



*Naturally Adventurous*

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**Explorers' Edge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, December 11, 2013  
Holiday Inn Express Hotel and Suites, Huntsville, Ontario**

**Present:** Don MacKay (Chair), Tony Armstrong (Vice Chair), Andrew Vitich (Secretary/Treasurer), Jerry Feltis, Jackie Leung, Michelle Berry, Andrew Ryeland, Ken Turner, Diane Wiber, Nicole Saulnier, John Miller, Anthony Rizzo

**Absent:** Hilary Chambers

**Staff:** James Murphy (Executive Director)

**Resource:** Laura Hernando (MTCS)

**Call to Order:** Don MacKay (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:50 am. Self- introductions were made.

**Approval of Agenda – December 11, 2013**

**Motion:** moved by John Miller that the Agenda for December 11, 2013 Board of Directors meeting be approved

**Seconded:** Tony Armstrong

**Discussion:** N/A 2

**Carried.**

**Approval of Minutes – September 4, 2013**

**Motion:** moved by Tony Armstrong that the Minutes for the Wednesday September 4, 2013 Board of Directors meeting be approved

**Seconded:** Dianne Wiber

**Discussion:** N/A

**Carried.**

## **Approval of Financials – Period ending November 30, 2013**

**Motion:** moved by Jerry Feltis that the Financials dated for November 30, 2013 be approved

**Seconded:** John Miller

**Discussion:** Armstrong enquired about the difference between budget and income received from the MTCS noting a 350k gap. Murphy shared with the board the TPA process and that a payment is in transition amounting to 350k.

**Carried.**

## **Approval of Consent Agenda**

**Motion:** moved by Tony Armstrong that the Consent Agenda items for the December 11, 2013 be approved

**Seconded:** Ken Turner

**Discussion:** Jackie Leung asked to have the Transacting item moved to discussion

**Carried.**

## **Consent Agenda Item Moved to Agenda – Transacting (Report/Presentation attached to Agenda)**

Discussion: Leung requested clarity on Transacting notes including role of Santa's Village and the future of the transacting programs (i.e. revenue generation). Chair Feltis shared with the board items as a result of the most recent committee meetings:

- Slide associated with Santa's Village was to merely highlight how a key regional attraction can be leverage to gain further reach and access a larger audience.
- The committee discussed tweaking the signature programs, in a effort to help sustain the programs long term, with the operator sharing a portion of the voucher expense, possibly 30%. This will also allow Explorers' Edge to move out more vouchers.

Berry commented to the board that the sense that the programs were meant to prime the pump and not be around for a longer period of time was never thoroughly discussed at the board. Leung commented that the programs are easy and operators understand them, why change that programs now. Jerry shared with the board the importance of sustainability and that they were designed to prime the pump. Leung asked for this discussion to be table to a future board meeting.

## **Presentation ED Murphy**

Murphy presented the Destination Development Plan and the 2014 - 2015 Operational Plan based on industry consultation with committees and stakeholders. Murphy noted that the initial plan developed by the board in September 2013 has had positive feedback and input based on industry consultation (including a series of Town Halls).

The first portion of the presentation Murphy updated the board on a series of performance measure adopted by the province to be used by all thirteen RTO's, they include:

1. Change in the number of new products and experiences and/or the number of existing products and experiences enhanced, in market
2. Increase in the percentage of RTO's aided brand awareness
3. Increase in the return on investment (ROI) of RTO marketing campaign investments (e.g., increase in overnight and day trips, incremental visitor spending generated)
4. Change in output measures including leveraged marketing from partners and earned media, web analytics and online bookings if applicable.
5. Percentage and percentage change of industry stakeholders that have partnered and collaborated in RTO activities.
6. Percentage and percentage change of stakeholders satisfied with RTO activities.
7. Percentage of industry operators who report business/customer improvement as a result of RTO-sponsored training (6-12 months post training)
8. Change in the number of outreach activities made to community and economic development organizations

In coordination with the established performance indicators the Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport shared with the RTO's a Logic Model that would help strengthen programs and activities. The model itself challenges the RTO to consider outputs and outcomes when articulating activities – ask the question "So what? How does this advance tourism". Murphy also shared with the board outcomes of a RTU training session where it was reiterated that the RTO has five pillars, we should look for gaps and take a leadership role where necessary and this is left to each individual RTO to decide. The board was asked then for input/feedback where several board members welcomed the input and direction laid out by the MTCS (regional tourism unit).

Murphy proceeded to share with the board the Destination Development Plan by reiterating the Mission, Vision & Mandate followed by the operating principals for the next three years, they include:

- Change Perceptions
- Build new audiences
- Increase four season business
- Leveraging significant strategic partnerships
- Engage multiple operators

Changes to the draft plan, as stated by Murphy include the inclusion of the MTCS logic model and eight RTO performance measures. Board feedback highlighted the importance of articulating program and projects using both the logic model and supporting the philosophy of putting the traveler first and using strategic collaboration.

### **Approval of Destination Development Plan**

**Motion:** moved by Ken Turner that the Destination Development plan 2014 – 2017 be adopted by Regional Tourism Organization 12 / Explorers' Edge be approved

**Seconded:** Dianne Wiber

**Discussion:** N/A

**Carried.**

Murphy completed the presentation sharing with the board stakeholder feedback on the operational plan. Stakeholder feedback included:

- Stronger articulation/outline of workforce development, investment attraction and tourism product development
- Process associated with the Partnership Fund Program/component
- Fine tune dates and schedule of events over the fiscal year in the document

Murphy addressed the feedback during the presentation and outlined the budget as associated with MTCS pillar responsibilities.

### **Approval of Destination Development Plan**

**Motion:** moved by Andrew Ryeland that the Operational Plan 2014/2015 be adopted by Regional Tourism Organization 12 / Explorers' Edge be approved with the change in the budget allocating an additional 50k from marketing into transacting

**Seconded:** Jerry Feltis

**Discussion:** Ryeland shared with the board the importance of having a strong transacting budget to support programs in the region that have a direct impact on operators. Leung highlighted that in the previous year the marketing budget had been drawn back while at the same time the marketing committee took on a larger role by having a responsibility to push out transacting programs, this coupled with the feeling on the board that the RTO can only prime the pump for so long. Leung also cited that the Marketing Committee has expressed desire to have new creative developed, which comes with a cost. Miller noted that the Marketing budget overall does not need to change and that throughout the year amendments under Marketing can be made if necessary. Murphy shared with the board that neither the marketing nor the transacting committee has concrete programs in place so the specific lines could, with approval from the board, be changed down the road.

**Carried.**

**Motion to Adjourn** by Diane Wiber. **Carried**

**Date and Time of Next Meeting:** early January, ED will circulate suggested dates and times

**Location – Parry Sound TBD.**