

# Policy Resolution:

New Membership rates for the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce

## **Problem:**

Our Chamber of Commerce is faced with continued cash flow and budgetary concerns that make it near impossible for us to operate as effectively as we need to and as the community expects of us.

## **Details of the Problem:**

Today our Chamber runs with an annual budget of approximately \$250,000. Some of which comes via the City of Port Alberni as a fee for service for the Visitor Centre Contract. That contract is also supported by Destination BC through a smaller contribution. The Visitor Centre itself loses money on an annual basis even with the much appreciated contributions by both parties. The Chamber of Commerce believes that the Visitor Centre Contract remains a vital part of our overall mandate as Tourism in effect leads directly to increased residences, which in turn leads to increased community investment. Tourism is NOT a Sector of the Economy but in essence it is a vital part of the overall economic base.

In order for the Chamber of Commerce to grow and develop it needs to increase its revenue base substantially so that staffing can be increased to satisfactory levels, training opportunities can be explored, and stronger positioning of the Chamber itself can be considered so that our 'voice' is heard loud and clear on the Provincial Scene.

The Chamber also needs to position itself as the primary business group in the Alberni Valley, which it already is, but it must leverage this position so that current 'non-members' realize that they must reconsider their present approach to the business community.

The Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce has far too many membership rates, most of which are at odd values (such as \$123.19, \$265.33 etc. As well, our rates are generally the lowest in the nearby communities; in some cases less than ½ of what other communities charge for their membership. As example: The Parksville and District Chamber of Commerce operates with an annual budget of more than 3 X what we work with. Tofino operates with a membership revenue of well over double what ours currently is.

Finally our Chamber needs to continue along the path of strong membership meetings with a good cast of guest speakers. This can be achieved with a better cash flow position.

## **Recommendation:**

Reduce our present 19 rates to 5 only. Eliminate the Associate Rates and instead simply reduce those rates by the surcharges necessary for BC Chamber and suggested Canadian Chamber amounts. New Rates as follows:

\$35.00 Seniors

\$75.00 Independents/Organizations

\$175.00 Businesses up to 10 persons

\$250.00 Businesses 11 – 99 persons

\$890.00 Businesses > 99 persons

All rates to come with a \$13.00 surcharge to offset the BC Chamber of Commerce fee along with an additional surcharge of \$2.50 to offset the fee required for the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. NOTE: The most common rate for us is the \$175.00 one. With the surcharges and applicable taxes the invoice would come to \$200.03.

Additionally it is recommended that we evolve over to a system of renewals, for new members, based on the 12 months from time of membership; IE: Not necessarily the Calendar Year.

All rates + GST

Submitted by: THE ALBERNI VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE