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Chamber of
Commerce
abbotsford

Monthly publication brought to you courtesy of our Media Partner: **THE NEWS**
ABBOTSFORD

CHAMBER WELCOMES NEW BOARD AT AGM AND CELEBRATES PAST YEAR'S ACHIEVEMENTS



(Abbotsford) – March 18, 2021 – The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce held its Annual General Meeting on Friday, March 12th where it welcomed its new Board and the celebrated achievements in 2020. The Board undertook a comprehensive recruiting process and clearly identified key sectors of focus, leadership, and skills competencies to grow the board. It also sought to ensure a diverse composition across business, professions and community.

The 2021/2022 Board Members are:

- Melinda Friesen, Clearbrook Grain & Milling, President
- Craig Toews, University of the Fraser Valley, Vice President
- Katie Yu, RBC, Treasurer
- Chris Gauthier, Memento Mori Studios, Secretary
- Mike Ashcroft, Cascade, Director
- Karen Biggs, Menno Place, Director
- Tim Holloway, KPMG, Director
- Josh Reynolds, Illustrate Collective, Director (*newly elected*)
- Ravi Sidhu, TELUS, Director (*newly elected*)
- Tammy McLachlan, Canadian Western Bank (*newly elected*)
- Kevin Mierau, Mierau Contractors Ltd, Director
- Paul Penner, Re/Max, Director (*newly elected*)

- Sam Varing, Baker Newby, Director

In her President's address Melinda Friesen reflected on the last year and experiences of our members and local businesses, including work of the Chamber and the community to support business throughout the pandemic. "COVID generated collaboration and creativity in our community on so many levels. Your Abbotsford Chamber took the lead in bringing together several community stakeholders to create the ABCC (Abbotsford Business Community Coalition) encouraging our community to shop and give local with the #dowhatlocalsdo campaign. Engaging local businesses to participate in a free gift-card platform with Support Local BC, as well as raising over \$40,000 to provide grants of \$2,000 each to small business owners," said Friesen.

Her message was also to not let COVID define the year as that "although it's constantly at the top of our minds and at the forefront of our everyday lives, there is much more that happened in 2020 than the COVID pandemic." Friesen moreover explained, "I believe one of the greatest accomplishments we made this past year was to strengthen our positioning as Abbotsford's leading business organization. Not only did we reflect on the value of the relationships with our members, but some of the Directors and Chamber staff combined our efforts to call every single one. We wanted to

hear first-hand what we could do to further support them now and as we navigate ahead... You are helping us build a greater Chamber. COVID hasn't kept us in crisis. It's helped us embrace our creativity, encouraged collaboration, and given many of us a greater sense of community – all things we can take with us as we take on 2021."

A full copy of the Chamber's 2020 Annual Report of activities and accomplishments is available on the chamber's website: abbotsfordchamber.com/news/category/announcements/

About the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce:

The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce is the Fraser Valley's leading member-driven organization and voice that improves the effectiveness of doing business. An Accredited Chamber of Commerce managed strategically to reflect national standards of business excellence and best practices. Created to promote the interests of businesses in the City of Abbotsford, the Chamber has been an integral part of Abbotsford's growth and evolution for nearly as long as the city has existed and is in its 108th year of service.

For more information, please contact:
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2021

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS



Melinda Friesen
PRESIDENT



Craig Toews
VICE-PRESIDENT



Katie Yu
TREASURER



Chris Gauthier
SECRETARY



Tammy McLachlan
DIRECTOR



Karen Biggs
DIRECTOR



Josh Reynolds
DIRECTOR



Tim Holloway
DIRECTOR



Kevin Mierau
DIRECTOR



Sam Varing
DIRECTOR



Paul Penner
DIRECTOR



Ravi Sidhu
DIRECTOR



Mike Ashcroft
DIRECTOR

2021

CHAMBER
TEAM MEMBERS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Communication and Connection and Elephants?

Hi Abbotsford!

I had an amazing opportunity this week to participate in a Zoom session with some of Abbotsford's key contributors – our honorable Mayor Braun, members of Council, President and Vice Chancellor of University of the Fraser Valley, Dr. Joanne MacLean, as well as several business owners and leaders. The dialogue platform was how to “Build Back Better” encouraging round table discussions to garner collective thoughts around economic, social, cultural, and environmental challenges to generate some next step action items as we shift into recovery. I am certain by now that most of us are simply tired of COVID, the stats, the protocols, the masks! But from this little dialogue, I was encouraged Abbotsford, so I wanted to attempt to pass that along to you.

Our community cares. Our council, university, Chamber of Commerce (just

to name a few), are invested in making sure that this pandemic doesn't break us. And in fact, it may better define us. The key – we need to stay connected. I want to share a book I am reading that has overwhelmed my soul regarding the spirit of connection. The book is actually about elephants. These mysterious giants have the most incredible ability to communicate through not only their trunks but also through their stomachs! Their rumblings are often too subtle for the human ear however it is a technique used across herds, and at significant distances. Then there is the connection they create between each other to establish their hierarchy and the deepest of relationships. The herd in this book stood over a newborn for 12 hours straight, without water or food in the sweltering African sun trying to help her stand, while protecting her by using their ears to keep her shaded. The herds are known to travel together, and despite being led by the matriarch, they will take their own routes. They all move towards the same destination, feeling



Melinda Friesen
President

their connection with the herd. They act individually while remaining a part of their community.

Abbotsford, that is the community that we have. A compassionate caring culture that wants you to succeed, wants to connect. Elephants' social structures are complex, relying on one another for support. We all need to ask for help sometimes, so don't be afraid to do so! Your community and your Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce is here for you.

NEW BUSINESSES:

Habitat for Humanity Greater Vancouver
604-681-5618

Modality Technology Partners Inc.
778-360-4700

A-Team Composites Ltd.
604-621-3734

Nurse Next Door
778-600-0682

Canadian Homebuilders' Association
604-755-9306

Summit Centre
604-396-0518

UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 22 – April 28

Building Resilience to Thrive
Cohort 4

Wednesday's 11:00am-12:00pm

Thursday, April 22

Cybersecurity for Small
Businesses

Sponsored by Red

Rhino Networks

11:30am-12:30pm

Friday, April 30

Budget Analysis with Michael
de Jong, MLA Abbotsford West

Sponsored by Baker

Newby LLP

11:30am-12:30pm

Registration at abbotsfordchamber.com/events

Latest Supports for Your Business

The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce wants to make sure you know about the latest supports for your business. If you missed our Lunch n Learn webinar with RBC on "Pandemic 201" we wanted to provide you with another way to hear about some recent information:

Most businesses are familiar with the federal government pandemic programs for business; such as the Wage Subsidy, Rent Subsidy, Emergency Business Account and their 2021 extensions.

Make sure you also know the major provincial grants such as the Small and Medium Business Grant, Work Experience Opportunities Grant the newest Launch Online Grant Program and BC Increased Employment Incentive tax credit. If you have any questions please contact our Executive Director, Katerina Anastasiadis katerina@abbotsfordchamber.com or our Office #604-859-9651.

Here is some more key information recently announced that you don't want to miss:

Book Publishing Tax Credit Extended - March 11th, 2021

The B.C. government is extending the book publishing tax credit. This refundable tax credit program was scheduled to expire at the end of March 2021. Instead, it will be extended five years to the end of March 2026 and will support the economic and cultural value of book publishers, increase their competitiveness and strengthen their economic recovery out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applications to Open For New Tax Benefits to Support Businesses - March 5th, 2021

As B.C. businesses work to transition to a post COVID-19 economy, the government will open applications for two tax benefits to support businesses:

- A temporary PST rebate on select machinery and equipment
- A refundable tax credit for employers, which encourages the creation of new jobs for B.C. workers or increases in payroll for existing low- or medium-income employees

Applications Open for Temporary Spring/Summer Patios in Vancouver - March 1st, 2021

- Applications for spring/summer patios are now open. To avoid permit delays, submit complete applications and make sure your patio complies with the City's safety and structural standards.

Small and Medium-Sized Business Recovery Grant Program Extended - March 4th, 2021

The B.C. government has extended the deadline for applying for the **Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Grant program** from March 31st, 2021, to **August 31st, 2021**.

- In addition, the previous requirement for a business to have experienced at least a 70% revenue loss at some point in March or April 2020 has been adjusted down to a **30% revenue loss in any one month between March 2020 to the point of application**.

Chamber's Virtual Lunch n Learn Series - The Chamber offers educational business offerings on a wide variety of topics related to: marketing, social media and branding, online sales & digital strategies, HR and health and safety law, business tax tips and accounting, government pandemic supports and programs and how they work for businesses, leadership and professional development, grant writing and more. Go to abbotsfordchamber.com/events to register.

For more information on these initiatives, please contact the Chamber 604-859-9651 or Executive Director, katerina@abbotsfordchamber.com



**IF THE TOOTH
FAIRY WON'T PAY
YOUR DENTAL BILLS,
WE CAN!**

The reality is we all can use help with unexpected expenses like dental bills, prescription drugs, or medical supplies. Now help is here, with affordable group coverage designed specifically for small to medium sized businesses. **See why over 25,000 business owners selected this plan!**

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