

**Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission  
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes  
May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**The Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission acknowledges this meeting was held on the Traditional Territory of the Syilx/Okanagan Peoples.**

✓ = Attended    X= Absent    \* Not required    A= Alternate Attended

**Advisory Council Executive:**

✓	Calissi, James, Chair
✓	Larson, Janice, Vice-Chair
X	Checkley, Mike, Past Chair

X	Hughes-Geekie, Sharon
✓	Nagy, Angela
✓	Quinn, Paula

**Advisory Council:**

✓	Alexander, Andrea
X	Barker, Phil
✓	Benson, Gavin
X	Blitz, Maurice
✓	Bruns, Myles
✓	Buchanan, Brad
X	Carroll, Mandi
✓	Cannan, Ron
X	Collins, Dave
✓	Csek, Nikki
✓	Dawn, Jeremy
X	Donn, Ryan
X	Douglas, Laurel

✓	Evans, Bob
✓	Friesen, Jason
✓	Gipps, Paul
A	Harper, Shauna
X	Ireland, Blair
X	Labrecque, Cory
✓	Lake, Brea
X	Lewis, Chris
✓	Malcolm, Ryan
✓	Mitchell, Kray
✓	North, Steve
✓	Preston, Adriana
✓	Pringle, Julie

✓	Price, Dan
X	Quinn, Paula
X	Ritchie, Geoff
✓	Rogers, Dan
X	Stack, Luke
✓	Stewart, Tony
X	Sulentich, Ruth
✓	Threlfall, Rich
✓	Thurnheer, Laura
✓	Udzenija, Nicole
X	Wentworth, Noel
✓	White, Jill
X	Widmer, Larry

**Staff and Consultants:**

✓	Allin, Paige
✓	Braun, Tory
✓	Lesack, Sascha

✓	Mallory, Krista
✓	Stark Leader, Myrna
✓	Trevino, Valentina

✓	Weston, Eva
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## **1. Call to Order**

Chair James Calissi called the meeting to order at 7:32 am.

## **2. Adoption of Minutes**

Minutes of April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, unanimously approved.

## **3. UBCO International Students: Workforce Recruitment Opportunities**

Dr. Dale Mullings, Associate Vice President, Students – UBCO & Dr. Philipp Reichert, Director, Global Engagement – UBCO, presented on the supports and programs being put in place to support the international student population at UBCO who are interested in becoming permanent residency. **See presentation attached.**

## **4. Discussion**

*What are the key issues that impact your decision to hire international students?*

- Employers would like UBCO to provide a document stating what the international student has experience in and the transferable skills, and what experience is still needed.
- Could be internal barriers within organizations that would preclude or limit the hiring of international students.
- Government requirements could be a barrier to hiring more students.
- For employers there is some trepidation as they feel the onus is on them to manage the immigration network – help from UBC in taking that on is very welcome.
- Supporting HR departments through hiring process, recognition that there are a lot of small to medium enterprises that don't have HR departments, having that support in understanding how to navigate the process is helpful.
- Major point is how to demystify the process for the employers.

*How can UBCO Okanagan Better Support the transition of students from an employer standpoint?*

- Supporting employers who feel pressure to manage immigrations, visa's, etc. As well as any unknowns of hiring an International Student in regards of work hours, PR, etc.
- There are time and other challenges (no HR departments, etc.) for small business owners. It can take a lot of time to evaluate, train, and onboard an international student.
- Reduce the bias towards hiring an international student.
- Reduce the challenges around differing work ethics amongst some international students.
- Help reduce barriers in expectations between international students and employers.

- Helpful for employers if UBC aided in helping employers understand how international work experience translates into the Canadian context.
- Better communication as to what opportunities there are for employers to engage with students either through volunteer experiences, co-op, capstone project and who to engage with to offer opportunities for students.

*Canadian work experience has been identified by many students as a key challenge – How can students (where applicable) articulate their overseas work experience to make it relevant for employers?*

- Help to make sure that any automated systems aren't making "transcription/translation" type errors that would unnecessarily screen out applicants.
- Have a comparison chart that students can fill out with their international skills and how that can be brought to the Canadian workforce. This is something that the student could bring to employers during the hiring process.
- Small businesses don't have HR departments/capacity, and it can be hard or impossible to check/verify work experience on resumes. Need to help students to better articulate their skills and experience in a way that makes it easy for small business owners to understand.
- We need to better consider and evaluate overseas experience in our application processes.
- Help small business owners to be able to better access the pool of international students.

## **5. New Business**

- Moving forward in the fall we will be exploring different options instead of hybrid Advisory Committee Meetings, such as alternating in person and online delivery or trying different meeting venues.
- A Q1 progress report showing the progress on our objectives and key results for the year has been distributed with the meeting agenda. If you have any feedback on the report, please do not hesitate to reach out. **See Q1 progress report attached.**
- The EDC has hired a new Administrative Assistant, Paige Allin. She will be the main point of contact through our [info@investkelowna.com](mailto:info@investkelowna.com) e-mail address moving forward. Welcome Paige!

### ***Adjournment:***

Meeting adjourned at 8:41 am.

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