

Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce
Business Support Committee Minutes
January 11, 2008

Attendance:

Ed Despres, Chair
Peter Brown
Peter Gosline
George Duncan
Carol Ogilvie
Pam Crook
Pamela Gleeson
Gordon Hale
Joe Hart
John Vance
Bob Edwards, Vice Chair

Call to order and Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Ed Despres opened the meeting at 7:30AM and the minutes of December 14, 2007 were approved as written.

Acknowledgements:

He acknowledged Bob Edwards, Ray Cote, Barbara Miller, George Duncan and John Vance for their recent accomplishments.

Sign Committee

He acknowledged that the funds committed to date were \$22,000+ and was hopeful the RFP was going to be mailed today.

Guest Speaker:

Chairman Despres introduced Jane LaPointe, board member from the Contoocook Valley Money Matters Coalition. Jane, a local Business Consultant, is also a member of the Economic Vitality Subcommittee (EVS) and co-authored reports used by the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Jane introduced her three key topics. The program itself - Money Matters - and explained the program began with welfare representatives from the local communities. 18 months ago, they sponsored a breakfast to discuss financial issues. She explained that it is a statewide coalition and has discussed these matters with the Franklin NH Coalition. A thorough discussion of the Earned Income Tax Credit was provided.

Jane also reviewed the AARP sponsored free tax return completion service. Presently there are six volunteers taking the test to become preparers. There are two sessions per week for simple tax return preparation. One is scheduled for Saturday, 2/2/08 10-1 and 4-7. Jane also discussed the Financial Tools Workshop. Workshops are being held at the River Center in Peterborough and at the Tuttle Library in Antrim with childcare provided.

She is encouraging and developing a volunteer base with the expertise to assist the Coalition with this workshop series. A detailed explanation of who and how and the terms and conditions is provided in a brochure that is being circulated amongst the ConVal School District communities. The program has the support of the IRS. David Bernstein is coordinating the tax preparer's effort. Money coaching is being overseen by Larry Schwartz of Hancock. He wants to develop a network of qualified individuals to help with this program.

There are numerous reasons why these financial planning and awareness programs are so important to the community. Jane is available at 924-6321 and would be delighted to discuss these benefits and the various educational programs with all interested parties.

Credit card awareness information flyers are being circulated to local employers and via other methods to help educate individuals, from young people to the elderly, regarding the use and abuse of this method of attaining and credit use. Much discussion incurred regarding various methods of circulating the information to reach as many individuals as possible. Ideas of leaving them in town halls, libraries, employer's HR departments, mailings by way of monthly bank statements and more were suggested. Jane indicated she would review these ideas and report back next year. Pamela Gleeson suggested using the Chamber Ambassadors too.

In closing, Jane stressed the importance of new and additional volunteers, as there is so much coordination involved with these valuable programs.

Old Business:

Chairman Despres reminded the Committee that Dr. Bergeron, Superintendent of Schools, will be the speaker at our next BSC meeting scheduled for February 8th, and in March, MEDC's Jack Dugan is scheduled to be the speaker.

New Business:

Be sure to sign up for the Citizen of the Year Dinner on February 12th at the MCC. Next meeting is scheduled for February 8th at the hospital.

A motion was made, seconded and voted in the affirmative at 8:40 AM to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully,

Bob Edwards
Vice Chair and Secretary Pro-Tem