



## Stratfords of the World (Ontario) Advisory Committee

### MINUTES

A meeting of the Stratfords of the World (SOTW) Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, August 8, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., in the Mansbridge Room at the Stratford Rotary Complex.

**Committee Members Present:** Joan Ayton – Chair Presiding, June Wells, Ken Clarke, Wayne Whitehorn, Joyce Mohr, Linda Hawken, Councillor Geza Wordofa, Susan Kummer, Kathy Hill, Barbara Finkelstein

**Staff Present:** Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

#### 1. Call to Order

Joan Ayton, Chair presiding, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Reading of the Land Acknowledgment and Moment of Silent Reflection

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Policy

#### 2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None declared.

#### 3. Adoption of the Previous Minutes

**Motion by** Linda Hawken

**Seconded by** Joyce Mohr

**THAT the minutes from the Stratfords of the World Advisory Committee meeting dated June 27, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried**

#### **4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

##### **4.1 2025 Reunion Plans – New Zealand (January 8-15, 2025)**

Joan Ayton provided the following updates on the upcoming Reunion in New Zealand:

- There are currently (13) delegates registered and everyone has submitted payment to the City;
- There are (11) people registered for the North Island tour and have each provided a \$100.00 deposit. Two registrants are from the UK and will be joining the Ontario registrants;
- There are (4) people registered for the South Island tour, with three additional people interested in possibly joining the tour;
- Ms. Ayton will send the registrants for both tours the tour agent contact information to contact directly for payment options;

##### **4.2 Discussion on Financial Assistance for Members Travelling to Reunions Representing Stratford, Ontario**

Vicky Trotter provided answers to questions SOTW members have regarding requesting financial support for attending reunions.

- Can support be requested now in 2024 versus requesting it as part of the 2025 budget?

Yes, it can. If the Committee wants to make a motion today, the request can go to Council and they will make the decision in 2024, however it will still appear in the 2025 budget. This option would allow members to be reimbursed in 2024 as opposed to waiting until after the 2025 budget is approved. Members will be required to submit their receipts for reimbursement.

- Is a fundraising event an option to assist with financial costs for SOTW members?

Ms. Trotter will inquire with the Director of Corporate Services regarding fundraising and sponsorship possibilities and e-mail SOTW members with the information.

Members discussed what type of expenses would be acceptable to be reimbursed for. Items such as registration fees and a portion of travel expenses were two items discussed as possibilities.

Members also discussed what an appropriate amount would be to request. Suggestions to cover the full registration fee and a portion of the travel expenses might be an acceptable request.

Ken Clarke noted that other Advisory Committees often request funds to cover expenses for members to attend conferences.

Wayne Whitehorn stated that he is opposed to requesting funds from the City to cover costs to attend the Reunion. He has been on the SOTW Committee since 2007 and there has never been any discussion about committee members being remunerated in any way. This seems to have been generated from other Advisory Committees being approved for funds, as they have never requested funds before. As a volunteer, he never expected any financial support from the City and is opposed to the process.

Susan Kummer inquired what support other committees have historically received as far as reimbursement for registration fees, travel and other expenses incurred to attend events. Vicky Trotter stated that some committees include a budget line for conferences. This would cover expenses that members may incur while attending conferences, seminars, workshops or similar events.

Linda Hawken noted that costs associated with travelling have risen significantly since SOTW first began and it did not cost as much to participate. Costs to travel to farther hosts, such as New Zealand, are much higher and should be taken into consideration when requesting funds.

Wayne Whitehorn stated it seems self-serving to the committee to request funds to assist with their expenses when the rest of the delegates attending, who are also paying the same prices, to not have the same financial support. Barbara Finkelstein disagrees, as members joined the committee and did not know that requesting financial support was a possibility.

Susan Kummer stated that the registration fees alone have almost doubled from previous reunions. She also noted that it is sometimes difficult to get new members to join SOTW and maybe this will create some interest in the future.

Joyce Mohr inquired if attending the Reunion would be the same as other committee members attending conferences. Joan Ayton stated that conference is a budget line term that the Finance Department uses. All the Reunion funds and expenses when Stratford, Ontario hosted their Reunion came out of the conferences budget line. Ms. Mohr stated that everyone on the SOTW committee joined as a volunteer and work very hard on the Reunions.

Councillor Wordofa stated that the SOTW committee could seek donations from local businesses to help with funding. SOTW could have their own account to hold the funds for future Reunions.

Vicky Trotter stated that a previously discussed bursary program for non-members of SOTW could be proposed for future Reunions, as there is not enough time before the New Zealand reunion in January to have a program such as this drafted and approved by Council.

June Wells stated that she agrees with Wayne Whitehorn's point that members have always paid their own way in the past and questioned if it is necessary to request that members be reimbursed for registration fees as well as travel expenses. Everyone who signed up to attend did so knowing that they would be required to pay their own way. Joan Ayton stated that members never knew in the past that requesting funds for attending the Reunions was an option or they may have done it sooner.

Susan Kummer stated that more members may have attended in the past if there had been some financial assistance.

Kathy Hill stated that it is her opinion that the committee should not ask for too much funding from the City, to be reasonable in their request to cover the registration fees and a portion of the travel expenses. Joan Ayton agreed that all other expenses such as the additional organized tours, are purely by choice and paid for personally.

**Motion by** Ken Clarke

**Seconded by** Linda Hawken

**THAT the Stratfords of the World Advisory Committee requests Stratford City Council consider financial support in the amount of \$7,350.00 for up to five (5) SOTW Ontario members to attend the 2025 New Zealand Stratfords of the World Reunion as outlined below:**

<b>Registration Fees (\$470.00 x 5)</b>	<b>\$2,350.00</b>
<b>Travel Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$5,000.00</u></b>
	<b>\$7,350.00</b>

**Carried**

\*Susan Kummer is no longer present at the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

**5. New Business**

**5.1 2025 SOTW Budget Request for Council**

Members discussed SOTW committee plans for 2025 and any expenses that they will incur during the year. Vicky Trotter noted that they will need to include the additional \$7,350.00 they have requested from Council for the New Zealand reunion.

June Wells suggested that the committee could hold some educational or promotional events to spread the word about Stratfords of the World and what the committee is all about. Linda Hawken suggested SOTW could join in with other events happening in Stratford for more visibility.

**Motion by** Barbara Finkelstein

**Seconded by** June Wells

**THAT the Stratfords of the World Advisory Committee requests a 2025 budgetary amount of \$800.00 from the City of Stratford for various meeting expenses and promotional items/events for the SOTW Committee. Carried**

**6. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the SOTW Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 10:00 a.m., in the Mansbridge Room at the Stratford Rotary Complex, 353 McCarthy Road, Stratford.

**7. Adjournment**

**Motion by** Ken Clarke

**Seconded by** Kathy Hill

**THAT the August 8, 2024 Stratfords of the World Advisory Committee meeting adjourn. Carried**

Start Time: 10:00 A.M.

End Time: 11:14 A.M.