

Please try and attend this public meeting

Orillia City Council Meeting – Re: Port of Orillia Management

July 29, 2016	9:00 a.m.	Council Chamber	Special Council Committee re Port of Orillia Operations	Special Agenda
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Orillia City Hall is at 50 Andrew St. South. There is ample parking. Council Chambers is easy to find once in

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:



Chamber Connections

ORILLIA DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Fostering Prosperity for Your Business - Your Community

July 2016

Chamber Connections

www.orillia.com

President's Message

David Carson
Carson Funeral Homes



It is hard to believe that 2016 is already at its midpoint. So far so good. The pulse in the business community is very positive.

There has been a lot of talk about the Chamber continuing the management of the Port of Orillia. I would like to address this head on as council debates whether or not to renew our management agreement with them for the Port.

The Chamber has managed the Port for 40 years for the city. It has done so in a professional manner, with the city always receiving a cash payment regardless of the income/loss at the end of the year. The Chamber has managed events as well to capitalize on the Jewel of the Trent Severn so that the city and its businesses realize the economic benefits of such an asset. The purpose of the Port was always to be used as a transient docking facility to drive tourist and economic dollars up into the core of the city which I believe we can see has been mission accomplished. I do not think that there is a business downtown that is not happy on a weekend when the Port is full of tourists or when we have an event on.

The Chamber has worked with the city over the last 40 years as a good partner at the waterfront, and we would look forward to carrying on the arrangement regardless if it is a 2 or a 5 year arrangement. We believe our historical agreement is fair to both parties. Being a not for profit, the limited amount of money that we raise allows us to help the city by managing other events, such as the Santa Claus Parade which the Chamber puts on at our cost.

The one item that the Chamber takes a strong stance on is that we do not believe that the Port should be used for seasonal dockage. There are several reasons for this. First, seasonal slips do nothing to help bring new visitors and new

dollars into the city and up into the businesses. A quick look at the Barrie Port would showcase this fact. Secondly, it is a waste of a jewel such as the port to allocate the amount of space that it would take for parking for seasonal slippage. Even one parking spot per slip would be 220 parking spaces. Lastly, operating a seasonal marina is in direct competition with local tax paying businesses. No one in business should have to compete with the city. Not a marina, not a gymnasium, not a developer. There is lots of local capacity for seasonal dockage at the local marinas.

Regardless of what the outcome of the council discussion is, we look forward to working with the city however we can to continue to promote economic spinoff and tourism into Orillia and Area.

On a positive note the Perch Festival was a great success this year. Attendance was up and businesses were full. Thankfully we started the season with great weather. The Boat and Cottage Show, Christmas in June, and the Waterfront Festival are all on the go this summer, so be sure to come out and enjoy!

I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer creating memories with family and friends!
Sincerely, David Carson

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