



MEDIA RELEASE

March 13, 2018

Kelowna Chamber Marks 112th AGM with full slate of Directors and a new President

Kelowna - The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual general meeting on Tuesday March 13, 2018 at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Centre. A full slate of directors, including four fresh faces, was introduced to members following online voting.

Speaking about 2017-2018, outgoing President Tom Dyas acknowledged it was one of the busiest years on record for the Chamber, not only with the leadership transition that was initiated a year ago, but because of the significant number of government policies that came under the Chamber's microscope.

The Kelowna Chamber ramped up its role as the voice of business during the year, stepping its advocacy efforts with all levels of government. The Chamber took on the proposed federal corporate tax changes, the provincial increases in the minimum wage, and new taxes being introduced by the provincial government, as well as the ongoing issues related to the City's efforts to manage growth while keeping taxes in check. The Chamber also held its first membership Policy Forum in the fall and expanded the role of its Policy Advisory Committee.

In recapping the past year, Dyas also extended a thank you to the returning directors for continuing on the board for the coming year. "Board continuity is extremely important for any organization, and for a business organization with a volunteer board, is always a critical part of strategic planning and success."

The board executive remains relatively unchanged from 2017; though Carmen Sparg takes over as President from Tom Dyas who served two terms in that post. Dyas will remain on the Board as Past President.

"It is an honour to take over as President of the Chamber," stated Sparg, who added, "Following in Tom's footsteps won't be easy. He was very active on a number of files, championing the needs of our members and the business community wherever he could. I am excited to work with the new board which have diverse backgrounds, plenty of experience and some new blood that will help shape the Chamber's future growth."

Returning directors include:

- Carmen Sparg, Silver Lining Management Consulting Inc., President Elect
- Tom Dyas, TD Benefits: Past President

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- Una Gabie, Touchstone Law Group LLP
- Stuart Grant, Norelco Cabinet Solutions
- Al Hildebrandt, Kelowna Foundation for Hope & Social Innovation
- Angela Nagy, GreenStep Solutions
- Ron Cannan, Interior Savings Credit Union
- Domenic Rampone, West Manufacturing
- Marek Buryska, Valley First Credit Union

Re-elected directors include:

- Shelagh Turner, Canadian Mental Health Association
- Nikki Csek, Csek Creative
- Andrew Ingenhorst, Grant Thornton LLP

Newly-elected directors include:

- Dan Price, CFO, Dilworth Quality Homes/Emil Anderson Construction
- Andrew Brunton, Partner, Pushor Mitchell LLP
- Jenelle Hynes, Business Development & Customer Service Manager, Pacific Coastal Airlines
- John Devitt, Manager, Business Development & Community Relations, Kelowna International Airport

The Board is also strengthened by a number of appointees including:

- Tracy Gray, Councillor, City of Kelowna
- Barry McGillivray, Associate Dean, Okanagan School of Business
- Gene Bernier, President, Kelowna JCI
- Jeff Robinson, Partner, Rush Ihas Hardwick LLP

2017 was a year of growth and transition for the Chamber. Highlights included:

- Managing the transition to a new operational leader
- Stepping up the focus on advocacy issues related to proposed Federal Corporate Tax Changes to the most recent tax changes proposed by the BC Government
- Membership stable, good retention of existing members
- Event attendance 4,654 at 49 events
- Twitter: 7,580 Followers/440 new; Twitter Visitors to our profile page 2017: 14,357
- Facebook Likes: 3935/350 new
- Facebook Followers: 1,935/295 new

Looking forward into 2018, the Chamber sees:

- Thoughtful, engaged, timely responses to policy issues and subsequent advocacy
- Monitoring the use of the Chamber's new website
- Continuous engagement with members; finding out 'what's on your mind'

After the Chamber AGM, keynote speaker Renee Merrifield Wasylyk, CEO, Troika Group, spoke on "Inside the Mind of an Entrepreneur: from Catalyst to Influencer." Deeply dedicated to Kelowna, Renee described the City as a hotbed for those starting businesses, as she did nearly 20 years ago. She described Troika's growth from a small shop to revenues of \$100M/annum.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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About Kelowna Chamber of Commerce

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce acts as a single powerful voice for our 1225+ members and their 25,000+ employees to promote local business interests. The Chamber provides a cohesive business network for our members to expand their business contacts, access value-added benefits, programs, and services aimed at improving the bottom line of Chamber members' businesses. The Chamber's mission is to foster a positive business environment by providing our members with leadership, advocacy and services of value.

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