



*Next to governmental affairs, marketing is the second key area of responsibility for our Chamber. We continue to work closely with the RRFDC on marketing strategies and annually we advertise in such magazines and brochures as the Fed-Nor "Discover Beautiful Fort Frances" and the Sunset Country Travel Guide. Our office annually field over 2500 requests for tourist information and we are viewed as the first contact for tourists visiting our area. The Chamber is a true Ambassador to Fort Frances and the District.*

*Membership continues to be important for the Chamber. In order that the Chamber can continue to be a strong united business voice in the community, it is important that the membership continues to grow. This year to date we have had 17 new members join. We have also had 5 leave the Chamber, 2 of those being businesses that have gone out of business. If you are not a member of the Chamber please consider joining. We are an important part of the business community.*

*Our annual Chamber Events were again successful. The Home and Leisure Show, Quest for the Best and our Annual Awards Banquet were all a great success. We also work on several other initiatives that benefit the community and business sector. The Business after Hours event provides an opportunity for area businesses to mingle and discuss issues. The Chambers growing contribution to the Town beautification now realizes over 60 flower baskets and pots A definite plus to the community. We designed and are selling a perpetual calendar highlighting the 100th year anniversary of our downtown. \$2 of each calendar sold goes toward the museum renovations. A very worthwhile project. These will continue to be available in 2007.*

*The successful outcome of a Chamber event or project is solely dependent on the amount of time, effort and commitment that the Director's and volunteers put into it! From the success of our 2006 Chamber projects it is evident that that commitment has been substantial and I thank all those who have been involved. I would also like to extend a major thank-you to all the businesses who have been a sponsor to the Chamber this year. Without your continued support we could not hold such successful activities.*

*We look forward to a successful 2007.*

*Thank you!"*

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the April 25, 2006 General Membership Meeting were presented for review.

- **Drysdale - Kahler to accept the minutes from the April 25, 2006 General Membership meeting as presented. CARRIED.**

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Meghan Haehn presented the year-to-date balance sheet and income statement ending October 31, 2006. She reported that the Chamber has had a positive bank account all year which is not usually the case, that the calendar inventory is now shown as an asset on the balance sheet, which is new for this year and that the accounts payable and receivables are due in part to the Business Awards banquet. As far as the income statement, Meghan stated that although we had budgeted money for the BR+E project this year, the project will not start until December therefore, very little has been spent to date. She went on to say that both the Home Show and Quest for the Best were very successful events again this year and contribute to a large amount of our operating budget. One of the 2006 goals and objectives was for the Chamber to become fiscally responsible and although the Chamber was struggling a few years back, we have managed to turn things around and hope to continue in that fashion.

- **Cournoyer - Gushulak to accept the Treasurer's Report ending October 31, 2006 as presented. CARRIED.**

### **By-Law Changes**

Gary reported that each year our staff and Executive committee review the by-laws and make any necessary recommendations to the Board of Directors. Once approved by the Board of Directors, the proposed by-law amendments are then presented to the general membership for adoption. The last by-law amendments were made in July 2004. The proposed amendments were attached for everyone to review. Gary suggested that anyone with any questions on the changes can contact the Chamber office or Board members.

- **Gushulak - Denby to accept the By-Law amendments are presented. CARRIED.**

### **2007 Nominating Committee Report**

Before introducing Alan Tibbetts to conduct the 2007 Nominating Committee Report, Gary had this to say:

*"Before we begin with our 2007 Board of Directors, we would like to thank each of our retiring Directors for their dedication and commitment to the Chamber of Commerce during their time as a Director or Executive member.*

#### ***Alan Tibbetts from H & R Block***

*Alan has served on the Board of Directors since 2001. In 2002 he was our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, 2003 and 2004 saw him as our leader, becoming President of the Chamber of Commerce and for the past two years, Alan has been our Past President. We are sad to see*

Alan leave as he has been a tremendous asset to the Chamber Board but if I'm not mistaken, he has agreed to serve on various Chamber committees which we are happy to hear. Good luck Alan and thanks for all of your time and hard work over the past 6 years.

**Gus MacDonell of IQON Financial**

Gus has been a member of our Board of Directors since 2003. Over the years, Gus was involved in various Chamber committees including membership, Business After Hours, and our Home & Leisure Show. We thank Gus for all of his hard work and dedication to the Chamber.

**Meghan Haehn from BDO Dunwoody**

Meghan was elected to the Board for the 2006 term and for the past six months, served as Treasurer. As Meghan is moving on to another organization, she is no longer able to serve on our Board but we thank Meghan and wish her all the best with her new adventure.

**Michael Cameron from Confederation College**

Michael served on the Board for the most part of 2006 and was instrumental in orchestrating our new Customer Service committee. Thank you Michael.

**Linda Larocque from Kitchen Creek Golf Club**

Linda has been with the Chamber of Commerce for the past 2 years but due to time constraints, has decided to move on. We wish Linda all the best.

**Randy Thoms of Shaw Cable**

Although Randy was only with the Chamber for a one-year term, his valuable input on committees like the Business Awards and Quest for the Best was very much appreciated. We look forward to continuing our relationship with Randy and Shaw on similar projects in the future.

Thank you to all of our dedicated Board of Directors and to our retiring Directors."

Past President Alan Tibbetts gave the following 2007 Nominating Committee Report:

Although 2006 is not over yet, we are here today to discuss our 2007 Executive & Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors are strictly volunteer members and include 5 Executive members, 9 Directors and 5 appointed members.

Jane Gillon from the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines will be returning as an ex-officio member to our Board in 2007.

In addition to our elected members, the Chamber reserves seats on our Board for representatives from the Town of Fort Frances, Economic Development office, Business Improvement Association, Couchiching First Nation and Abitibi-Consolidated.

**The following individuals will sit as our appointed representatives:**

- Patti Anderson for the Business Improvement Association
- Geoff Gillon from the Rainy River Future Development Corporation
- the Town of Fort Frances and Couchiching First Nation have yet to name an appointed member but we should have that in place by the end of the year.

**There are nine seats available for Directors on our Board. The following individuals have put their names forward for consideration:**

- Leigh Ann Cameron . . . . . Border Rock 92.3 fm The Wolf
- Nancy Daley . . . . . Canadian Mental Health Association
- Brian Kahler . . . . . Brown Cow Promotions
- Stephen Kontzie . . . . . RBC Royal Bank
- Bev Kotnik . . . . . Good Impressions Printing
- Kevin Nielson . . . . . Shopper's Drug Mart
- Janet Plumridge . . . . . Investor's Group
- Anne Renaud . . . . . Confederation College
- Chris Shackles . . . . . Enterprise Rent-a-Car
- Kelly Spicer . . . . . Curves for Women
- Jeff Wright . . . . . Wright Physiotherapy

Alan asked for any other nominations from the floor. As there were no other nominations from the floor, Alan went on to explain that although there are eleven individuals vying for the nine Director seats, we are still looking for a Treasurer so one of these individuals will eventually sit as Treasurer and the other will sit as an alternate but all of that will be determined at a later time.

- **Gushulak - Spicer to accept the eleven individuals as Directors for the 2007 Board of Directors. CARRIED.**

### **Past President**

Alan reported that Gary Rogozinski representing Abitibi-Consolidated will sit as Past President for the 2007 term. Gary served as President in 2005 and 2006 and was thanked and congratulated on two very successful years as President and for his continued dedication to the Chamber!

### **Treasurer**

As no one had put their name forward for the position of Treasurer, Alan asked for nominations from the floor. As none were received, Dawn stated that we will appoint someone into the Treasurer position at our first meeting in January, once the Directors have had a chance to think it over. Anyone with any questions on the Treasurer seat was urged to talk to either Dawn Booth, Chamber Manager or Meghan Heahn, current Treasurer.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

Barb Cournoyer from TD Canada Trust had put her name forward for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President seat, although was still awaiting approval from TD to assume this position. Alan asked for any other nominations from the floor and as there were none, asked for a motion to accept Barb Cournoyer as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President.

- **Spicer - Emes to accept Barb Cournoyer of TD Canada Trust as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President for the 2007 Board of Directors. CARRIED.**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

Cathy Emes of Skills & Employment Source agreed to run for the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Alan asked for any other nominations for the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President seat and as there were none, asked for a motion to accept Cathy Emes as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President.

- **Kahler - Cournoyer to accept Cathy Emes of Skills & Employment Source as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President for the 2007 Board of Directors. CARRIED.**

### **President**

Christine Denby of Gillons' Insurance Brokers put her name forward for the role of President. Alan asked for any other nominations for President, and as none were received, asked for a motion to accept Christine Denby as President for 2007.

- **Kotnik - Gushulak to accept Christine Denby of Gillons' Insurance Brokers as President for the 2007 Board of Directors. CARRIED.**

Alan congratulated the in-coming 2007 Executive & Board of Directors and stated that these nominations will be in effect from January 1, 2007 - December 31, 2007.

### **President-Elect Speech**

Gary welcomed President-Elect Christine Denby to say a few words. Christine thanked everyone for coming out, declared that she is looking forward to an interesting year ahead, although she has big shoes to fill and only little tiny feet. She thanked everyone who agreed to stay on the Board in 2007 and to those who are new. She stressed that she is confident that we will only continue to improve and is looking forward to 2007.

### **Guest Speaker**

Gary introduced Mayor-Elect Roy Avis as our special guest speaker.

### **Roy's Speech**

*"Good evening,*

*As Gary has mentioned this evening, I have lived most of my life in Fort Frances. Forty of those working at West End Motors, of which 35 were as manager-owner.*

*In conversation, many times I hear we should do business the old fashioned way or the way it was done 30 years ago. I would say the basic principles of business have not changed, but business practises have, and if we did business today, the way we did 30 years ago, businesses would close. My career has been working with a major corporation under a franchise system, and I know very well change must occur.*

*I can recall when our major commerce district was Scott Street and the closer you established to Downtown the better. Fort Frances ended at Wright Avenue and my business was in McIrvine. Now we see the change in business development with the Big Box stores and Fast Food Alley located in the West End. This does not mean the West End is Better than Downtown or Downtown is better than the West End. We must all work together for a healthy vibrant community.*

*Over the next four years I expect our council will work proactively with the chamber. As a united force, we will make a difference.*

*I am glad to see the Chamber with the Rainy River Future Development Corporation is surveying existing business in Fort Frances for retention and expansion. I want the Town to be involved in this process.*

*We must support the pulp and paper industry by keeping open communications with Abitibi, the unions and the forest workers. We must support the initiatives of the Northern Ontario Municipal Association in support of the forest industry.*

*I believe in business and government partnership, and support the initiatives of the downtown core committee and would support an initiative to develop a parking area to accommodate motor homes and vehicles pulling trailers. We must work to develop Fort Frances as a destination point. We must continually work with the Chamber in support of the tourist industry.*

*Fort Frances has a great deal to offer and we must move to the offensive and teamed with the Chamber and economic development professionals we will make that difference.*

*One small example: How often do you hear that commercial taxes in Fort Frances are too high and it is not conducive to a good business climate? Yes we on council in the past have worked to reduce our commercial ratios, but do you ever hear that we have the lowest power cost in Ontario probably and the United States.*

*I strongly support the red tape committee proposal brought forward during the last council term and will support it.*

*Health care is a major business in our community and we all know the problems that exist in developing a family health team and community owned clinic. I ask the Chamber Of Commerce to support this initiative.*

*Collectively we must continually seek out new business and industry opportunities and in closing, I was once told, "the best way to get business is to deserve it."*

#### **Question & Answer Period**

No questions were asked

#### **Adjournment**

Gary adjourned the meeting and invited everyone to stay and enjoy the complimentary hors d'oeuvres and mingling.

#### **Mix & Mingle**