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Deputy Mayor Sandy Donald

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Chamber of Commerce 2003/4 Awards

Speech

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Dear Chamber Members, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you this evening.

Mayor Glenn Sutton is away until tomorrow evening and has asked me to provide greetings from the Municipality.

It is wonderful to see so many businesses and most importantly, people, being honored and congratulated tonight. The Chamber of Commerce is also to be congratulated for sponsoring this event.

The people and businesses being honoured tonight are assets to the Community and we could not make this place as vibrant as it is, without you.

Thank you very very much for being a vital part of this community.

As you know, a change in government at any level is treated with a large amount of hope for the future and to some degree trepidation.

Business groups in the area, like the Chamber, need to know what course, we as a local government are setting, they need confidence that the officers can get us there, that the crew are all rowing the same way, that the ship is strong enough to take whatever weather we see and nimble enough to handle course changes.

You can tell I like nautical anecdotes.

I believe that we, as an area are on the cusp of great things.

I believe that we are going to move forward with many projects in and around our area, and that we will be bringing new people and business here.

I believe that we are on the verge of sustainable diversified development for the future throughout this area, not just the Municipality of Kincardine.

With this in mind, Mayor Sutton, myself and the CAO John Derosenroll, have met with the peer officials of our sister communities of Huron Kinloss and Saugeen Shores.

We have asked them for a new relationship, we have asked them for support and we have asked how we can learn from each other, so that we can all move forward together, cohesively, ensuring that the prosperity I believe will come, is sustainable and shared by everyone in the area.

They have responded extremely positively and we are looking forward to these new cooperative relationships.

So, the question becomes, how do we produce a sustainable community and why.

With regards to the how:

The correct approach I think is to ensure we produce a strategic plan, follow it and that we report to it regularly.

We must discuss publicly the various options and that we as a Council, make sound social and business decisions based on where we believe the community should go for the common good.

It is not to say that the plan won't change; the simple fact is; it will.

But, making cognizant reasoned decisions based on fact, to change course is quite acceptable. Reactionary thinking is not.

With regards to the why:

Why do we want the community to grow, why do we want the community to expand?

The simple answer is that the community will expand whether we like it or not.

The way I would look at this is that we need to encourage all facets of our community to grow in a reasonable planned fashion to allow everyone to play a part.

We need to give confidence to our banking community and to our businesses that this is a worthy place to invest in.

We need to have sustainable economic development that will allow our young people to stay here and raise families.

We need to ensure that our seniors are welcome here.

We need to build facilities that everyone can enjoy.

The phrase I would like you to think about is “good people, good ideas, great community!”

Let me state quite clearly and succinctly to everyone here; this is a great place to invest in for the future.

In short, we need to ensure we are planning the communities not just for the short term but for the future.

I am convinced that planning for an election term is not the way to go, we need to plan further beyond that and take the leaps that will generate a sustainable community in 5, 10, 15 years and beyond.

As we move forward as a community, we need to be inclusive, that we are innovative, that we look at new ways of doing things and to have an open mind.

We as Council, understand that we do not have all the answers, but we are certainly willing to listen to solutions.

In closing, let me assure the business community at large that confidence is high, we are moving forward and the future looks bright. It will not all be smooth sailing, but I believe we need to stay the course and that remember, everyone is welcome on board, especially if you are ready to row, when the wind isn't blowing. Around here that may be unlikely.

Thank you all very much.

Yours Faithfully,

Sandy Donald

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