



Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee

MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratford Communities in Bloom (CIB) Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 12:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford ON

Committee Members: Councillor Brad Beatty – Chair Presiding, Mary-Anne Krutila, Councilor Bonnie Henderson, Kimberly Richardson, Barb Hacking

Staff: Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Regrets: Carys Wyn Hughes, Cindy Carlson

1. Call to Order

Councillor Beatty, Chair presiding, called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

Reading of the Land Acknowledgement and a Moment of Silent Reflection.

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Policy.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

3. Adoption of the Previous Minutes

Motion by Mary-Anne Krutila

Seconded by Kimberly Richardson

THAT the minutes from the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee meeting dated July 4, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried

4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

4.1 Update on Ted Blowes Garden

Barb Hacking reported that she and Bernie Van Herk were working at the garden earlier today and they spotted two Monarch butterflies. It was nice to see that the garden is doing what it is supposed to do and attracting butterflies. Monarchs have not been plentiful this year, so it was wonderful to see them.

4.2 2024 CIB Judging Review – Councillor Beatty

Councillor Beatty reported that it seemed the judges really enjoyed themselves here in Stratford. There were no major hitches with accommodations and meals, which helps make the visit run smoothly. Councillor Beatty thanked CIB members for all their efforts along the way, it made a big difference. The updated profile book and the addition of the new items marked with gold stars was a hit with the judges.

Mary-Anne Krutila stated that the communication between CIB members needs to include all members of the advisory committee if there are deadlines or timelines to respond to and to assign responsibility if that is applicable. This will ensure that there are opportunities for all members to contribute their time, skills and perspectives. Ms. Krutila provided an example where she was not informed by fellow members there had been a change in locations for meeting the judges. After approximately 15 minutes she texted another member and was informed that a last-minute change was made to meet at a different location. Additionally, Ms. Krutila had really hoped to be assigned more tasks for the 2024 judging, as she was only assigned her section of the profile book, which she completed and also assisted with updating the entire book and submitting it prior to the requested deadline. Reservations that she completed and notified the committee about were not updated in the itinerary and went out incorrectly. As the dinner host, she was not notified of additional guests attending and there was misinformation regarding the table reservations. Referencing the Respectful Workplace Policy, she feels it is discriminatory on a committee such as CIB to exclude members. All members are equal and everyone should be given the opportunity to participate. She also noted that Vice-Chair was removed from Kimberly Richardson's name in the profile book that went to the judges. Vicky Trotter apologized for the oversight that happened when re-arranging the names in alphabetical order.

Ms. Krutilla is concerned about going into the October CIB National Symposium representing Stratford and needing to be a strong, effective team where everyone knows what is going on and who is doing what. Most of the senior members of the committee are not able to attend the upcoming event and the committee members who are available to attend are the ones who have been the least involved and excluded.

Kimberly Richardson suggested that when the committee is organizing events such as the judges visiting or organizing for the symposium, there cannot be e-mails or text messages going out to just specific people. If the committee is working on an event, they need a form of communication that everyone is part of. CIB wants to have new members join and remain on the committee and in order to do that, they need to build a team that is going to continue to flourish and prosper without the present long-term members. Ms. Richardson feels the committee needs to capitalize on the strong skills that members bring to the table and work as a stronger unit. Ms. Richardson previously suggested Mary-Anne Krutilla be the point contact for the 2025 Symposium because of her skillset and what she can do and bring for the event. Ms. Krutilla is enthusiastic about the community and the great work of CIB. She stated members need to be trusted to get the job done and this is a great learning opportunity to gain experience and grow and become even better moving forward. Perhaps a better orientation for new members would be helpful to help them integrate with what CIB is working on.

Councillor Beatty stated it is difficult to incorporate last-minute additions and changes such as scheduling the Mayor to meals and events and transportation arrangements. He sometimes needs to make decisions on the fly to and accommodate additions and changes. Councillor Beatty noted it is all valuable feedback to help everyone improve.

Ms. Richardson stressed that the committee needs a better form of communication exactly for this reason. A group chat or e-mail for the entire group with updates during the event will prevent anyone from missing information and last minute updates. A concrete plan moving forward for P.E.I. needs to be written down so everyone knows exactly what needs to be done by who and who is responsible for completing it. Having communication between all members so everyone knows exactly what is happening is going to be key.

Councillor Henderson thanked Mary-Anne Krutilla for discussing these items and bringing it to everyone's attention. Everyone can always improve.

*Councillor Henderson is no longer present at the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Mary-Anne Krutila has created a spreadsheet with the list of people that should receive thank you cards for their help during the time the judges were here. Ms. Krutila will share it with all members to review and add their names beside the cards they will write. Kimberly Richardson suggested a standard message from the Committee and then members can write a personal message. Ms. Krutila and Ms. Richardson suggested writing "On behalf of Communities in Bloom, we would like to thank you for making our 2024 CIB judging event spectacular".

4.3 2025 National Symposium Update

Councillor Beatty reported that Sonia Parrino will be returning to the office on August 6, 2024. Councillor Beatty stated that CIB National was working on correspondence with hotels.

Mary-Anne Krutila has created a draft list of potential speakers, hosts, ambassadors to incorporate into the symposium as plans move forward.

Vicky Trotter noted that at the next CIB meeting, members will be asked to submit their 2025 budget request to Council. This figure will need to include the funds required to host the 2025 CIB Symposium. Ms. Trotter will contact Sonia Parrino to inquire about anticipated expenses to assist in budgeting for the symposium. Ms. Trotter will also inquire about costs relating to the Ted Blowes bench for consideration during budget discussions.

Mary-Anne Krutila suggested that possibly sending a representative from Destination Stratford to the Charlottetown symposium to also represent Stratford during the first night would be beneficial. Vicky Trotter will update members at the next CIB meeting on the funding parameters once the request has gone through Council. Ms. Krutila requested if Ms. Trotter would also confirm with Sonia Parrino if CIB members would still be able to receive the preferred hotel and flight rates once members find out if Council has approved the funding request. Councillor Beatty noted that Tim Wolfe, Director of Community Services and Quin Malott, Cemetery Manager/Parks & Forestry Manager are also attending to represent Stratford.

As the host city for next year's symposium, Stratford is required to bring a small gift for attendees at this year's symposium in Charlottetown. Members discussed possibly having a post card designed with a QR code that sends attendees to preliminary information regarding the 2025 symposium and/or

chocolates from Stratford chocolate makers. Vicky Trotter will coordinate the postcard and discuss options with the City's Corporate Communications Specialist. Kimberly Richardson will arrange ordering chocolates.

Motion by Kimberly Richardson

Seconded by Mary-Anne Krutila

THAT the Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee spends up to a maximum of \$1,000.00 to purchase promotional items and decorations for Stratford Night at the 2024 CIB National Symposium in Charlottetown, PEI. Carried

4.4 Donation Option for SDSS Eco-Club Community Garden

Vicky Trotter reported that she has contacted Christine Ritsma at SDSS regarding the list of items that the Eco Club required for their urban farming project and all items on their list have been purchased. The CIB Committee can still make a motion to request Council approve a financial donation to the Eco Club from their 2024 budget or consider making it a part of their 2025 budget request. Members will refer the decision to next month's meeting during budget discussions.

5. New Business

None noted.

6. Upcoming Events

- 2024 National Symposium (Charlottetown, PEI) – October 17-20, 2024
- Pumpkin Parade – Friday, November 1, 2024

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the CIB Advisory Committee will be held on Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 12:00 p.m., Rotary Complex – Mansbridge Room, 353 McCarthy Road W., Stratford.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Barb Hacking

Seconded by Mary-Anne Krutila

Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee
August 1, 2024

THAT the August 1, 2024 Communities in Bloom Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried

Meeting Start Time: 12:03 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 1:04 P.M.