



COMMITTEE MEETING ACTION SUMMARY

Committee: First Nations and Métis Opportunities Committee

Meeting Date: April 7th, 2015

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce

Meeting Chair: Chris Sicotte

In Attendance: Richard from SIIT, Pamela Spink, Mark Brown, Chris Sicotte, Monica Brunet, Rob Woods, Julian Ovens

Staff: Kent Smith-Windsor, Kevin Meldrum, Czarina Catambing

Introductions

Empower Program, Heather Abbey (Program Director)

- From Ideas Inc., and ShopIndig owner
- Aboriginal business is thriving: 30 participants in Empower Program just from Saskatchewan
- Problem: there are barriers for Aboriginal entrepreneurs
- Solution: looking to accept 15-20 Aboriginal Entrepreneurs and help them in their businesses
 - Empower Business Centre now open
- Challenge:
 - Small-scale areas face competition problems

Provincial Budget and Opportunities for First Nations and Métis Businesses

- Small Business Loans Association Program is winding down and will not offer new loans
- Refundable tax credits are no longer refundable for innovation companies



- There is an opportunity for on-reserve businesses (can attract more Aboriginal businesses to develop on reserve)

Business Mixer

- Move to October (Small Business Month) because of student engagement event
- Jacqueline handled most of the previous event, and Mathew will spearhead next one
- Subcommittee to be formed
- Event sponsorship is possibility
- Julian: We can have themes for the upcoming mixers

Student Engagement

- Sask Polytechnic, Edwards MBA
- How: Social media, Luncheons
 - Should be on-site
 - Last weeks of September is best time to outreach
 - Chamber-University connection is through JCC and Edwards School of Business (mostly operational)

Additional Business

- Aboriginal Business Match

Roundtable/Open Discussion

- Providing sponsorship for Dakota Dunes Casino Pow Wow (Early August)
 - Not much benefit for Chamber, so will not proceed



- Aboriginal Financial Officers Association-Saskatchewan
 - Developing Centre of excellence for education
 - Chris can bring in a speaker