



Staff Report

Report Title: September 2023 Business and Economic Officer Status Report

Prepared By: Amy Irwin, Business and Economic Officer

Department: BED

Date: Sep. 6, 2023

Report Number: BED-2023-09-36

File Number: C11 BED 23

Copy to: D02

Attachments:

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number BED-2023-09-36 prepared by Amy Irwin, Business and Economic Officer.

Background:

This report provides the Committee with an update from the Business & Economic Officer.

Discussion:

Economic Development

The Economic Development team continues to support local businesses by:

- Regular check-ins and communication with local businesses.
- Creation and organization of Business surveys and check ins, to be conducted in September and October, with the goal of curating data for an updated business directory and promotional/marketing material.
- Support to businesses looking for space in Huron-Kinloss.

Tourism

Secrets of the Back 40

Secrets of the Back 40 is continuing to be promoted by:

- Distribution of postcards at local tourism offices, businesses, in Lucknow's Music in the Fields camping bags, and representation at local events such as the Ripley

Food Art and Craft Festival, Back Forty launch event and the Drifter's Cruise nights.

- Branded flags and sandwich boards are placed with operators and tourism offices.
- Social media posts promoting the Back Forty.
- Photo and video shoots are planned for September 11 and 13 to increase assets.

Point Clark Lighthouse

- The Point Clark Lighthouse had a busy summer, with four staff and one coordinator doing a fantastic job of conducting tours, organizing a weekly children's program every Friday afternoon, and hosting a Lighthouse speaker series three times.
- As of August 30, 1492 adults and 748 children have paid for a tour. Children's programming is every Friday at the Lighthouse, courtesy of funding from Bruce Power. 88 children attended 7 sessions this summer. 58 people have attended 3 of the Lighthouse speaker series, hosted by local lighthouse historian, Larry Wright this summer.
- Merchandise is going very well at the Lighthouse with 2 re-orders this summer.
- Full report from the Lighthouse Coordinator will be attached to October report.

General Tourism

- Drifter's Car Club has hosted 3 Cruise nights at the Ripley-Huron Community Centre - June 30, August 4 and September 1. Tourism and Economic Development support has been given by procuring local food vendors and some marketing leading up to and during the event.
- Continued support as secretary for Lucknow's Music in the Fields event, which was held on August 24-26, 2023, with over 5500 attending.
- Lucknow Tourism student finished the season on September 2 and full report will be attached to October status report.

Key indicators of success:

- Secrets of the Back 40 tourism initiative moves forward with a new tourism website, with the goal of attracting new visitors to Huron-Kinloss, encourage local spending and invite locals to re-discover local producers and spend more time in our downtowns.
- Point Clark Lighthouse Museum revitalization project is re-opened for the 2023 season, attracting new visitors.
- Data is collected and analyzed through the visitors' surveys, allowing for better understanding of the needs of our visitors.
- Surrounding municipalities and organizations are aware of what Huron-Kinloss has to offer and tourism cross promotion bring visitors to the area.
- Huron-Kinloss businesses feel supported and celebrated in our community.
- Ongoing business investment and retention in our community.

Financial Impacts:

Included in the current budget.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the Municipality's Vision and Mission. The recommendations contribute to our goals in achieving a prosperous community, a vibrant community, and a spirited community.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Amy Irwin, Business and Economic Officer

Report Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer