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Windsor, Ontario October 28, 2009

A meeting of the **Small Business Advisory Panel** is held this day commencing at 3:30 o'clock p.m. in Room 405, 400 City Hall Square East, there being present the following members:

Dr. Alfie Morgan, Chair
Councillor Alan Halberstadt (arrives at 3:45 p.m.)
Councillor Caroline Postma (arrives at 3:45 p.m.)
Don Larkin
Norm Marcoux
James Marsh
Vicky Smith
Jim Williams

Regrets received from:

John Millson

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Lee Anne Doyle, Executive Director/Chief Building Official
Thom Hunt, City Planner
Janice Guthrie, Deputy Treasurer – Taxation and Revenue
Rose MacLachlan, Business Improvement Area Development Officer
Mario Sonego, City Engineer
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 3:33 o'clock p.m. and the Panel considers the Agenda being Schedule "A" **attached** hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. MINUTES

Moved by V. Smith, seconded by N. Marcoux,
That the minutes of the meeting held October 7, 2009 **BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED** to indicate that under Item 4 Small Business Advisory Panel Mandate, Page 3, bullet point 1 that "billing fee increases" **BE REPLACED** with "***development charges***".

Carried.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT

None.

4. **PRESENTATION**

Mr. Patrick P. Persichilli, Vice President, Windsor-Essex Development Commission sends regrets. He will be invited to attend a future meeting.

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

5.1 **Implications of the Official Plan Review for Small Business**

Thom Hunt, City Planner is present to provide the implications for small business as it relates to the Official Plan review. T. Hunt indicates he wishes to dispel the misconception that a “commercial freeze” is addressed in the Official Plan review.

T. Hunt distributes a map outlining the designated land use, *attached* as Appendix “A”. He advises that the exercise of producing the map resulted in the following observations/comments:

- Identified an alarming number of vacancies in built up areas of the city
- There is enough land for growth to the foreseeable future of 2012

Councillor Halberstadt indicates that several businesses located in the core area and throughout the Business Improvement Areas are suffering financially due to “power centres”. He refers to the Community Improvement Plan and he notes that marketing of incentives for small business owners have not been addressed. He advises that incentives are imperative to attract people to the downtown core.

J. Williams explains that the shift from indoor malls to power centres arose as a result of the costs associated with utilities, taxes and the requirement for common area space.

T. Hunt states that efforts must be made for a viable city that includes walkable communities with amenities located nearby.

- J. Williams provides the following comments relating to the downtown core:
- Need for more residents to live in the downtown core
 - Lack of parking space available and the issuance of parking tickets
 - Provide incentives
 - Provide affordable living in the city centre

The Chair asks that J. Williams provide the foregoing comments and any additional comments regarding the downtown core for a future report to City Council.

The Chair states there is a need for a Small Business Development Officer.

The Chair thanks Thom Hunt for his presentation.

5.2 Small Business Advisory Panel Subcommittee Report

Councillor Halberstadt advises that a meeting of the Small Business Advisory Panel Subcommittee was held on October 9, 2009. He suggests that a meeting be convened to create a presentation relating to tax relief for commercial and industrial properties. He indicates that the presentation will be brought forward to the Small Business Advisory Panel and will then proceed to City Council during the 2010 budget deliberations. In response to a question asked by Councillor Halberstadt regarding whether the presentation should concentrate solely on the commercial sector or should it be expanded to include industrial rates, the Chair responds that the term “small business” should be viewed in the widest sense of the word which would include a variety of economic sectors.

J. Marsh expresses concern relating to how services are delivered by the city and he suggests that the business process be “re-engineered”. He states that the City’s current procedures/policies cause a bureaucratic slow down as it relates to services and he provides his personal experience of a land purchase.

Lee Anne Doyle states as Chief Building Official, she is interested in acquiring feedback from citizens relating to their experiences with city services and she notes that the processes need to be fine tuned. She advises that under the legislation of the Ontario Building Code, the City is accountable to a time frame.

6. NEW BUSINESS

The Chair advises that City Council at its meeting held October 26, 2009 adopted the following excerpt from CR352/2009:

“That the net strike savings/costs of \$5,571,535 be returned to the taxpayers”

Discussion ensues regarding the New Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario). Background information regarding FedDev Ontario is attached as Appendix “B” for information purposes. It is noted that the Southern Ontario Development Program has been established to promote economic development, economic diversification and job creation. It will deliver close to \$100 million in funding over 2009-10.

The Chair suggests that an application to FedDev for \$20 million be considered. M. Sonogo advises that the Corporation must leverage a portion of funds to receive a FedDev Grant.

Councillor Postma requests that administration bring back a report regarding the application for a FedDev Grant.

R. MacLachlan asks that the section relating to the membership structure (2 General Managers from administration) of the Small Business Advisory Panel Terms of Reference be revisited

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on November 18, 2009 at 3:00 o'clock p.m. in the Town of Walkerville Meeting Room, third floor, City Hall.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 4:58 o'clock p.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR