

Present: CED committee members (chair Christine Bossi), Sue Welke, Norm McGinnis (Chief Administrative Officer), Carol Mushata (corporate officer), Dana LaJeunesse (Council liaison)

1. CED update by Sue Welke, CED Officer

A. Some things mentioned on the Idea Board from the joint meeting with CAC "Let's Talk Sooke":

- they would like a CAC representative to be present at CED committee meetings. This was made into a motion and was carried. "Carried" means it will be a recommendation to Council.
- need some ideas for using LCR (Low Carbon Resilience) tool such as create an LCR sustainability checklist.

- need to consider (keep in mind?) direct public implications and financial implications, both long and short term (of economic development, I guess)

- how are greenhouse gases measured?

B. Sue has had some meetings ("meet and greet") since her arrival to her new post as CED Officer. Some she mentioned are: South Island Prosperity Partnership, SFU LCR team, Destination B.C., government of B.C. citizens services, Community Data Program (federal), Employment and Social Development Canada, tourism Vancouver Island, B.C. Economic Development Association. There were others but none that I caught that were local. These likely will be important in securing various funding. She also compiled a list of organizations that they might want to hear from; i.e. invite to make a presentation to the CED committee at one of their monthly meetings. Ms. Welke said that the SFU LCR team is a priority. Also, Investment Readiness (B.C. government), Blue Economy (federal government) (refers to stewardship and sustainable use of oceans), Trade and Invest B.C., Coastal Communities social procurement initiative. Norm McGinnis added post-Covid recovery. Ms. Welke will put forward a suggested agenda for presenters, possibly 2 per meeting. No local organizations were mentioned.

2. Delegation by Peter Dukakis from Work BC and Worklink (he is also a member of the CED committee). These have been a non-profit since 1978, but they are now creating a for-profit branch for purposes of: economic development, charitable gift giving (want to be the "charity of choice" for big donors that are required to give to the community) and social enterprise to generate a revenue. They offer many services to the community such as up to a 50% wage subsidy for 24 weeks for new hires, provide laptops (refurbished), pay tuitions, living expenses and childcare for up to 3 years for eligible clients to retrain, self-employment services (done by a subcontractor), provide financial assistance for 52 weeks for people training on new jobs, provide tools and equipment if needed for starting a confirmed new job. They have plans for a big new building on Church Rd. where they hope to be able to provide employers with meeting spaces, computer labs, a conference room and a 250 square foot multipurpose room with kitchen that will be available to local organizations for no charge.

3. Delegation by Diane Bernard on home-based businesses.

- what are the number for home-based businesses in Sooke? No official record but estimates range from 400-700. HBB organization Sooke Women in Business has 70 business-members. There are approx. 80+ men in the "gig economy" i.e. trades..

- she has 3 points: traditionally Sooke has looked outside the community for chain stores; there has been some help for "so you want to start a business"; nothing has been done for "how to grow a business" and there are many hurdles people have to deal with if they want to grow their business.

- businesses owned and run by local people provide character, are vibrant, stay longer, are more efficient, have lower costs, involve less travel (ghg emissions), wealth stays in the community, more investment in the community via donations of time, money and resources to local causes.

- problems faced by local businesses are: high rents, high taxes and day care.

- she would like to see a "hot desk scene". This is a gathering place for home-based businesses...sort of a shared office space. It needs to be aesthetically pleasing ("not a hole").

- when considering tourism as a major resource for Sooke, keep in mind that "our wild iconic natural resources are under threat".

This delegation was very well received. Some comments by members of the CED committee: Karen Mason: we need affordable commercial space; Doug Wittich (he is the president of the Family Business Association of Vancouver Island): anything that supports small businesses is good. He notes that mental

health is also a problem during Covid; people that he talks to are feeling some despair.; Peter Dukakis: Work BC provides 10 free counselling sessions. They want to bring in a full-time counsellor.

3. Farm stand business licenses. Member Donnie Eve wondered why this "political" decision was passed off to CED committee. Eventually Norm McGinnis noted that that is part of the mandate of this committee. The committee considered that there are lots of programs available if one has a business license and that \$50 per year is not very much money (cost of business license) so they agreed with the idea of mandating that anyone selling "value added products" such as jams and pies at a farm stand would need to buy a business license. It was brought up but not really considered if they could provide an option for waving the fee in the case of someone feeling it was too much money.

4. CED committee vision statements to be postponed until next meeting. Also details of how best to use a climate first lens and LCR lens. Public engagement is also to be considered next meeting. Peter Dukakis noted that they need to explore some best practices for engaging the community. He offered to work with Sue Welke on that.