

TIABC CHAIR, JIM HUMPHREY – TIABC TOWN HALL

BC TIC, WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2017

THANK YOU WALT. MY ROLE THIS AFTERNOON IS TO PROVIDE YOU WITH A BRIEF UPDATE ON SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS SINCE WE LAST MET TOGETHER AT THE SUMMIT IN MAY AND THE 2015 BC TOURISM INDUSTRY CONFERENCE.

IF YOU REGULARLY READ OUR NEWSLETTER OR FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA, YOU KNOW THAT OUR CEO, WALT JUDAS KEEPS A VERY BUSY CALENDAR – CONNECTING WITH MEMBERS, STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND OF COURSE, GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES TO ENSURE WE'RE DOING THE WORK THAT OUR MEMBERS EXPECT.

OVER THE PAST YEAR HE HAS MET OVER 25 DIFFERENT TIMES WITH MINISTERS AND KEY MINISTRY STAFF, NOT ONLY WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF JOBS, TOURISM AND SKILLS TRAINING BUT ALSO WITH FINANCE AND TRANSPORTATION.

OUR PRIORITIES ARE NOT ONLY LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL, BUT ALSO FEDERAL AS WALT CONNECTS WITH TOURISM MINISTER CHAGGER, PUBLIC SAFETY MINISTER GOODALE, AS WELL AS TIAC AND THE OTHER PROVINCIAL TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS FROM ACROSS CANADA.

WALT ALSO WORKED CLOSELY WITH OUR DEDICATED POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TO TACKLE NUMEROUS FILES AND POLICY POSITIONS THAT BRUCE OKABE WILL SPEAK MORE ABOUT SHORTLY.

WE CONTINUE TO COMMUNICATE WITH OUR MEMBERS AND INDUSTRY THROUGH A BI-MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER AND OUR WEBSITE. PLUS, EVERYTHING WE SHARE, TWEET ABOUT OR POST ON FACEBOOK IS TAGGED WITH *#BCTOURISMMATTERS* AND IT IS SHOWING – WE HAVE HAD OVER 191,000 IMPRESSIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR THANKS TO THOSE OF YOU HELPING TO SHARE.

TIABC HAS BEEN WORKING VERY HARD OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS TO GROW OUR MEMBERSHIP BASE. NOT ONLY IS MEMBERSHIP A MAJOR SOURCE OF REVENUE, ALLOWING US TO DO WHAT WE DO, BUT A STRONG, DIVERSE MEMBERSHIP BASE ALSO STRENGTHENS OUR VOICE.

I AM PLEASED TO SAY THAT TIABC MEMBERS REPRESENTS OVER 2,700 BUSINESSES. OUR SECTOR MEMBERS REPRESENT BUSINESSES IN MANY SECTORS OF OUR INDUSTRY – SKI, WINE, ACCOMMODATIONS, MOUNTAIN BIKING, GOLF, FISHING, TRANSPORTATION AND CAMPING – TO NAME A FEW.

WE ALSO REPRESENT 46 DMOS ACROSS BC...BOTH LARGE AND SMALL, URBAN AND RURAL. AND OUR BUSINESS CATEGORY – THE ONE WITH THE MOST GROWTH IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS – AGAIN REPRESENTS EVERYTHING FROM ATTRACTIONS, HOTELS AND CAMPGROUNDS, TO SHOPPING CENTRES, UNIVERSITIES, ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS, TOURISM CONSULTANTS AND TWO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WHO WORK HARD FOR TOURISM AS ELECTED OFFICIALS.

WHILE OUR POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR, BRUCE OKABE WILL SPEAK TO THE MAJOR ISSUES WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON OVER THE PAST YEAR, I WOULD LIKE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO SOME OF THE OTHERS WE'VE BEEN INVOLVED WITH TOGETHER WITH OTHER INDUSTRY PARTNERS.

YOU MAY RECALL THAT GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING CHANGING AGRI-TOURISM REGULATIONS THAT COULD HAVE HAD A SERIOUS IMPACT ON FARMS, WINERIES, CIDERIES AND COMMUNITIES ALL OVER THE PROVINCE WHO RELY ON EVENTS TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR SEASONAL INCOME FROM FARMING. TIABC PROVIDED A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENT, SOME OF WHICH FORMED THE NEW REGULATIONS THAT WORKED OUT FAVOURABLY FOR THE GROWING AGRI-TOURISM SECTOR, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL BC.

THE CITY OF KELOWNA WILL GET A NEW, STRATEGICALLY LOCATED VISITOR CENTRE DOWNTOWN THANKS TO THE HARD WORK OF TOURISM KELOWNA. TIABC SUBMITTED A LETTER OF SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF TOURISM KELOWNA TO THE CITY THAT WAS WELL-RECEIVED AND CERTAINLY PROVIDED SOME INFLUENCE.

WE ALSO SUPPORTED SEVERAL RIVER RAFTING COMPANIES, AS WELL AS THE COMMUNITY OF GOLDEN IN THEIR BATTLE WITH CP RAIL OVER THE RAILROAD COMPANY'S EDICT TO BLOCK ACCESS TO THE KICKING HORSE RIVER THAT INCLUDED CROSSING SOME TRACKS...SOMETHING THE RAFTING COMPANIES AND THOUSANDS OF VISITORS HAD BEEN DOING FOR YEARS. HAD CP RAIL BEEN SUCCESSFUL, IT WOULD HAVE ESSENTIALLY KILLED THESE BUSINESSES AND TAKEN AWAY A WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCE FOR VISITORS. FORTUNATELY A FAIR COMPROMISE WAS REACHED.

TIABC WROTE A LETTER TO LANGLEY TOWNSHIP COUNCIL IN OPPOSITION TO THEIR PROPOSAL TO SEPARATE FROM LANGLEY CITY AND EMBARK ON THEIR OWN TOURISM MARKETING INITIATIVES. WHILE THE IDEA WAS ULTIMATELY NOT APPROVED BY COUNCIL, THE SITUATION IS FAR FROM OVER GIVEN THE DEMANDS LANGLEY TOWNSHIP HAS PLACED ON THE CURRENT JOINT DMO STRUCTURE. AS A CONSEQUENCE, WE DEVELOPED A NEW POLICY ON MRDT THAT BRUCE WILL TALK ABOUT LATER.

WE'VE PROVIDED SOME GUIDANCE AND INFLUENCE ON MYRIAD OTHER ISSUES RANGING FROM ENCROACHMENT BY FOREST COMPANIES ON TOURISM OPERATIONS, TO PLANS FOR A ROCK QUARRY NEXT TO AN EXPANDING RV SITE AND CAMPGROUND.

IMPORTANTLY, TIABC WAS A KEY PART OF A UNIQUE WORKING GROUP THAT INCLUDED FIRST NATIONS, BUSINESSES, SECTORS, DMOS, AND COMMUNITIES IN THE CARIBOO CHILCOTIN COAST REGION THAT NOT ONLY DEVELOPED A FIRST NATIONS TOURISM STRATEGY FOR THE CENTRAL COAST, BUT ALSO WORKED DIRECTLY WITH THE PROVINCE TO REINSTATE THE DIRECT FERRY ROUTE BETWEEN PORT HARDY AND

BELLA COOLA. YOU WILL HEAR MORE GOOD NEWS ABOUT THIS PROJECT IN THE COMING WEEKS. SUFFICE IT TO SAY, IT WAS A HUGE VICTORY FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE REGION AND FOR TOURISM IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

FINALLY...IT'S IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT 2017 MARKS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF AN HISTORIC ACCORD BETWEEN TIABC...THEN KNOWN AS COTA, AND FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT...THAT ESSENTIALLY LAUNCHED A NEW ERA OF RESPECT AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND FIRST NATIONS, RECOGNIZING THAT BOTH PARTIES HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN BUILDING BRITISH COLUMBIA'S VISITOR ECONOMY. WALT TALKED ABOUT IT IN A RECENT TIABC NEWSLETTER.

THAT ACCORD IS MORE VALUABLE THAN EVER, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF MY PREVIOUS COMMENTS ON THE MID-COAST FIRST NATIONS TOURISM STRATEGY, AS WELL AS SOME BREWING ISSUES IN PARTS OF THE PROVINCE.

AT THIS TIME, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ANYONE WHO REPRESENTS A SECTOR ASSOCIATION – AND IS A MEMBER OF TIABC - TO PLEASE STAND. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE IF YOU ARE A MEMBER – SEE IF YOUR ASSOCIATION LOGO IS ON THIS SLIDE

ON BEHALF OF OUR BOARD AND STAFF, THANK YOU ALL FOR SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS AND WORKING WITH US TO COLLABORATE ON ISSUES.

NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ANYONE WHO REPRESENTS A DMO – AND IS A MEMBER OF TIABC - TO PLEASE STAND. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE IF YOU ARE A MEMBER – SEE IF YOUR NAME IS LISTED ON THIS SLIDE!

AGAIN, OUR BOARD AND STAFF WOULD THANK YOUR ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS AND WORKING WITH US.

AND LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ANYONE WHO REPRESENTS TIABC BUSINESS MEMBERS TO PLEASE STAND. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE IF YOU ARE A MEMBER – COME AND ASK ONE OF US, OR CHECK OUT OUR MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY ON OUR WEBSITE. DUE TO OUR STRONG MEMBERSHIP GROWTH, THERE ARE JUST TOO MANY BUSINESS MEMBERS TO LIST ON ONE SLIDE.

THIS MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US. INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSES JOIN TIABC TO SPEAK ON THEIR BEHALF AND TO MAKE US AS AN INDUSTRY VOICE, STRONGER. THANK YOU FOR MAINTAINING YOUR SUPPORT AND SHARING YOUR GOOD AND BAD NEWS WITH US, HELPING US TO SHAPE POLICIES THAT BENEFIT ALL OF TOURISM.

NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE JENNIFER TAYLOR, VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND MEMBER RELATIONS, WITH TIAC – THE TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA. WE'RE VERY PLEASED THAT JENNIFER HAS JOINED US ALL THE WAY FROM NOVA SCOTIA TO PROVIDE US WITH A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE.

THANK YOU.