

Pinawa Chamber of Commerce 2008 Annual Report

I would like to thank the Chamber Executive for their efforts over the past year. They have done an excellent job working on your behalf. They are: Donna Warenko, Past President; Rhonda Henschell, Secretary; Vince Lopata, Treasurer; Rick Backer and Barrie Burnett, Members-at-large. I would also like to thank the members of a special committee formed to investigate the issues and propose a solution to high commercial building taxation on new builds – these members are Diane Boczek, Jeff Simpson and Brian Wilcox.

This past year, the Pinawa Chamber worked diligently to complete a strategy determined by the Chamber for the 2008 year. We continued to liaise with other groups within Pinawa including the PCDC and Council. Throughout the year, Donna Warenko sat on the PCDC Board of Directors. In addition, the Chamber has developed a very good relationship with Nancy Bremner, which has allowed us to participate in joint marketing efforts as well as with pinawa.com. I would like to thank Nancy for all her efforts on behalf of the Chamber. The Chamber also received, and passed onto its membership, Council minutes.

The Chamber helped provide mentorship to one new and one growing business in 2008. A Chamber member sat on the Business Incubator committee, and another acted as mentor for the first incubated business in the program to date. A local business helped with marketing materials and logistics for the new business. In 2008, the Chamber plans to continue to provide mentorship as well as training to both new and existing businesses within Pinawa.

The Pinawa Chamber was in attendance this past year at the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce AGM held in Clear Lake. This weekend conference was an excellent opportunity to network with other Chambers throughout Manitoba. Specific information was sought from selected communities regarding their commercial building taxation and issues surrounding raising capital for new business ventures. This information was handed to the special committee on issues surrounding commercial building taxation. This building taxation committee took their results to Blair Skinner and had a discussion that resulted in an action on Blair and the Chamber to make it known there was room for negotiation on building incentives/initiatives with all new business builds for the first 5 years of their building lifetime.

The Chamber was active in establishing an interim solution to the change in location of the Greyhound Bus Depot, so this service has been maintained for the community. The Chamber also organized the Birthday Weekend Parade – thanks Vince, and assisted with the RCMP Musical Ride event.

The Chamber is an active member of the Age-Friendly Manitoba Committee of Council. This is an Initiative by the Manitoba government and Pinawa has been chosen as a pilot community to receive funding to make Pinawa an Age-Friendly community. This Initiative is in the early stages and a meeting with the Province will be held on November 10, 2008. Grants for automatic door openers, wheel-chair accessibility are part of the Initiative and the Committee has already started assessing and applying for those grants. The Pinawa Committee, led by Councillor McMurren, includes members from Pinawa 50+, Two Rivers Seniors and the Chamber.

The Chamber held the only All-Candidates Forum in the Provencher riding and had all 5 candidates out to discuss and explain their platforms. This was a successful pre-election event with over 100 people in attendance – several from out-of-town.

One key area the Chamber has had difficulty with over the years is determining whether or not we provide benefit to all sectors of business in Pinawa. We are very pleased to report that we currently have 36 members. We would like to encourage our membership to speak up about issues they would like us to work on in 2009.

The Chamber is looking forward to another busy year in 2009. In order to complete our strategy, we need membership participation. I encourage everyone to consider sitting on the executive and becoming a part of the Pinawa Business Buzz.

Marsha Sheppard
President, Pinawa Chamber of Commerce
sheppardm@ecomatters.com; 753-2747