

South Queens Chamber of Commerce

Minutes
General Meeting

Date Held: October 21, 2009

Location: White Point Beach Resort

In Attendance:	Mark Sapp	Robin Anthony
	David Noel	Bruce Inglis
	Cheryl Beaton	George Mitchell
	Pam Miles	Barry Tomalin
	Kerry Morash	

Cheryl called the meeting to order.

The minutes of the Directors meeting on October 7th were read.

Barry questioned the purpose of reading the minutes at a general meeting, and the lack of an agenda with action items. David responded that as these minutes were not yet posted on the website, it was felt that they should be reviewed with the members to make them aware of the directors issues and concerns. The lack of an agenda was due to insufficient time to prepare one, and in any case, it would have been a generic agenda with call to order, review of minutes, correspondence, old business, and new business elements, but with no specific discussion or action items.

David expressed frustration at the failure of members to provide input to the board. As indicated in the directors minutes, Amber had sent a questionnaire by email to all members asking what they want from the Chamber. David reported that he had received only one response, despite the fact that there are 40 plus members. Barry stated that he had provided a verbal response to the questions.

Pam asked about approaching new businesses – how should they be approached, what can she say to them without overstepping her authority? She indicated that she would be interested in doing this if she had some information to work with. Cheryl said that she would provide the membership package information to Pam. As it appears that not all members have received this information and the laminated membership cards, she will ensure that this info is distributed to all members.

Barry asked who would be the chairperson after January 1st, as Mark had stated his intention to step down after December.

Cheryl felt that we need to operate the Chamber as we think is best, not necessarily trying to make everyone happy. If some people don't like the way it is run, it is up to them to step up and get involved in order to change it.

Mark reiterated his belief that the Chamber should function as an umbrella organization, under which the committees can operate to do their work and achieve their goals.

Robin noted that the discussion at today's meeting is very similar to Chamber meetings of 10, 20 or more years past. She felt that our most successful activities have been the special event meetings - e.g. the business meet & greet, and the Queens Place update meeting – probably because they gave value back to the members.

There was a broad discussion that there may be no purpose in having general business meetings, but that we should focus on quarterly special event meetings for the membership. The business of the Chamber would be dealt with by the board of directors. Suggestions for meeting topics included H1N1 pandemic planning, and downtown development and promotion.

An issue was raised regarding the Christmas Committee working on a Christmas season shopping promotion which will benefit South Queens merchants, but there is a real lack of merchants involved in the initiative. Question of how much should the Chamber be trying to do for people that don't want to contribute to the effort.

Mark reported that he had spoken to Jill Cruikshank on a number of issues, including the new VIC. He pointed out that we view the project as a positive for the community, but would have welcomed the opportunity to provide input to it, particularly from our tourism businesses. It shows that we need to have good two-way communication between the Chamber and RQM. He also noted that the Mayor had previously suggested that the Chamber could make a presentation to Council on the work that it does.

Cheryl circulated the Treasurers Report.

George provided an update on the 250th anniversary committee projects. He explained that this was his first involvement with the government grant applications, and he has learned a lot from the experience. The first approach to ACOA included very rough estimates of costs, and these are too low. There has been considerable discussion within RQM on the location for the clock. As this will be taken over by the Region, it needs to be on Region land. The current proposal is to locate it on the new VIC. This may allow it to be funded under the VIC project, which may free up funding for the performance stage and mural. There are some design issues for the performance stage and the building inspector has agreed to help address these. Due to the lateness of the season, both the stage and mural projects will have to be resubmitted next year. George will continue to work on these with ACOA's Mark Townsend.

There was a question about when to start the 11th hour shopping promotion. The Christmas Committee had planned to start on Nov 13th, but this would require advertising

prior to November 11th. It may be that the community would consider it to be inappropriate and in poor taste to focus on Christmas before Remembrance Day. Kerry suggested that the committee contact the Legion and hear what they have to say about it. It was also suggested that the major retailers such as Mark Reynolds and Don Mackenzie be consulted for their input.

Mark thanked all the attendees, and in particular Barry, Pam and Robin for their input as newer members of the Chamber.

Meeting adjourned.