

**MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams
770 Vernon Avenue

Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Zac de Vries (Chair), Jason Arruda, Raymond Chan, Patrick Marshall, Robert Wickson (via Teams), Richard Michaels, Jesse O'Neill-Bains and Rachid Ouache

Staff: Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk; and Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk (6:19 p.m.)

Guests: Dallas Gislason, Interim CEO, South Island Prosperity Partnership

Regrets: Tim Petropoulos, Amber Hockin, and Victoria Shannon

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by R. Chan and Seconded by R. Michaels: "That the Minutes of the June 20, 2024 Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated"

CARRIED

CHAIR'S REMARKS

No comments were made.

SOUTH ISLAND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP

The Interim CEO from the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) gave a presentation, and the following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- The "Victoria RISING" initiative was developed after consulting with approximately 400 stakeholders, drawing inspiration from cities around the world with similar values.
- SIPP aims to raise the city's profile without diminishing the significance of tourism.
- Victoria has the largest faculty of health informatics in North America, contributing to its growing life sciences sector.
- The Centre for Ocean Applied Sustainable Technologies (COAST), another SIPP initiative, brings together people, ideas, businesses, and communities to create a hub driving ocean technology and marine industry innovation.
- Indigenous representation is central to SIPP's work. The organization actively engages with Indigenous communities in areas such as training, employment, and retention.
- Before SIPP was founded, a roundtable was held with Indigenous Chiefs to determine if there was interest in regional economic development.
- SIPP hosted the Indigenous Prosperity Gathering, an economic development conference, in 2019.

- In May 2023, SIPP hosted a marine event where local Indigenous Chiefs shared their work on various initiatives, from fisheries and agriculture to coastal protection and spill response.
- The committee was encouraged to look up the Victoria Native Friendship Centre's Small Business Pledge Program for further learning opportunities.
- SIPP engages in government advocacy, focusing on what is working and what is not in areas such as procurement. They recently launched a procurement resource network to foster innovation.
- COAST serves as a vital connection between government and the private sector, and SIPP has partnered with provincial ministries in BC to advance trade and investment initiatives.
- The Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) does not extend to this region, adding to funding challenges.
- Victoria's economic base is different from the rest of Vancouver Island, making it complex to discuss an island-wide economic strategy. However, there are areas for coordination, such as an island-wide agriculture strategy.
- Regarding Saanich's economic development, SIPP collaborates with the municipality but does not focus on the land asset side of development.
- Saanich and SIPP work together to create opportunities in emerging sectors, such as life sciences and ocean/marine industries through initiatives like COAST.
- Destination Canada has launched a tourism corridor to boost economic development.
- SIPP is involved in facilitating cross-jurisdictional collaborations between governments and the private sector.
- SIPP is exploring how to engage with YYJ (Victoria International Airport) through a multi-stakeholder approach, recognizing YYJ as a significant driver of the local economy and tourism.
- Time and context are critical in regional development. The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board is working collaboratively to deliver services across boundary lines.
- Saanich's Economic Development Division is relatively new, and the committee expressed interest in solidifying this focus within the municipality.
- SIPP is currently in the fourth year of a five-year funding agreement with its municipal partners. They plan to explore a long-term agreement in the near future.
- Committee members were encouraged to re-apply as volunteer members. The application period closes on October 25, 2024, at 4:30 p.m.

Angela Hawkshaw left the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Robert Wickson left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place Thursday November 21, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Councillor Zac de Vries, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk