

ANTIGONSH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

COMMITTEE REPORTS - 2009



February 24, 2010



2009 Board of Directors

President: Phil Hughes, Antigonish Golf & Country Club
Treasurer: Neil Scribner, CJFX - 98.9XFM Radio
Secretary: Carolyn Grant, Bergengren Credit Union
Past President: Daniel Ross, Ross Screenprint

Directors:

John Dobson, Sothern Accents – resigned effective May 13, 2009

Marilyn Dugas, Re/Max Newstyle

Barry Grant, Piper's Pub

Rose O'Connor, RBC Royal Bank

Ron Sangster, Sangster & Associates Financial Group

Robena Stewart, Antigonish Career Resource Centre

David Tellum, Braemore Co-op – appointed to the board in September 8, 2009, to fulfill vacancy of John Dobson



2009 President's Report

February 24, 2009 – February 24, 2010

I feel it has been a very successful year for the Chamber. At the start of the year, I put two items as my goals for 2009---2010. The first was to establish a better line of communication with the Town and the County of Antigonish. I believe we have made great strides in this area. Anne Marie and I met with Mayor Chisholm and later with Warden Delorey to discuss how we could best discuss mutual concerns and work together to achieve the desired results. We agreed to try and set up at least two meetings a year where we could discuss those issue that affect the Business Community and work together to solve potential problems. I certainly thank the Mayor and the Warden for their effort in this endeavor.

My second goal was to find out how the Chamber can best serve the Business community. A questionnaire was sent to all our members in hopes of learning how we can best achieve this end. The responses are now being correlated and we will be spending the next few months in going over this information. My thanks to all who returned their questionnaires and if anyone forgot to send it in, please feel free to send it at your earliest convenience.

The new jail has taken a lot of work over the past month. I cannot say enough about how hard the Mayor and Warden have worked for the people of Antigonish on this topic. We have fought any suggestion that the jail should go anywhere but Antigonish. It is being built to replace the existing jail in Antigonish. Contrary to what the new government would have you believe, the jail coming to Antigonish was a done deal until after the election took place. There are too many misstatements coming from our MLA to cover in this report, but if Antigonish is not the site for the jail, it will be for a political reason not a cost saving decision.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Barry Grant and Neil Scribner for their service on the Board of Directors of the Chamber. Very special thanks to Dan Ross, Past President. Your shoes will not be very hard to fill as my feet are much bigger. However, your dedication and work ethic toward the Chamber will be very hard to match. To all the other Board members and to the new directors who will be coming on board, I very much look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

Phil Hughes



2009 Education Committee

Scholarships

Your chamber again this year offered two(2), twelve hundred dollar (\$1200.) scholarships which is a partnering project of the chamber with chamber members Antigonish Mall, Bergengren Credit Union, and Ross Screenprint.

The recipient of the Anne Cusack Memorial Entrepreneurial Scholarship, awarded to a graduating student of the Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional School was Jeanette VanderLinden. Jeanette is currently pursuing studies in the Business Administration – International Food Business program at Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

The recipient of the Entrepreneurial Scholarship, awarded to a graduating student of the East Antigonish Education Center/Academy was Ryan Levangie. Ryan is currently pursuing studies in the business administration program at St. Francis Xavier University.

In August we hosted a “send off luncheon” and for Jeanette and Ryan along with our partners; it’s an enjoyable opportunity to “meet and eat” for all. I would very much like to thank Len P.D. MacDonald and Marilyn Dugas for all their help in the selection process.

Junior Achievement

As many of you know Junior Achievement (JA) has and continues to be a passion of our chamber presidents; to further develop our relationship with the local JA advisors the board has tasked the education committee to act as liaison for the chamber.

Currently we assist in recruiting more volunteers to assist in the delivery of the grade six (6) program “Our Business World” and the grade nine (9) program “Economics of Staying in School”.

We thank all those members of the business community for allowing the “company program” existence in Antigonish, your commitment in many forms: financially, thru space for meetings, and in mentorship of these young entrepreneurs is the reason this program is viewed as top shelf on the provincial JA scene.

Ron Sangster, Chair
Marilyn Dugas
Len P.D. MacDonald



2009 Events Committee

Special thanks is given to all Chamber members who provide ongoing sponsorship support to events, through the purchase of banner ads, general sponsorships, or ticket purchase and attendance of events.

Local Yokels Yacking over Yokes

The 2009 year saw the continuation of the breakfast series with a goal to offer all members with informative information sessions while providing opportunities network with other members of the Chamber and business community. The speakers for this year included:
Municipal Relations – Town of Antigonish: Mayor Carl Chisholm & CEO Debbie Kampen (January)
the Miq'Mac of NS: Danny Graham & Dan Christmas (February)
Meeting NS's Challenges: Darrell Dexter, Provincial NDP Leader (April)
the Business of Sports: Danny Berry, Ant. Fields Project & Ed Ryan, Ant. Golf Club (June)
Social Media Tools Relating to Your Business: Robert Proctor (November)
Municipal Relations – Municipality of the County of Antigonish: Warden Herb DeLorey & Clerk Alan Bond (December)

Small Business Week & Awards Gala

ACC joined other community partners in the planning and organizing of the week's activities which included a business social at Piper's Pub and the Excellence in Business Gala. The Ian Spencer Award for Excellence in Business was presented to West River Holsteins; the Bell Aliant Outstanding Customer Service Award – Individual was presented to Jamie Bouchie, StudnetComputers.ca. The committee was pleased to have received several nominations for the awards and will continue the established process in future years to encourage recognition of additional colleagues.

Annual General Meeting

The committee is pleased to welcome Pierre Battah, for our Chamber AGM to address a big and pressing issue within business of employee recruitment and retention for small business in rural settings; along with the multigenerational workplace and navigating today's changing workplace.

The events committee provided a recommendation for the board to adopt the following calendar of events as annual for the chamber and that no additional events be added unless the circumstances are extremely special; along with a aggressive sponsorship program for these events. This recommendation was approved by the board in December. Below is a list of the events for the chamber:

AGM & Dinner - February (2 or 3rd week)
April Breakfast (1st Wednesday in April)
June Breakfast with Golf (3rd Wednesday in June)
September Breakfast (1st Wednesday of September)
Business Gala (Thursday of Small Business Week in October)
December Luncheon (1st Wednesday in December)

Carolyn Grant
Rose O'Connor
Robena Stewart



2009 Membership Committee

We set a goal of having two hundred (200) members again in 2009; and though we came up a little short we did grow in membership.

As we moved forward in 2010 the committee has made recommendations to the board for an additional category of membership “Senior / Student Individual”; along with an annual membership questionnaire that will enable the board to decide on working issues of the year.

Continued promotion of chamber benefits such as the Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan thru local agent Paul Lorefice (presently 51 members are using this benefit); the Esso Direct Program, TD Merchant Plan must occur as cost-saving reasons to be chamber members.

An overview of membership:

- 191 members in 2009
 - ❖ 21 new members
 - ❖ 170 of 186 renewed memberships from 2009

Below is the overview of 2009 membership by sector:

Accommodations	4%	Financial Services	7%
Agriculture/Fishery/Forestry	2%	Government	3%
Automotive	6%	Health	8%
Business – Industry	6%	Housing	4%
Business - Services	16%	Insurance	4%
Community Groups	5%	Legal Services	2%
Construction / Trades	7%	Shopping	15%
Culture & Entertainment	1%	Sports & Leisure	2%
Dining & Take-Out	6%		
Education	2%		

Neil Scribner, Chair
Robena Stewart
Rose O’Connor
Cohen MacInnis