



Staff Report

Report Title: December 2023 – The Hub Status Report

Prepared By: Will LeGrand, Business Development Coordinator

Department: Business & Economic Development

Date: Dec. 21, 2023

Report Number: BED-2024-01-1

File Number:

C11 BED 23

Attachments: The Hub – Business Incubator Overview, The Hub – At a Glance

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number BED-2024-01-1 prepared by Will LeGrand, Business Development Coordinator.

Background:

The Hub November Status Report provides information to Council on behalf of the Business Development Coordinator.

Discussion:

Business Support

The Hub assisted 5 businesses in December, all from Huron-Kinloss. The businesses contacted The Hub for a range of services, including website development, online listings, branding, and adapting to new markets.

Homestead Program

The Homestead Program, offered by The Hub, supports entrepreneurs in testing their business concepts in a physical location, providing both space and guidance. Currently, the program is hosting Maggie Robinson, owner of Collective Co, a consignment store specializing in women's and children's clothing.

Operating from The Hub since September 13, Collective Co has become a significant attraction in downtown Ripley, especially after expanding its vendor market for the holiday season. Collective Co Boutique's participation in the Homestead Program is

set to finish on December 24, 2023. Maggie Robinson has done exceptional work in the program, and we look forward to watching their continued success.

Creative Futures – Youth Entrepreneurship Events

The Creative Futures events, hosted by The Hub, aimed to inspire youth entrepreneurship through fun and informative workshops. The purpose was to provide a platform for young minds to explore the potential in creative industries while still fostering innovation and skill development.

On December 11th, The Hub hosted a dynamic Filmmaking & Content Creation Workshop with JOI Creative, a local video marketing agency. Attendees explored the essentials of making engaging videos and learned valuable insights on growing a business in the media industry. JOI Creative's practical tips provided a hands-on experience, making this session a blend of creative exploration and business savvy.

On December 12th, The Hub hosted the STEM and Business Challenge, led by NII Explore, a division of the Nuclear Innovation Institute. This session immersed participants in an activity that combined STEM skills and essential business knowledge. Attendees gained valuable insights into applying their STEM knowledge in real-world business scenarios, making the event a bridge between technical expertise and entrepreneurial thinking. NII Explore's contribution showcased their role in accelerating innovation within the nuclear industry, making the challenge a valuable experience for all involved.

With a total attendance of 19, including 7 participants in the Filmmaking Workshop and 12 for the STEM and Business Challenge, these events showcase the community's interest in after-school youth enrichment and the growing enthusiasm among youth for entrepreneurship.

The Hub Project Ends

After three years of service, The Hub, our local business support center, officially closed its doors on December 15th. The closure marked the completion of its predetermined funding period, during which The Hub played a vital role in supporting and assisting local businesses.

Throughout its time in operation, we are proud of the meaningful impact it had, helping hundreds of businesses with free consultations, training events, and networking opportunities. For a deeper understanding of The Hub's history and contributions, please refer to the attached report titled "The Hub – Business Incubator Overview".

Financial Impacts:

None at this time.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

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

Projects in this report assist staff in achieving the following projects in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan:

P2.2 Business Incubator

Respectfully Submitted By:

Will LeGrand, Business Development Coordinator

Report Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer