



WHISTLER

MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAY LONG WEEKEND
COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2015, STARTING AT 3:00 P.M.
In the Piccolo Room
4325 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V0N 1B4**

PRESENT:

Chair, RMOW General Manager, Corporate and Community Services, N. McPhail
Councillor J. Grills
General Manager, Four Seasons Whistler, Peter Humig
Director of Bars and Pubs, Gibbons Hospitality, Terry Clark
Member at Large, Keir Fine Jewellery, Nicole Shannon
RCMP Staff Sergeant, Steve LeClair
RMOW Manager, Village Animation and Events, B. Andrea
Recording Secretary, Rose Lawrence

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by T. Clark
Seconded by P. Humig

That the May Long Weekend Committee adopt the May Long Weekend Committee agenda of March 27, 2015.

CARRIED

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

Round Table

Round table reports from each of the Committee members:

P. Humig: interested in replacing the partying label/history with a more family-friendly and safe weekend.

T. Clark: A great weekend for bars and clubs. A lot of what has happened is with underage groups. With GO Fest: a beneficial shift in focus.

B. Andrea: Acting as a staff resource. Agree with T. Clark in that there has been an improvement; and that there is also more to do. Agree too that the issues have been with underage groups. It is the isolated incidents that make the headlines.

S. LeClair: Have seen a variety of incidents over the years. Echo above re: underage groups. Have had from 112-170 calls over previous May long weekends. Have in recent years taken a high visibility approach, with extra resources (e.g. bike patrols); seems to be making a difference. RCMP will have a comprehensive plan in place for 2015.

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N. Shannon: Have experienced plenty of Whistler May long weekends. Agree that Whistler has made the experience a success. A concern is displacement; e.g. when parties disperse, what happens.

Councillor J. Grills: Have experienced plenty of Whistler May long weekends. It used to be a race weekend; when that stopped it lost its identity and has become a party weekend. Agree with T. Clark that it is a great business weekend. The direction Whistler started taking last year is a very positive one. Agree that the RCMP high visibility approach is effective.

N. McPhail: Have been involved in various capacities since 1988. Interested in furthering the successes.

Review 2014
Recommendations

N. McPhail reviewed the 2014 recommendations in the 2015 presentation to Council as circulated with the group. A discussion ensued:

N. McPhail suggested a more proactive approach with the media to mitigate any rumours; T. Clark agreed and added that this would also serve as a means to highlight the positive elements of the weekend. N. Shannon suggested monitoring what is trending and responding quickly and accordingly. B. Andrea advocated having a source of truth; e.g. RMOW or RCMP press release. GO Fest will take a few more years to fully develop as the May long weekend new identity. N. McPhail stated that there are tools in place in order to track and gather evidence-based data.

N. McPhail asked: If we can have the business community collaborate: what can we package up as offerings to displace unwanted activities.

P. Humig: we have to know who we are catering to before we can package offerings. Everyone can co-exist; e.g. families and nightclubs. Planning would start this summer for next May.

B. Andrea: RMOW event planning is working with existing businesses more this year: e.g. family-oriented events.

T. Clark noted that Gibbons Group is working with TW to pair events; this is proving to be effective.

P. Humig suggested tapping into arts and culture to attract more diverse audiences. In order to organically grow the weekend different activities could be offered that cater to different demographics and naturally these will displace the unwanted element.

Councillor J. Grills asked how the message is getting out to people. B. Andrea stated that funding makes planning challenging; however, F,E&A has started planning sessions. Appreciate P. Humig's comments re: so much to offer. It is really about getting everyone on board and getting the positive message out.

N. McPhail commented that it is about getting locals involved too, e.g. putting teams into the Great Snow-Earth-Water race. B. Andrea stated that the more locals are involved the less the chance of misbehaving.

N. McPhail noted that continued level of increased policing remains a priority.

T. Clark pointed out that gangs have stopped coming due to the diligence of the RCMP in making it uncomfortable for them to be here. The same approach could be taken with the current troublesome groups.

N. McPhail reported that 2014 results were that RMOW didn't get as far with identifying who is in charge of non-front desk accommodations, this to aid eviction when people are causing trouble. Some steps taken in the village but more focus needed our neighbourhoods. It is essential that the community be involved in reporting crime. We need to educate employees and community members that they can call 911 when they see trouble.

S. LeClair advised that RCMP will meet with the hotel association again this year.

P. Humig stated there are issues with all hotels whereby one person books a room but more show up to stay. S. LeClair remarked that a few hotels have a security guard on site to assist.

B. Andrea commented that he would like to see business owners make it less easy for trouble groups to stay.

Action item: N. McPhail to follow up with Shawnigan Lake School to see if they're hosting a party this year at the Chateau.

2015 Plan

Determine the next steps and the plan for 2015:

N. McPhail asked the Committee members to submit their ideas and thoughts to be addressed at the next meeting.

B. Andrea declared he would pass along Committee findings with GO Fest event organizers.

Action item: Councillor J. Grills and B. Andrea to meet re: event funding to ensure that planning can go ahead.

Action item: N. Shannon will talk with a few local businesses re security and their thoughts.

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of Other Business.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by N. Shannon

That the May Long Weekend Committee adjourn the March 27, 2015 meeting at 4:00 p.m.

CARRIED

 Signed Original on File
CHAIR: N. McPhail