. So moved, the motion passed unanimously.