



Minutes of the General Meeting
February 8, 2017

Present:

Doug Bailey	President/Thames Valley Solutions
Kendell Hall	Past President/Power Flower Web Design
Denise Winger	Vice President/Dorchester Terrace
Eric Kirkpatrick	Vice President/Pine Knot Golf and Country Club
Greg Keegan	Treasurer/TD Canada Trust
Kathryn Suffoletta	Secretary/ Dorchester Library
Jeannie Bailey	Thames Valley Solutions
Jack Blinkhorn	Printers Plus
Bev & Rose Shulman	Banner Promotions
Angelo Suffoletta	AAS Engineering
Sharron & Gary McMillan	Assist-2-Sell Homes Around London Realty
Lee Smithson	The Business Help Centre
Erik Lasch	TD Bank Group
Jack Baribeau	Baribeau Construction (London) Ltd.

1. Welcome & Introductions:

Kendell welcomed everyone and introduced the Executive. Then everyone present introduced themselves.

2. Guest Speaker: Lee Smithson, The Business Help Centre

Lee spoke briefly about the Business Help Centre. The purpose of the Business Help Centre is to provide better access to capital for entrepreneurs in Middlesex County, provide advice to someone starting a business, and provide financing to start ups and growing companies. Lee mentioned some of the projects and funding opportunities that are available.

3. Review of the Minutes from last meeting: Kathryn

The minutes of the December 7, 2016 general meeting were projected on the screen for people to read. There were no errors or omissions noted.

Moved by Angelo Suffoletta and seconded by Eric Kirkpatrick that the minutes of the last general meeting be approved.

4. Financial Report: Greg

Greg gave a brief verbal report of the current finances. The revenue for 2016 was \$5400.00 plus \$5,000.00 from the Home Of signs. The major expense was the disbursement of the \$10,000.00 for the bridge enhancement project. Greg will work with the nominated treasurer Eric Lasch to send out membership invoices. There was a question asking if the membership fee was remaining the same. Doug responded yes. He explained that any proposed changes would require a look at the TCBA Constitution and By-laws to see what the process for change would be.

5. Reports:

- Vice President: Denise

Why membership in TCBA?

- With all the things you need to do to keep your small business moving along, joining a business association may not bubble up to the top of your priority list. However, there are a number of reasons why joining a business association can help boost your business and even save you time in the long run on marketing and operational activities.
- Here are five things that encouraged me to make finding the time to join worthwhile:
- **Networking opportunities:** Networking opportunities for many are the number one reason for joining a business association. While not everyone you meet will be a potential customer – in fact some may be competitors – you’ll meet people who can be referrals to their business associates or others who may need your services. In fact, the more involved you are, the more people get to know you and will be inclined to help open doors. Networking isn’t only for business leads. You’ll be able to get referrals for services or vendors; discover alliance opportunities; and find prospective job candidates, which most small business owners indicate is their [number one HR challenge](#). Associations are also a great forum in which to glean and share best practices that are relevant to your business.
- **Advertising opportunities-** including Facebook exposure- featuring your business, promoting events and sales, Signpost flyer distribution providing lots of opportunity to engage your customer
- **Increasing visibility in your community-** getting the word out to the community that the service they require or product they are seeking in right here in Thames Centre.
- **Credibility-** Many potential clients or customers view membership in a business association as a sign that you're an established business and accepted by your industry.
- **Education and training:** The TCBA’s goal is to offer educational and training options. TCBA is open to suggestions of topics that you would find helpful.
- **Civic leadership:** TCBA support volunteer and charitable efforts that you may not have the time to undertake on your own. By participating through TCBA, you can lend support to the effort by managing some aspect of the program, encouraging your team members to get involved or providing financial assistance. Your small business will gain from your involvement by boosting your reputation locally and expanding your contacts. Your team also may learn new skills by volunteering.
- **Social-** In addition to these benefits, business associations also provide opportunities to socialize with others at dinners and other special events. Considering how much time you spend at your small business, you may welcome the opportunity get together with others in your market or industry in a social setting to exchange information and share insights.
- **Membership-** is tax deductible

- Vice President: Eric
Eric spoke about why he joined the Association and what Pine Knot has gained and will gain by being a member business. He believes in hiring locally, supporting local businesses and being a part of the community. He wants to grow the TCBA membership. As the Chair of the TCBA Annual Golf Tournament Committee, Eric spoke about his goal to improve the participation and introduce some changes, such as an opportunity for networking prior to T off and a sponsorship built into the registration fee. He also would like to see an email newsletter which would solicit input from members who have something to promote.
- Past President/Social Media: Kendell
Kendell reported that the posting to Facebook and updating the website is ongoing. Members were urged to send information updates to her.

6. Old Business: None

7. New Business:

- a.) Election of New Treasurer: Angelo thanked Greg for his years of service as the TCBA treasurer. He ask if there were any other nominations for the position. Hearing none, Eric Lasch was elected by acclamation.
- b.) Dorchester Library sponsorship proposal: Doug's proposal for a Business Wall of Fame in the newly renovated and expanded library supported by an annual donation of \$250.00 was discussed. After some discussion, it was decided that a more detailed proposal be brought to a future meeting. There was a suggestion that individual member businesses could contribute to the donation making it more significant. Further discussion is warranted.
- c.) Membership Drive: there was a lengthy discussion regarding how to increase the TCBA membership. Some suggestions were
 - Create a membership position – someone who would reach out , visit businesses
 - A member package with a membership card and window decal
 - More social events
 - Local job fair - \$100.00 to participate which would pay for your membership
 - Everyone try to find 5 new members
 - The need for a comprehensive list of current and former members
 - Breakfast networking meetings

8. Special Guest Presentation: Jack Blinkhorn

To recognize his many years as a business owner in Dorchester and a founding member of the TCBA, (formerly the Dorchester Business Association), Jack was invited to be the special guest speaker. Jack spoke about his early work experience and how he got started in his current business. He spoke about the changes he has seen in over 60 years in business and shared some artifacts from bygone days. At the end of his presentation, Jack was presented

with a Face on Business banner, a TCBA promotional program in which he had not previously participated.

9. Announcement: Denise invited everyone to a Community Open House at Dorchester Terrace on February 18 and to a special Open House on Thursday March 2, 11:30 – 2:30 for members of the TCBA.
10. Adjournment: moved by Angelo Suffoletta and seconded by Jack Blinkhorn that the meeting be adjourned.