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## MINUTES

**MEETING DATE:** 4/19/2013

**MEETING TIME:** 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

**ATTENDANCE:** N. Gavarre (City of Barrie); A. Dorsey (Barrie Public Library); C. Kouassi (Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario); M. Kuzma (Nottawasaga Futures); S. Laycock (Simcoe County Workforce Development Board); R. Milne (Councilor, Town of New Tecumseth); C. Oosterbaan (County of Simcoe-Chair); L. Thompson (City of Orillia); R. Wisken (LIP, County of Simcoe); R. Griffiths (LIP, recording secretary)

**SUBJECT:** LIP - Business Development Sub-Council

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1. Welcome

C. Oosterbaan welcomed the group.

2. Ethno-Cultural Event – Debrief

R. Wisken reported on the Ethno-Cultural event held at Liberty North on March 20, 2013. Good first connections between newcomers and service providers were initiated. C. Oosterbaan remarked on reaction from attendees regarding services that were offered in the County and their previous lack of awareness of the programs. R. Wisken shared a FaceBook post from an attendee who shared the meeting notes and encouragement to club members who were unable to attend.

3. Portal Launch

Municipal Immigration Information Online (MIIO) Portal Launch will be held on May 3, 2013, at the Gibson Centre in Alliston from 2:00-4:00 pm. The Minister of Citizen and Immigration, Honourable Michael Coteau, is scheduled to attend.

Registrations for the Community Marketplace, to represent the five categories of the portal, Welcome, Living, Working, Learning and Business, have been sent out.

R. Wisken provided a brief demonstration of the portal, focusing on the Business section. The group was encouraged to forward any "News" items to be added to the portal to LIP staff.

4. Newcomer Entrepreneur Study - Review In-Depth Interviews

M. Kuzma and A. Dorsey shared newcomer entrepreneur survey results. Key points from the discussion included:

### Feedback on Survey Design

- Some language barriers in the way the survey was written could result in participants not completing questions.
- Suggestion to simplify language and avoid jargon
- Suggestion to simplifying the language of the survey and adding “skips” after certain questions might help the survey to flow better.
- What country they came from would be a good question to add

### Preliminary Findings and Discussion

- Understanding the terminology and processes is a common struggle.
- Networking/Mentoring was an item that was repeatedly mentioned.
- Fees associated with courses or services in different organizations are sometimes a barrier.
- The size of Simcoe County and perceived minimal competition was found to be a deciding factor in choosing their location in Simcoe County.
- Regulations/red tape where common barriers.
- Networking was indicated as both a positive and a negative. They recognized value in it but it was not high on the priority list due to time constraints.
- Cost of joining groups (ie. chamber of commerce) was a barriers indicated by respondents.
- C. Kouassi asked if the participants provided any positive feedback. A. Dorsey– Yes there was some positive experiences reported.

### Potential Action to Address Newcomer Entrepreneur Needs

- Discussion on how self-employment information is shared with immigrants was discussed.
- Discussion on the idea of immigrant entrepreneurs being mentors for other newcomers.
- A “one-stop-shop” location to provide information/referrals would be beneficial. Business services coordination group could be a goal for the group to provide an impartial coordination. Group needs to seek funding for this.
- Discussion regarding approaching banks for possible funding and or resources that could be beneficial to the Business Development Sub Council.
- Suggestion to engage print media to provide one free ad promoting new businesses would be beneficial.
- Suggestion of a flow chart of business development and services that are provided including costs etc. (service mapping) similar to the Parks Canada.

After the Survey Monkey is created and distributed, the data will be gathered and analyzed by a County of Simcoe summer student. This information will then be provided to the group to further assess and begin brainstorming priorities for the sub-council to address needs.

**ACTION:** R. Wisken to add discussion items to the work plan so they are not “lost”

**ACTION:** M. Kuzma and A. Dorsey will provide a summary from each of their survey’s to capture the main ideas and themes from the respondents.

**ACTION:** R. Wisken and C. Oosterbaan will create draft of Survey Monkey for next meeting, May 10, 2013.

## 5. Update on Succession Planning

C. Oosterbaan reported that succession planning was on the agenda for the Regional Economic Development Committee meeting; however, due to time, they did not have an opportunity to discuss. The Community Development Corporation (CDC) hosts a workshop to help business map out succession planning with the focus to pairing immigrants looking at purchasing a business and businesses owners looking to sell.

L. Thompson provided an overview of successionmatching.com which is a web match, similar to a date match site, in Saskatchewan. Discussion regarding the website included:

- Considering the succession planning needs in rural areas and farming
- The need to educate business and newcomers of the website
- Marketing of the website and potential barriers

**ACTION:** Sub-Council members will review the website before the next meeting to further discuss.

## 6. Next Meeting

May 10, 2013 10 am – 12 pm

Meeting schedule for summer will be set at May meeting.