

Chamber holds AGM, elects new board

By Mark Pavilons

Steady membership gives the King Chamber of Commerce a mandate to continue to advocate on behalf of local business.

The Chamber's role was reaffirmed last week, during its AGM. Members gathered at the King municipal complex for a networking time, followed by a tour of the facility.

President Tom Allen, who was once again voted in to lead the group, asked members to let the board know what matters most.

Members are encouraged to be engaged and actually help the Chamber drive forward.

Making things exciting this year will be the federal election.

Some economists note it's been 10 years since the last recession, and one is overdue. Allen said he's not convinced the economy is fragile, but rather seems to be robust. He also asked local businesses to let the Chamber know if they're feeling any signs of an economic slowdown.

One member wanted to know where the majority of revenue for the Chamber comes from, and how this can be increased. Allen said it's the membership fees that carry the Chamber. A steady number of roughly 150 members provides the funds needed to operate. He said most of the events the Chamber puts on are on a break-even basis. He did point out that there's a sub-committee, led by Zach Shoub of London Publishing, that's trying to drive membership.

'I'd like to see us grow,' Allen said, 'to improve the cash flow. But steady is good.'

The Chamber is also constantly trying to get people and businesses connected throughout the township.

Another major role is that of business advocate. 'The group has credibility in its lobbying and advocacy roles, given its strong membership.'

One member wanted to know about the opportunities for cross-promotion, and getting some visibility on the Chamber's and King's websites.

Allen said business openings and similar events can be put on the website. Someone wanted to know about posting help wanted ads on it, too. Allen said it's never come up in the past, but is something to look into. Allen said there's nothing wrong with promoting local opportunities to local workers.

Jamie Smyth, King's economic development officer, said he does send out e-blasts about business events. He's happy to join forces with the Chamber and local businesses to promote them any way he can.

The board said goodbye to a few members, and welcomed new ones. Leaving the board were Rose Dodaro, Margarida Ramoa D'Alfonsi, Tara McCarthy and Rob Payne.

Joining the board for 2019 are David Cross, Brian Speers, David Huckvale.

Huckvale, of The 'Country' Day School, said he's been at the school for 10 years and is also a King resident. He wanted to join the Chamber because CDS is a proud member of the community and often gives back as well. 'We benefit from a successful township,' he pointed out.

Welcoming the new King Chamber board were David Cross, Tom Allen, Mayor Steve Pellegrini, Brian Speers, David Huckvale and Jamie Smyth.