



Municipality of Central Huron
Monthly Report
Administration
For the Month of: April 2020

Date: April 29, 2020
To: Mayor and Council
From: Angela Smith, Community Improvement Coordinator

BIA:

Work continues on the "Who's Open" business listing. All CH businesses have been invited to participate. We have asked through email (those that we have) and social media for them to contact me. Please share the info if you know of a business that isn't listed...especially rural businesses as I'm sure there are lots more that could be added. The listing is available on the BIA website, social media accounts and in The Pulse emails. It will be updated daily if there are additions/changes. Cchbia.ca

Central Huron Business Supports:

Planning a business appreciation breakfast as a kick off to resuming business when the time comes. Preliminary plans are to hold it in the town hall auditorium at 8am as a way to offer our support, ask what we can do to aid them in their 'restart' of business, have them share ideas and offer supports as a group. Words from Mayor, Council and Staff are welcomed. Light breakfast refreshments offered. Please let me know if you have suggestions.

Bruce Power initiated a program called Grey, Bruce, Huron Strong where they requested communities provide business information and they would promote those that are open, those that have restrictions and those offering curbside and delivery options. Deputy Mayor Jewitt forwarded the information to me and I immediately began gathering it and assembling it on a new page on the BIA website as this is something that has been on the BIA wish list for a long time. I reached out again to all the businesses and had an overwhelming response. They are all grateful to the team from Bruce Power for taking on the project. THEN I heard from them again, saying that they were going to start an online store to sell gift certificates to help out all the businesses in the region, but specifically those that don't have their own online store. Central Huron has the most businesses listed and I have been taking calls from business owners, BIAs and Chambers across the region asking for direction/assistance with getting their own listings. Visit the site at www.gbhstrong.com

Central Huron Tourist Map:

Many changes and updates have been made. Thanks to everyone that provided input.

Economic Development Conference:

Meetings have continued for planning the 2020 economic development conference for this fall. It will be held in Goderich, with tours in areas of the county. More details to follow.

Social Enterprise Central Huron:

Central Huron Sweet-meetings have been held to move this initiative forward. We now have support from OMAFRA at two levels (advisory and inspection) & Community Futures Huron. I have done preliminary research into the Canada Student Service Grant which is purported to offer post secondary students with up to \$5000 in a grant towards their tuition if they provide community service in the food sector. This would allow us to move forward with the program, with the students getting paid for their participation. CHSS and St. Anne's have been contacted to help connect us with students that are moving on to post secondary in Sept. (or last Sept) and would like to participate. There is a lot of support being offered and OMAFRA is particularly interested in helping develop the program structure... they have an interest in it becoming a program that can be easily replicated in communities & schools across Ontario! They love the idea of teaching a lifelong skill in agriculture and local food to students ...that they can continue for the rest of their lives with very little investment, no farmland required, and a potential for huge financial returns. Beehives create income on two different levels...first off is the obvious...they can sell honey. Secondly though...many farmers rent beehives from beekeepers in order to have proper crop pollination and rental is expensive. These rentals are placed on farms to pollinate specific crops, then they are moved to another farm to pollinate some other crop. As an example, the Bayfield Berry Farm rents hives to pollinate the fruit...once the pollination period passes, those hives are shipped to a farm in Nova Scotia! I'm wondering what it costs to ship live bees in their hives????!!

I have already had offers from 3 different farmers that would like to host the beehives.

Municipal Flower Beds:

I have been participating in the semi-weekly OBIAA online meetings. Municipal flowerbeds have been discussed recently and some of the municipalities aren't planning to plant this year. I had already been looking into the possibility of planting vegetables in the flowerbeds, with perhaps an outer ring of a few flowers for colour. I have discussed this with the Facilities Manager and we have identified Spooner's Lane, the Albert Street Park and Sloman Park as areas where vegetables would work nicely. I propose that we use this opportunity to support the food banks by using municipal

property and volunteer labour. There would be no impact on the budget as the parks budget already has funds for flowers. This idea was generated through a meeting I had with the Community Food Bank and is in no way meant to compete with the community gardens at Huronview. The Community Food Bank would like the gardens to be within walking distance. They are interested in potentially taking responsibility for one bed and of course being considered as a recipient of the produce come fall. I would reach out to our local vendors for vegetable seed and plants. Since that discussion, I have learned (as already stated) about the Canada Student Service Grant and as this is a community food production program, I believe it will fit nicely in the requirements for the grant as well. I have sent out an initial inquiry to judge if there is interest from post secondary students to participate and had nine positive responses out of 14 asked... within an hour. These students are desperate as most of them have lost their jobs due to covid and will not have money available to pay for college/university in the fall, and many of them are struggling right now to pay their rent on apartments in the city that they aren't even living in, due to annual lease requirements.

We are launching the Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG), which will help students gain valuable work experience and skills while they help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For students who choose to do national service and serve their communities, the new CSSG will provide up to \$5,000 for their education in the fall.

More details will be made available on the "I Want to Help" platform soon.

Flowers of Hope Positivity Project:

Another idea from the OBIAA meetings that I would like to implement that I think would enhance the flowerbeds as described above. This was the info received...

Two weeks ago, the Board wanted to do something to beautify the downtown and to give hope to their BIA members and the local community. That's where the idea for this positivity project was born. They "planted" 32 flowers in their downtown (standing more than 3 feet high and 2 feet wide) with inspirational messages. The community was so positively impacted that they asked them to consider selling the flowers – so they could buy them for their own homes, gift to others, place in front of their businesses etc.

The BIA is now ready to open the sale mechanism and they realize that other communities may want to create their own version. They have made the artwork for their flowers available to other communities, downtowns, and BIAs.

These could be made locally for aprx \$45-48 each. I would endeavour to enlist a post secondary student to place them in the flower beds, while recognizing social distancing rules. I propose that we plant tomatoes around the base of the signs, then beans around that (or other crops as suggested by volunteers and vendors)...and then adding

a few flowers at the edge for colour. I would like to purchase 10 of the flowers of hope, placing 7 in areas around town and 3 in the hamlets. There is room in my budget to cover this expense.

Thursday Tunes:

I received this note after our last TT dance and wanted to share it with you.

What a crowd. The dance is so needed in this area.

Thank you to all of you.

Mary-Rose

Apr 1 mtg Wingham BIA

Apr 2 mtg BIA & mtg OBIAA

Apr 6 Council

Apr 7 OBIAA

Apr 9 OMAFRA

Apr 14 Council

Apr 14 EcDev Mtg

Apr 16 OBIAA

Apr 17 GBH Strong

Apr 20 OMAFRA

Apr 21 CH Sweet

Apr 22 Sip'n Savour

Apr 24 mtg South Bruce

Apr 27 Klienburg flowers of hope

Apr 27 Budget

Apr 28 Bayfield Berry Farm re ecdev tour



Angela Smith
Community Improvement Coordinator