

Minutes of the Regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission held on Thursday, March 21, 2013 at 7:32 am in the Community Futures Boardroom, 135 Third Street, Duncan, BC.

PRESENT

George Robbins, Chair
Roger Hart, Blair Herbert<to 9:15 am>, Russ Jenkins, Michael Kelly<at 8:08 am>, Robert Radford, and Marsha Stanley<to 9:03 am>

ALSO PRESENT

Tom Anderson, General Manager, Planning & Development
Geoff Millar, Manager, Economic Development
Cathy Mailhot, Marketing Coordinator, Tourism Cowichan
Louise McMurray, Film Commissioner, Film Cowichan
Dominique Beesley, Recording Secretary
Dana Thorne

ABSENT

Directors M. Dorey and P. Kent
Darin George, Darrel Mansbridge and Sandra Goth

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be amended with the addition of the following New Business item:

NB1 – A verbal Staff Report from the Manager, Economic Development; regarding Economic Work Plan for 2013, Opportunities BC, Tourism Vancouver Island – BC Ferries, and Nanaimo Airport meeting;

and that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Economic Development Commission meeting held February 21, 2013 be adopted.

MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS

R1 – Film Cowichan Update

A verbal Report from Louise McMurray, Film Commissioner, regarding Film Cowichan update, was received as information.

The Film Commissioner noted that a Budweiser commercial had been filmed on a private fishing boat in Cowichan Bay last week, as a part of its Island-wide locations list, and for which the set was people watching a hockey game on television. Ms. McMurray also noted that the major motion picture *Godzilla* was currently being filmed at locations in Ladysmith and Shawnigan Lake.

Ms. McMurray also noted that Front Street Pictures production company was about to begin producing a television series, and she introduced Allen Lewis, Vice President, Production.

Allen Lewis said that his company would be shooting a twenty-two episode television series, on-going until the end of August, mainly being filmed at the old curling rink on Sherman Road, in North Cowichan – serving as its production studio.

Mr. Lewis said that the main characters would be from ten to fifteen years old in age and would reoccur in all episodes.

The show, entitled *Spooksville*, he said, would be shot in locations such as Chemainus, City of Duncan, and various Cowichan graveyards and churches; airing on Hub network in the United States and YTV in Canada.

Allen Lewis introduced Michael Farias, Locations Manager, Front Street Pictures for *Spooksville*.

Ken Lawson, Line Producer, Springsville Productions Ltd., residing in Victoria, BC, said that he has worked on Vancouver Island since 2009 and that he felt that it had huge film potential. He noted that he also had ten years of experience in producing films in various locations in Greater Vancouver.

There were drawbacks, he said, and that he would be diligent in pleasing everyone inconvenienced from this filming.

Mr. Lawson said that effected parties would be notified in advance of any public space occupancy and he acknowledged that homeowners may not be happy with all filming locations. Springsville Productions Ltd., he said, would be available at any time via telephone and he encouraged the Regional District to contact him or Front Street Pictures if any issues arose.

Allan Lewis said that there would be a cast and crew of 75 working on the production which, in his view he said, would benefit the local economy. He noted that Front Street is looking to hire locally for extra cast members and crew.

Mr. Lewis also said that the biggest inconvenience to residents, he feels, would be the possibility of lost parking spaces.

Ms. McMurray said that there was a lot of good will and an open door policy, resulting from the length of production time to build a relationship with Front Street, and that this group had met with Vancouver Island University trades program, City of Duncan's staff, and the Downtown Business Improvement Association to make them aware of the upcoming filming.

She also said that local business economic opportunities would result during this time.

Ken Lawson said that a legacy would be left in hopes that the television series was renewed in that, he said, a 10,600 sq. ft. studio, built by Front Street and the only one on the Island, would be left intact for other film companies' use.

Mr. Lawson noted that an engineer from the District of North Cowichan had looked at its studio at the curling rink and, he said, the viewing potential from its lounge area would encourage community observation of the production.

Mr. Lawson also noted that a local electrical company, Rob Lee, Professional Electric, would be hired.

Ken Lawson said that a meeting has been scheduled with Cowichan Senior Secondary graduating class regarding his request that its venue for an upcoming

celebration be changed.

Mr. Lawson said that the Sprott Shaw building in North Cowichan was serving as the company's office space and that he was seeking desks to borrow or purchase.

Mr. Lawson said that crew members would be from out of town during the summer holidays and that Springsville would be providing rental housing for the parents of any minor cast members.

Dana Thorne, QET Coordinator, Quw'ustun Employment and Training, Cowichan Tribes, said that Cowichan Tribes had some extra office furniture in its storage and that she would investigate possible loan to Front Street. She said that Stephanie Charlie had a passion for the arts and that she would help facilitate the availability of any desks for Mr. Lawson.

Ms. Thorne said that an all native soccer tournament was scheduled to be held on Mother's Day weekend and that a huge women's flag football tournament was scheduled for June 21st to June 23rd.

Michael Farias said that there were a few locations that he was interested in as potential film locations on Cowichan Tribes land and Ms. Thorne responded, asking him to contact a Tribes elder to go through any required protocols.

Mr. Farias said that filming would begin April 16th and that Front Street's policy is to hand deliver notices of filming to any effected residents/businesses 48 hours in advance.

Allan Lewis said that an excellent work reference for Front Street would be provided by the City of Aldergrove if requested.

Members of the Committee requested that the Film Commissioner provide an analysis of any economic benefit stemming from this production.

Ms. McMurray noted that the ninth annual Cowichan International Aboriginal Festival of Film and Art would begin April 17th this year and, she said, Front Street Pictures will be welcomed into the Cowichan community by the traditional First Nations way.

The Manager, Economic Development, noted that he would compile a list of names of people in charge of *Spooksville* production and that he would make it available to Commission members.

8:08 am

Mike Kelly joined the meeting at 8:08 am.

R2 – *Once Upon A Day.... Cowichan*

A verbal Report from the Manager, Economic Development, regarding *Once Upon a Day... Cowichan* film premiere, was received as information.

R3 – Report to Board

The Economic Development Commission Report to the Board dated March 4, 2013, was received as information.

R4 – 2012 State of

The Subcommittee report regarding the 2012 State of the Economy Cowichan Region was considered.

the Economy

It was moved and seconded that the 2012 State of Economy Cowichan Region report be accepted by the Economic Development Commission and that it be taken to Regional Services Committee for its consideration.

MOTION CARRIED

The General Manager, Planning & Development noted that funds for film Cowichan were not included in the draft budget although, in his view he said, they should be because *Spooksville* would generate large economic revenue returns for the Region.

Mr. Anderson said that he felt that the Board should support adding \$25,000 into the budget, for the CVRD's participation to film Cowichan, because it would directly benefit the local economy.

Mr. Anderson noted the importance of the Commission regularly liaising with the Board so that it is kept apprised of projects like this television production.

It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board that a supplemental item in the amount of \$25,000, for Film Cowichan, be added to the 2013 Economic Development budget.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS**NB1**

A verbal Staff Report from the Manager, Economic Development; regarding Economic Work Plan for 2013, Opportunities BC, Tourism Vancouver Island – BC Ferries, and Nanaimo Airport meeting; was received as information.

The Manager, Economic Development noted that Opportunities BC was a BC government website designed to promote investment opportunities across BC. It contains a searchable database of business opportunities in a variety of sectors which, said Mr. Millar, could be businesses for sale, or those looking for investors to help grow and expand a business.

Mr. Millar noted that Economic Development currently had thirty listings posted on this website and that it would continually be updated.

Mr. Millar said that the President of the Nanaimo Airport Authority would be attending an informal meeting (location and date to be determined) with himself and members of the Economic Development Commission to present information on the recently redeveloped Nanaimo Airport.

9:03 am

Marsha Stanley left the meeting at 9:03 am.

9:15 am

Blair Herbert left the meeting at 9:15 am

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 am.

Chair

Recording Secretary