

The VOICE of Business

Town Hall Meeting Draws Crowd

Over 100 business people attended the Town Hall Meeting held June 28 to discuss the hikes in the 2017 Commercial Property Tax bills. The meeting's purpose was to enable the business owners to learn more about how the tax bill was developed and what constituted the difference between the 2017 tax bill and that of 2016.

The Honourable Greg Ottenbreit, MLA Yorkton spoke about the many decisions the Government of Saskatchewan had to make in order to address the \$1 billion dollar deficit. Its plan is to bring the budget back into balance within the next 3 years. Mr. Ottenbreit indicated that planning for the 2018-19 budget is already occurring. Additionally, the Ministry of Government Relations is consulting with municipalities (SUMA and SARM) on how to deliver future funding (Revenue Sharing and former Grants in Lieu). He indicated he is aware that tax hikes have an impact on business and he encouraged business owners to use the Assessment Appeals process. He also acknowledged that the removal of the Grants-In-Lieu to the cities created huge difficulties for the cities - especially Yorkton. As a result, the cap on the loss of the GIL was set at 30%.

Kevin Groat, Assistant Managing Director, Assessment Services with the Sask Assessment Management Agency (SAMA), explained that January 1, 2015 is the Base Date on which the current assessment is based. The value of property between that time and today may have changed. The video he showed explaining property assessment,



Following their respective presentations, Hon. Greg Ottenbreit; Kevin Groat, SAMA; and City Manager Lonnie Kaal fielded questions from the floor.

entitled How Properties are Assessed, is available on SAMA's website and the City's website (www.yorkton.ca). Mr. Groat indicated that due to a computer upgrade, SAMA released its data to the City later than anticipated and recognizes this created some difficulties for the city. He stated businesses can begin to launch an appeal to their assessments when the City announces that the Assessment Roll is open. In a revaluation year the appeal period is 60 days. All other years, the period is 30 days. Appeals are not retroactive.

The power point presentation used by Lonnie Kaal, City Manager is also available on the City's website www.yorkton.ca/news/. She showed the City's revenue sources and explained that a decrease in one revenue source means an increase in other sources, namely property taxes. The 2017 loss of crown payments in lieu was significant and equates to 58% of provincial grants. While the reprieve in capping the loss to 30% in 2017 was appreciated, the concern is that the rest will be lost in 2018 which equates to another almost 4% tax increase. She

also indicated that while on average, the increase in the Education Tax legislated by the Government of Saskatchewan is 9.8%, in Yorkton, it is even higher because our assessments increased greater than the provincial average! The delay in receiving the assessment information also put the city in a difficult position because it was not given enough time to even consider a phase-in approach to the shift in taxes that the new assessments created.

The Q & A session following the presentation was a lively one with a number of businesses expressing their frustration at the impact the tax hike is having on their businesses. While many were expecting increases, no one was budgeting for 60 or 100 or 240% increases! One business reported an increase on land value alone of 1365%!

The Chamber was pleased to be able to host the Town Hall meeting which helped the Chamber to fulfill its mandate of advocating for business. Thank you to all the speakers.

Congratulations!

- To **All Season Rentals & Sales** on 30 years in business.
- To **Randy Goulden, Executive Director of Tourism Yorkton** on receiving the Life Member Award from the Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway Association. The award

recognizes her commitment and service to the Association. Yorkton attended the Association's inaugural meeting in 1947.

- To **Yorkton's SARCAN depot** on receiving the Cleanliness Award for an Extra Large Depot from SARCAN.



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Calling Entrepreneurs!

The **Great Ideas Seminar** facilitated by Glenn Suart, Chief Strategist at WriteMyPlan based in Calgary will be held **Wednesday October 4 5:30 – 9:00 PM** at the **Painted Hand Casino**. Participants will leave the seminar with 2 concrete steps toward turning their great ideas into businesses. Registration is \$100 and includes supper. The **Great Ideas Seminar** is co-sponsored by The Rock 985.

To register, contact the Yorkton Chamber 306-783-4368 or info@yorktonchamber.com or download the registration form from www.yorktonchamber.com

All Entrepreneurs with a new idea (cannot currently be their business) are invited to apply to be selected for the **Parkland Pitch Party 7:00 PM Wednesday November 15**. \$4500 in prizes to be given to the 6 entrepreneurs selected for the "Pitch".

Application forms are available on the Chamber's website www.yorktonchamber.com

Deadline for submitting applications for the Pitch Party is November 1.

Positive Ticketing

The Yorkton City RCMP Detachment continues to utilize the positive ticketing program to make contact with youth in our city. Positive tickets have been used in all sorts of situations from youth being respectful, to making a smart decision, to youth who helped out with younger siblings while the police attended their home.

Interested in assisting with the program by providing rewards? Contact Cst. K. N. Guspodarchuk (306) 786-2400



Chamber Meets Council

Several Directors from the Chamber's Board met with City Council at City Hall June 8.

The meeting's purpose was for the Chamber and Council to have an open dialogue about the issues and opportunities facing the business community. As "the voice of business in Yorkton", the Chamber is able to articulate to Council the concerns of its business members as outlined in a list of Talking Points sent by the Chamber to Mayor Maloney and City Manager Lonnie Kaal. The topics ranged from the steps the Council will take to prepare for the 2018-19 budget, the City's procurement policies, infrastructure and communication.

The Chamber will continue to work with the City in helping to communicate information relevant to the business community.

The next meeting between Council and the Chamber's Directors is scheduled for September 5.



President Brent Murdock, in his opening remarks at the Town Hall

Meeting held in late June, indicated that the reason for being for any Chamber of Commerce is to advocate for its members. As a result of the concerns expressed by the membership over the 2017 Commercial Property Tax bills, the Chamber worked with the city to host the Meeting so that the business members would have the opportunity to learn about assessment and taxes and to have a forum at which they could express their concerns.



Chair of the Chamber's Policy Committee Mike Stackhouse did a great job as Moderator for the Town Hall Meeting. He introduced the Q & A session with a few questions of his own.

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New Directors Share Views about the Chamber and the City

With 6 Board meetings and several committee meetings behind them, the new Chamber Directors were asked to share their views on the Chamber. They were also asked if there was one thing they could change about the city, what would it be.

Chris Bogdan indicated that he is really enjoying being so involved in the community and being able to help Yorkton grow and prosper. I truly have a better understanding of what is going on in Yorkton business community and how I can help. By getting involved, I have met many great individuals that I would have never met before.

If he could change one thing in the City, it would be the perception of the city. "People don't realize that there is so much that we have here. As a community, we don't do enough to showcase what the city has to offer".

Jason Popowich said that what has impressed him about the Board of Directors is the atmosphere of the Board meetings. "The meetings are very constructive and all attendees share the common goal



Chris Bogdan



Jason Popowich



Chris Kosteroski

for better business in Yorkton. Everyone serving on the board seems very creative and willing to make change to improve the Chamber presence in the community".

The one thing Jason would like to see change in Yorkton would be to increase the number of businesses joining the Chamber. "I don't understand why we have businesses in Yorkton which are not Chamber members when the Yorkton Chamber provides so many benefits".

"Early in the morning, before most business are open, the Board is collectively discussing business issues and challenges, and formulating effective strategies to raise awareness and advocate on behalf of our Chamber members," said Chris Kosteroski. "It's a passionate Team and dedicated Chamber".

Chris Kosteroski. As for the one thing Chris would change about Yorkton, he indicated he would like to see increased airport industrial & commercial development, and increased air services in Yorkton for business people, residents, visitors, and international students.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

July 26

Chamber Coffee House

Sept 14

Chamber Business Lunch - Induction of Honourary Life Members

Sept 27

Chamber Business Dinner

Oct 4

Great Ideas Seminar, Painted Hand Casino (see Chamber's website for details)

Nov 15

Parkland Pitch Party, St. Mary's Ukrainian Cultural Centre (see Chamber's website for details)

Chamber Tour of China

There's still some seats available for people interested in taking an 11 day tour of China with the Sask Chamber of Commerce! With a guide fluent in English and a full itinerary, this is a great way to take your first trip to China! The tour will commence April 7, 2018 and is coordinated by a respectable travel company that has served many Chambers of Commerce in Canada. Want to see Shanghai?

The Great Wall? The Ming Tombs? Then call the Yorkton Chamber 306-783-4368 for details today!

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Michael Campbell to Speak at 19th Annual Chamber Business Dinner

The Yorkton Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that Michael Campbell will be the Guest Speaker at the Yorkton Chamber's 19th Annual Business Dinner September 27 at St. Mary's Ukrainian Cultural Centre.

Michael Campbell is a popular speaker on money, business, economics and personal financial strategies.

Mr. Campbell is one of British Columbia's most respected business analysts, best known as the host of Canada's top



Michael Campbell

rated business show Money Talks, heard across the country on the CORUS radio network.

Michael is the Senior Business Analyst for BCTV on Global Television and writes the lead business column in the Vancouver Sun weekend edition.

In addition, Michael has been a successful business owner and operator in the manufacturing and service sector.

For information about sponsorship opportunities, or for tickets, please contact the Yorkton Chamber of Commerce 306-783-4368.

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Thanks to Staff Sgt Jeff Simpson for the following article:

#YorktonRCMP are requesting the assistance of local businesses and residents who may have external video surveillance on their property.

When serious offenses occur such as robberies, home invasions or violent crimes, or property thefts our Members look to those in the community with surveillance to assist with collecting evidence, identifying suspects, and furthering criminal investigations.

If you have surveillance on your property please CALL the



Yorkton Municipal RCMP at 306-786-2400 with your name, address, contact information and business name (if applicable). You will not be named in the investigation and not required to appear in court.

When these calls come in they can sometimes tie up our

Members with endless phone calls, voicemails as well as door to door knocking. If we have this information ready and available to us, it helps us solve these crimes quicker which puts our Members back on the road and able to respond to other calls more efficiently.

We are looking for security cameras, but not dash cameras or trail cameras.

Again, please call the **Yorkton Municipal RCMP office**, do not comment or send us Facebook messages as this page is not monitored 24/7.

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PHC's 17th Annual PowWow



President Brent Murdock was honoured to receive a blanket following the Grand Entry at the Painted Hand Casino's 17th Annual PowWow in early June. A PowWow Grand Entry is a spectacular event; participating in a Grand Entry is an awesome experience. The Chamber appreciates the invitations it receives from the Organizing Committee to participate in the Grand Entries and encourages the Chamber membership to attend a PowWow.

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