



**DISTRICT OF SOOKE**  
Committee of the Whole Minutes  
Meeting held January 26, 2016  
at 6:00 pm  
Council Chamber, 2225 Otter Point Road

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**COUNCIL PRESENT**

Acting Mayor Kerrie Reay  
Councillor Bev Berger  
Councillor Rick Kasper  
Councillor Ebony Logins  
Councillor Kevin Pearson

**STAFF PRESENT**

Teresa Sullivan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Tina Hansen, Corporate Assistant

**ABSENT:** Mayor Maja Tait, Councillor Brenda Parkinson

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED** to approve the agenda as circulated.

**CARRIED**

3. **Presentation: Trade Commissioner Service, Marilyn MacLean Denton, Head of Office & Trade Commissioner**

Marilyn MacLean Denton, Trade Commissioner provided a powerpoint presentation and overview of the Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) and Can-Export. Ms. MacLean Denton reported that the TCS has been around since 1897. They have a network of 900 Trade Commissioners located in 174 cities worldwide and have a client base of over 13,500 per year. The majority of Trade Commissioners are not Canadian, they are hired in country and are locally engaged; they speak the same language and know the culture. The TCS services are free to Canadian companies and it is important for companies to get in touch with the local Trade Commissioner in Canada prior to getting into foreign markets.

Ms. MacLean Denton advised that their clients are small, medium and large companies that are established in Canada and do business abroad. The TSC is there to provide advice to these companies. Companies are expected to have researched their markets and to have a business plan in place. The TCS assists companies to succeed globally and helps lower costs of doing business through four key services:

- Preparation for international market
- Market-potential assessment
- Qualified contacts
- Problem solving

Ms. MacLean Denton explained the continuum or export process. There are a number of things that companies need to do throughout the continuum and it is important, based on what companies are planning to do abroad, to know which TCS Partner services fit with their goals. These steps are important to consider as companies get into their international business development plan.

Information was provided as to the Canadian Technology Accelerator (CTA) which was developed by the TCS to assist technology companies' access global business opportunities. The CTA's focus is on export-ready technology firms; they support the growth of companies through immersion into international markets.

Ms. MacLean Denton overviewed the CanExport Program explaining that there are a number of criteria for becoming eligible for the program including having annual revenue of \$200,000 up to \$50 million dollars. The CanExport Program is a five year program and it is important for companies to have a five year plan. As companies complete the on-line application, it helps in developing a strategic plan and is a good learning tool. Ms. MacLean Denton also noted that in order to meet the criteria; projects must be between \$20,000 and \$200,000 and if approved 50 percent of the expenses incurred may be reimbursed.

Ms. MacLean Denton encourages companies interested in foreign markets to reach out to the TCS by sending an email providing contact information and a profile of the company explaining what the company does. This makes it easy for the TCS to put companies into their database so they can contact sector Officers abroad. Trade Commissioners in other countries will often go to great distances to provide information to help businesses prepare for the global markets.

**Committee discussion:**

- Discussion as to Agriculture Agri-Food Canada for companies wanting to export food products
- Discussion as to Trade Agreements and whether the TCS assists companies in learning about barriers hampering exporting products
- Clarification as to whether the five year Can-Export Program could be renewed for another five years
- Discussion as to getting and sharing information from the Trade Commissioner Services and getting it out to the business community; the TCS website is a good tool for businesses

**Public Input:**

Brian Mooney, Sooke resident inquired as to the CanExport Program's entry level minimum criteria of \$ 20,000 for projects in particular to attend trade shows as he believes this amount is well beyond the actual costs that are incurred for trade shows. Ms. MacLean Denton explained that they want companies to think long term and strategically. Ms. MacLean Denton also provided information as to the Agriculture Agri-Marketing program for businesses involved in agriculture.

Acting Mayor Reay took opportunity to thank Ms. Denton for her presentation.

4. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Certified Correct:

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Kerrie Reay  
Acting Mayor

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Tina Hansen  
Acting Corporate Officer