

December 06, 2018

Dear Mayor Finch and Council,

The South Huron Chamber of Commerce (SHCC) is a volunteer driven, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the economic health and welfare of the Municipality of South Huron. SHCC was founded in 1998 with a mandate to provide a healthy economic environment for South Huron businesses, promote business growth and attract new businesses to South Huron. SHCC has over 100 members representing the full spectrum of the local economy, including financial, manufacturing, hospitality, retail, agriculture, service groups and professional services. Businesses receive a number of benefits for being members of SHCC, including free access to networking and business development events hosted by SHCC and discounts on numerous business services.

SHCC provides a number of successful networking and business development events and services to the community, including:

- 'Business after 5' events;
- Business improvement or education workshops targeting emerging issues that impact our members;
- Annual 'trade show' style events (e.g. 2019 Huron Food and Beverage Show) that are open to the public and provide exposure to member businesses;
- Job fairs to bring employers and job-seekers together;
- Other annual networking events (golf tournament, summer/Christmas socials)
- Co-host of the annual South Huron Business Excellence Awards Gala;
- SHCC in partnership with the Exeter Business Improvement Association (BIA) oversee the operations of the South Huron Welcome Centre;
- SHCC in partnership with Exeter BIA launched the local Farmer's Market through Trillium Grant funding;
- Hosting of All-Candidates Forum prior to every Municipal election.

In the past number of years, SHCC has been able to help bring a number of economic development projects to the Municipality. Totalling over \$150,000 in funding, these projects targeted workforce development, community promotion, sector development and more. Although these project-based monies support the mandate of SHCC and provide value for the members - this funding does not support the core functioning of the Chamber.

SHCC is financed through several non-guaranteed sources of revenue, including membership fees, special events, grants, and group insurance commission. 'Non-guaranteed' means that SHCC's primary revenue sources are based on the voluntary actions of our members and event participants to continue their support of SHCC. SHCC's business model is very different than other organizations like business improvement associations that receive a guaranteed amount of core funding.

The Municipality in past years has given a grant to the SHCC to help in its annual business plan. Due to an administrative error, we failed to apply for the grant in September 2018, the deadline for such applications and we apologize for this error. We respectfully ask that Council consider this late application for a grant allotment in 2019 in the amount of \$10,000.

In respect of this grant, and in consideration of the numerous benefits that SHCC brings to South Huron's businesses and community, we ask that Council consider entering into a memorandum of understanding with SHCC so that this grant amount becomes a permanent budget line item beginning in 2020.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to a prosperous relationship working with Council to bring economic prosperity to South Huron.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leanne Comeau".

Leanne Comeau (President, SHCC)

(Signing on behalf of the Board of Directors of the South Huron Chamber of Commerce)