



Date: January 20, 2016

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: 945 Princess Street at Innovation Park

Committee Attended:	Heather Ford	Judith Hay	Debi Wells
	Bo Wandschneider	Judith Pineault	Donna Gillespie
	Gerard Hunt	Councillor M ^c Laren	Councillor Candon

Committee Staff: Emily McCracken Brock Dickinson

Committee Regrets: Michael Harris

N.B.: Minutes are intended to capture questions and comments received during the meeting. Speakers are identified in the minutes only when s/he publicly stated their name.

Video proceedings can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoGqbWf8LCY>

Twitter Feed: <https://www.twitter.com/tommyvallier>

Website Link: <https://www.kingstoncanada.com/review>

KEDCO Review Committee: Public Town Hall

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Judith Pineault, Co-Chair, welcomed all attendees to the Public Town Hall and proceeded to introduce Committee members:
 - Brock Dickinson, CEO, MDB Insight
 - Councillor Jeff M^cLaren, *Co-Chair*
 - Councillor Adam Candon
 - Gerard Hunt, CAO, City of Kingston
 - Bo Wandschneider, KEDCO Board Member
 - Judith Pineault, *Co-Chair*, KEDCO Board Member
 - Donna Gillespie, CEO (Interim), KEDCO
 - Heather Ford, Community member
 - Michael Harris, Community member
 - Judith Hay, Community member
 - Debi Wells, Community member
- Judith Pineault stated that the Committee was struck with the support of Council to undertake a review of KEDCO to ensure that the Corporation is delivering strategies of value to the community and aligned with City priorities. Major review items have been identified as:
 - Scope, Strategic Direction & Alignment with City Council priorities;



- Governance & Operations Model;
 - Performance Metrics, and;
 - Communication/Outreach Strategy
 - Going forward the Committee will be meeting on a tri-weekly basis, upcoming dates: January 27, February 17, March 9, March 30 and April 20. A draft report is to be produced by the end of April and the Committee will report back the findings to City Council by the end of June. All meetings take place at Innovation Park at 4:00 PM. Time at the start of all meetings is allocated for delegations or individuals to address the Committee; all meetings are open to the public.
 - Judith Pineault noted that Brock Dickinson, MDB Insight, would be facilitating the meeting going forward.
2. Overview of Economic Development
- Brock Dickinson, CEO, MDB Insight, provided an overview of economic development for the attendees. The presentation included:
 - History of Economic Development;
 - Employment Development Index;
 - Business Retention and Expansion;
 - Corporate Calling Programs;
 - Economic Gardening;
 - The Creative Class.
 - It was noted that the Review Committee would hear questions from all Town Hall attendees, any that remain unaddressed will be posted on the website (www.kingstoncanada.com/review) to be answered in full.
3. Discussion
- Brock Dickinson opened up the floor to the public and noted the key issues that have been brought forward for speaking topics: accountability, transparency.
 - **Audience:** When people talk about accountability, what is the budget, how is it followed and can we audit the results? We have had the 'budget that will happen next year' broken down showing the tourism vs. business split. We want to see where the money is going and be given quarterly and monthly results on where it is being spent.
 - **Audience:** Can KEDCO be put back under the City as a lower level structure? This would allow the economic development responsibilities to join Ontario East, a larger area to be covered on the city's behalf.
 - **Audience:** I was very surprised this question regarding budget was being raised in 2016 and not earlier. When public funds are being spent there is a need to have accountability. The accountability is currently displaced. Governance and accountability must be included in the process and an explanation as to whether the City is responsible for this or Board of Directors responsible. Accountability has to be accompanied by action. The tax revenues generated by the economic development organization are what matter not the jobs created.

- **Audience:** You showed two examples of management structures. Do you have any examples that show the RFP process for the management of the Corporation? There is an example already in Kingston with the Rogers K-Rock Centre.
Brock Dickinson: There are examples of contracting economic development services, but not in Canada, as this generally happens in the US. Normally these services (economic development) would then fall under the local chamber of commerce, although this is rare.
- **Audience:** We hear a lot of buzz words and City Council has done a good job of promoting them around the review process; Accountability and transparency seem to be the standout words. In my business the only one I am accountable to is Revenue Canada, I pay taxes. How is it possible that we can promote accountability when we are auditing ourselves. You have ten people on a Review Committee, none of those ten people can be involved in any way with KEDCO operations. They cannot objectively review themselves.
- **Committee Member, Debi Wells:** I served on the KEDCO Board for six years. When I applied to be on the Review Committee, I came with constructive criticism for KEDCO but I didn't want to trash them. When I put my name down I thought I was applying to a City Committee, but it seems that this is not the case. My role is different than what I thought it would be.
- **Audience:** As a member of the Review Committee would you be willing to look at the expenses that I pulled from the website. Are we getting a return on any of these expenses (ie. travel). What is our return on investment? How is the community to know how our tax payers' dollars are being spent.
- **Audience:** How many business owners are on the Committee? How many government employees are on the Committee? The whole thing is a contradiction.
- **Committee Member, Bo Wandschneider:** I am on the KEDCO Board, but I do not work for KEDCO, I have no vested interest in KEDCO otherwise. I have put in 200 hours as a volunteer Board member.
- **Audience:** There have been previous comments about transparency and showing what KEDCO does in the community. There is a lot that they do. They offer advice to existing businesses and that is hard to measure. Having metrics to show the measures and results properly would be helpful for the community.
- **Audience:** I've owned a home in Kingston for 17 years. When I saw the ledger of expenditures "my dander rose". The travel expenditures are very questionable and it does not show where the money is going. In teaching we have accountability and we have to show where the money is going and why it was being spent the way it was. I don't see how spending this money on travel is benefiting the community. This is not measurable.
- **Audience Member, Don Curtis:** Back to transparency, "crock of crap", never seen so many in camera meetings. There is no open government in Kingston. The government is dead in Kingston. Everything is closed doors and shut down. It is a disgrace, I am ashamed with what is going on in this meeting. The financial reports were published the day of the meeting (Town Hall, January 20, 2016). They are garbage reports and do not show anything. The 2015-2020 Strategic

Plan has bogus numbers. We have got to do something about it. There is no: transparency, accountability and openness. I am a tax payer and I see closed government and closed minds. They should be ashamed of themselves. KEDCO has a clean slate now that three staff members have left. It is a clean slate now going forward. It is criminal what is in the numbers.

Brock Dickinson: How do we connect the numbers to the actual work. There are some things that may be broken and the Committee has the opportunity for a fresh start in the community.

- **Audience:** I have a couple of concerns, I have listened to various questions and attended meetings. I'm a widow and my taxes are a stretch to pay and then I look at three million dollars to an Organization, which I did not know. My concern is that, this is a lovely building here at Innovation Park and it is nicely done, but does the City not have space somewhere where KEDCO could go and do what they need to do. I hate seeing on any kind of an audit, whatever they want to call it, miscellaneous expenses, that could be lets go to the Keg and spend \$4,000 dollars. Where has miscellaneous gone? Paper, stamps – there needs to be an attachment to show where this has gone. KEDCO needs to be under the umbrella of the City of Kingston.
- **Audience:** I would like to speak to the Committee, they are here in a Town Hall format and that is a step in the direction that we want to see. I want to commend everyone that is taking part and spending their time to move our economic future forward. There is room for improvement. The budget of \$2.7 million for economic development is a large number, but I have no idea what that is in relation to economic development. So I looked into it and noticed it is a high budget. The Amer report was very telling. If you are going to start with a clean slate you need to readily identify that your budget is accountable. Guelph is a shining example of economic development, I called them and they gave me the numbers the next day. That is a phenomenal example. We have so many resources in Kingston (military, university). My primary point is if we have a clean slate we need to objectively break down the numbers and show what KEDCO is going to do for the City and what is changing going forward. The Committee will be judged on the end outcome, I commend them for volunteering their time.
- **Audience:** In providing a solution to accountability, I would like to see, in each district is a Community Association for the residents and businesses to gather and find out what is happening in their community. Councillors can share what they are taking to City meetings. I would like to know more about the businesses in my area and how I can help them. When do the unemployed and workers in transition get to meet the businesses that are here? A Community Association or networking group workers in transition can meeting the businesses one on one and talk about their skills.
- **Brock Dickinson:** This is a good opportunity to build on ideas. Maybe we can start to think a little about what we want our economic development to achieve and why is this important to all of us here tonight. What are we hoping to accomplish and what is the purpose?

- **Audience:** Something I learned long ago, any Committee that has more than three members is pretty well doomed to begin with. Here we have a small Organization run by twelve directors.
- **Audience Member, Bernie Robinson:** I came here as a concerned citizen. My company is successful because we are held accountable every day to design a process to determine an outcome. Our outcomes are measured against the industry standards and the future expectations and how they are sustainable in a global market. Everything needs to be scored, and unfortunately there are a lot of wonderful tax payers in the community who have asked for results for over a year and not received them. I came here tonight to listen and hopefully go away with confidence that we are going move forward. The disheartening thing is the biggest private employer in this city is coffee shops. When Novelis left it affected 15,000 people in the community who had good paying career jobs. I love this community. I care about the citizens here tonight who came to remedy our distraught private sector. We have been in a decline for so long that we are now in denial. Economic development is about focus, discipline, and being proud on reporting yourself whether you failed or passed. It's called a score card.
- **Audience:** First, thank you Brock for coming into a situation that is not of his own making. The tourism section of KEDCO could perhaps be separated out in terms with the accountability section. There may be more direct measurable's in it which could assist with the accountability that has been brought forward tonight. Kingston First has done a tremendous service so far. They have been persistent in continuing to try and improve the situation in Kingston. I think we have underachieved as a community.
- **Audience:** The Kingston tourism model is the best that exists anywhere that I have seen in the province. The reason why it is: tourism represents about half the budget, there is a requirement in tourism to have people in the field looking after so many of the aspects such as government relations, media inquiries, travel trade, and conventions. No one business can be overseeing this at all times. We count on the staff intensive Organization to oversee this. You cannot bring tourists into Kingston sitting at a desk, you need to be at the shows to attract visitors, staff members need to be out representing our destination.
- **Audience:** It is very hard to measure what KEDCO does as it does not say it to the community. Our company has received a lot of support from KEDCO over the years. They would arrange meetings with the Mayor and this was a huge step for us. I agree with the financial statement accountability and it needs to be there. Perhaps the ability for other small businesses in town to understand the use of KEDCO and the services that can be offered to them would be beneficial. We have received a lot of success through the help of KEDCO.
- **Audience:** Is there not a duplication of money going to Kingston tourism and KEDCO and then going back to Kingston tourism. Isn't there a lot of duplicity, couldn't our money be better spent.
- **Committee Member, Donna Gillespie:** Tourism Kingston is a Direct Marketing Organization for the City. Tourism Kingston accounts for 42% of KEDCO's funding from the City of Kingston.

- **Audience:** I'm 100 percent certain that all the people on the KEDCO Board have Kingston's best interest in mind. I came here to get an answer to a question: how can this Review Committee be objective? You talk about outcomes, what are these that are on the table and is the possibility of shutting down KEDCO an option?
- **Audience:** There is confusion in understanding where the dollars are going in relation to the Tourism Kingston budget. We want the best for the tourism sector., and there should be a better break down of where monies go and how they are spent. Is the money currently being well spent right now? Should there be more or less in the budget? Let's find a way of getting accountable reporting. We want to understand what the return is on our tax dollars.
- **Audience Member, Murray Matheson, Executive Director, Kingston Accommodation Partners:** Provided an overview of the services that they provide the community.
- **Audience:** I understand the bit about transparency. There is a more fundamental problem around trust. If you can't trust the folks doing the review, you cannot trust the results coming out of it. Open up your books and let us see them. We deserve to see it.
- **Audience:** I would like to congratulate tourism, they do a great job. I don't know who is crippling who here, but tourism is not causing it. To be successful on anything you are going to do you need to know what you are looking for and you need to bring a single focus to it. Tourism with all its success is clouding the view of what we need; career jobs to keep the students in town after graduating. Keep Tourism Kingston but make it a separate entity.
- **Audience:** Kingston will have 600 refugee families coming to the city. When I think of the refugees coming those men and women held jobs and businesses and can contribute to the Kingston labour force.
- **Audience:** It is important to tell all the stories that are sometimes not told that KEDCO is doing. KEDCO is playing a role in seeing where the jobs are and making those connections to the work force
- **Audience:** There is a question about objectivity. That question itself is predicting an outcome. We may not want a KEDCO going forward, talking about what we see in KEDCO is predicting the outcome, shutting it down is not on the table. Can the Committee be truly objective. There is a perception that they are not objective and they need to show us that they are.
- **Audience:** I could care less if KEDCO exists, it does not help my business. My interactions have resulted in dropped balls. I had a conversation with the previous CEO of KEDCO saying that his employees are not following through on promises. The old CEO had no ability to monitor the conversations that are happening between employees and businesses. My employees have to justify what they did during their day. I know that KEDCO did invest in Sales Force and I know that as of my last conversations that it was not being used appropriately. If KEDCO is going to exist a tracking tool should be put in place to show what the team did.
- **Audience Member, Bernie Robinson:** The goal when you are in business is to perform proper measurement. In the private sector we will do anything to get

measured, in Government it is the opposite. When I was on the KEDCO Board we tried to bring KEDCO down to two things, find existing companies and help them create jobs and go out to new companies and get them to move here. Focus and clarity are needed in the Corporation.

- **Audience:** I have the Terms of Reference here for the Review Committee. This is not an open ended Committee and I can comfortably confirm that the mandate of this Committee does not include the scrapping of KEDCO.
- **Audience:** I am curious about whether or not this is an Organizational review. What are the dynamics between the Committee and the KEDCO Board, I've noticed that more recently KEDCO has been advertising for a number of positions, so the idea of scrapping the Corporation clearly isn't on the agenda. Are these positions full-time or part-time contracts to be fulfilled until the Organizational review is complete?
- **Audience:** The first directive that should come from the Review Committee is a freeze of all hiring and spending. We have to get rid of the KEDCO Board and KEDCO's current influence on the Review Committee. We need to have someone who is willing to disband KEDCO.
- **Audience:** Is the Board of KEDCO a paid position and is the Review Committee paid outside their position?
- **Brock Dickinson, MDB Insights:** (referring to Review Committee members) No, these are both volunteer roles.
- **Audience:** I am hoping to get some input on the relationship between KEDCO Board and the Committee. Brock Dickinson is a very good choice by City Council to bring to this community. There are some great opportunities for KEDCO to pursue that the City has to offer.
- **Audience:** I have worked in economic development for 25 years across the province and I currently live in Kingston. Economic development is an investment and we need to balance the short term transparency with longer term goals, attracting businesses and growing them. Something that appears on a balance sheet this year may not come to fruition until a few years down the road. Tourism Kingston is successful due to the leadership in the business community. Keep in mind the long term investment.
- **Audience:** Up until now I believe that the tourism function of KEDCO has been closed door to the community.
- **Audience:** If KEDCO does bring business in to the city, we have a lot of red tape at City Hall. The only thing that City Hall has done is build the Rogers K-Rock Centre downtown. All the parking spots are now being taken up by high rise buildings now. I would like to have some type of a report or an interim report showing what KEDCO has been doing for the community.
- **Audience:** Question for Brock Dickinson. Can you ask my question regarding the objectivity of the Review Committee members, specifically those who have ties with KEDCO, so I can have a response?
- **Audience Member, JC Kenney, CBC Radio:** Can anyone on the Review Committee address and talk about the biggest concerns being heard at the town hall regarding having KEDCO Board members on the Committee and having the



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acting CEO also.

Committee Member: Councillor Jeff McLaren stated everything that has been brought up today will be addressed. He proceeded to provide an overview of all big ideas shared throughout the meeting.

4. Close - 9:28 PM