

**Fredericton Chamber of Commerce**  
*Annual Report*  
2004/2005

**A Message from the 2004-2005 President, Dan Koncz**

When I assumed the position of President I had three main objectives. They were maintenance of existing services, managing growth, and economic development/advocacy.

**Maintenance:** Our membership survey indicated that we exceed their expectations on benefits, event's, and networking. I think that we have to continue to provide these services to our members in the same high fashion that we have all become accustomed to. Continued support from all of our partners for events, meetings and functions continues to be strong. Our sponsors, as usual, have been wonderful to work with, our members have been supportive, and the staff has done a great job in ensuring that everything moved along smooth and seemingly effortlessly.

**Managing Growth:** this has been a great year of growth for the Chamber. With in excess of 840 members, we are now the largest chamber in New Brunswick and second largest in Atlantic Canada. This growth is wonderful and as a result we have re-distributed the workload at the chamber office to streamline operations and prepare for the future. As most of you know we have to relocate our offices by July of 2006. I'm grateful of the work of the Office Space Task Force in bringing forth the direction for the next few years. I hope that everyone will read their report to keep abreast of where we are heading.

**Economic Development and Advocacy:** This year we have created the Economic Development Task Force to help identify our role and steer the chamber into this growing and ever more important area of advocacy. The taskforce has identified several next steps so that we can continue to strengthen our economic development efforts. The next year will bring more focus to this group.

On the advocacy front, we have joined forces with the Greater Moncton Chamber and the Saint John Board of Trade on several issues relating to the capital commission, natural resources, and transportation. We have created the Federal Government Affairs Committee to over see federal issues and to prepare a brief our local MP's on an annual basis. This committee will be chaired by the Past President and is a natural continuation of our succession plan. The first brief has been completed and sets the agenda for future ones.

My year has been a very rewarding one. I would like to thank everyone for all the support that I have received. The board has been wonderful to work with. All the volunteers on the various committees without whom most of the chamber's success wouldn't be possible. Thanks to the wonderful companies that we work with as suppliers, and to sponsors who contribute generously to our events. Also to our development partners with

whom we've worked to make Fredericton the # 1 location to do business in New Brunswick.

And, finally and most importantly the staff at the Chamber... the early meetings, late night functions, and the long hours in between that they work is what made my term as fun and rewarding as it was. Thank you all.

### **Incoming President Report – *Laura O’Blenis***

Over the last six years, I have had the opportunity to be involved with the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce. I began on committees in 1999 and then on our board in 2001. During this short period of time one thing has become more and more evident and that is; what a great organization we have.

No matter the level of your involvement, you will see our volunteers are dedicated and our staff is exceptional. It’s an organization that is often emulated with other volunteer groups because of the well thought structure in place and message our predecessors have instilled in us.

Leading up to what will be my term as Chamber President, I have placed a tremendous amount of thought into the vision I hope to bring to our members and to our community at large.

Working with our board and executive committee, we remain constant in our focus to “Take Care of Business” and have identified three key issues we will be working on over the coming year.

First and foremost is our Advocacy Efforts. With our three lobbying committees: Municipal Government Affairs (MGA), Provincial Government Affairs (PGA) and Federal Government Affairs (FGA), we will continue to address issues that matter for our members on all three political landscapes.

Secondly is Economic Development. Working with our Economic partners Enterprise Fredericton and Team Fredericton, we will continue to monitor issues that drive our economy and brand our city. We will update you on developments with Atlantica, Immigration and Fredericton’s new E-Plex facility to help you gain a greater understanding of how they will affect your business.

Finally, our third key objective is to merge the business community with the community at large. Our objective is to engage our businesses and to inform our community of the immeasurable benefits a strong economy brings to us all. What’s good for business isn’t just good for your business, it’s good for our city. Because we understand that many issues are connected either directly or indirectly to our ability to do business, your Chamber continues to work diligently behind the scenes on many issues. Key business issues indicated above and social issues like Health and Education are just a few examples of how we are “Taking Care of Business”.

As you can see, we have an exciting year ahead and I am delighted to enter the role as Chamber President for the 2005/2006 period. If you are currently involved in our organization, I look forward to working with you. If you are not yet involved, I encourage you to join us and help us make it happen. I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

### **General Manager's Report**

#### **Greater Fredericton is a Cohesive Economic Unit** – *Weldon LeBlanc*

Partnering, collaboration, leveraging (of resources), inclusion and focus are key words that characterize the activities of the Fredericton Chamber over the past year.

Our membership has surpassed the 840-business members mark. As one of the most dynamic Chambers in Canada, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce has grown to become the largest Chamber/Board of Trade in New Brunswick, and the second largest in Atlantic Canada. While membership growth is in itself a tremendous achievement, the true achievement is how we got there.

Through a dedicated volunteer base, the resources of the Chamber have been directed to maintain a strong focus on five key areas: benefits to members, education/training, economic development, advocacy, and networking opportunities. While not being "everything to everyone", we are able to provide sustainable results on things that matter to our members. Volunteers add a solid meaningful contribution to the operations, and are the heart and soul of the Fredericton Chamber.

I mentioned 'partnering, collaboration, leveraging, and inclusion' previously. Recognizing that the Chamber has limited resources (financial and human resources), it is prudent for the Chamber leadership to explore opportunities to leverage these scarce resources, and partner with other organizations on strategic initiatives. Working side-by-side with our partners, we focus our resources at key initiatives to grow the economy of greater Fredericton.

The Fredericton Chamber have currently partnered with Enterprise Fredericton on PEMDI, BRE, and an immigration strategy. The Ambassador Program and developing a Community College Centre of Excellence for Fredericton are two initiatives that we have partnered with Team Fredericton. The Chamber works with Downtown Fredericton and the Main Street Business Development Association addressing key development issues in our two Business Improvement Areas, such as barriers to development, policing, and the need for strategic infrastructure improvements.

And there are more partners: Greater Fredericton Tourism Association, Fredericton Tourism, Fredericton Development Services, the elected officials at all three levels of government, and more.

I think you get the picture. There are many people working to make Fredericton a great place to live and work. Fredericton is a cohesive economic unit consisting of organizations working in harmony led by a team of dedicated volunteers. Join us...roll up your sleeves and make a difference in the future of your community.

### **Treasurer's Report – Ron Sauntry**

The year ended 2004-2005 was a successful year for the Chamber. Our overall deficit of \$ 9,741 was in line with out budget of \$9,400.

Total revenues for the year were \$337,000 compared to \$ \$323,000 for the preceding year. Our membership growth is very strong. In 2005 the Chamber had in excess of 840 members compared to 778 for 2004. On a cash receipts basis dues to April 30, 2005 were \$208,000 compared to \$ 184,000 the prior year. Unfortunately the majority of this revenue increase will not be reflected until our 2006 financial statements.

The Fredericton Chamber continues to be the largest chamber in New Brunswick and second only to Halifax in the Atlantic region. It is our strong membership base and membership growth that allows the chamber to continually meet financial targets and have the resources to contribute to program objectives. The membership also continues to support the chamber though the various after hours and networking events, the group insurance program and the newsletter.

Total expenditures were \$347,000 compared to \$340,000, but significantly under the 371,000 budget. The primary reason for the under expenditure was that provision was made for a relocation of our office facilities, and that move did not happen.

The chamber has several challenges for the upcoming year which will impact our operations and therefore present financial implications. Firstly, we do need to relocate by July of 2006 it is unlikely we will find facilities as financially attractive as our present location. Secondly, our financial reserves are the lowest they have been in many years and because of the impact of monthly cash flows throughout the year its imperative we start to rebuild our reserves. The board recognizes the importance of meeting these challenges and is committed to achieving both.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my second year with the chamber and my role as treasurer and am looking forward to the upcoming year. I would like to personally thank each of the Chamber staff members, Weldon, President Dan Kontz and my fellow board members for their personal efforts and dedication to making the Chamber as strong and successful as it is.

### **Membership Marketing Director's Report – Kerry Atkinson**

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is a vibrant business organization showing continued growth and strength! Our membership levels continue to show a positive report card topping the 800 mark in September and positioning us as the largest Chamber in New Brunswick, 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in Atlantic Canada. At time of reporting our membership stands at a strong 847 members (an increase of 10% compared to this time last year.

With the expansion of our benefits package in 2004, combined with enhanced educational components, networking opportunities and the leadership role the Chamber takes in our business community, we can expect continued growth for the upcoming year!

As in the past year my main focus will remain on **Membership Recruitment & Retention**. *Sponsorships* for our Major Chamber Events and *Newsletter Advertising*.

### **Special Thanks to~**

-Suzanne Wood and The Ambassadors for all their hard work! You're efforts have paid off for the Chamber. By welcoming each of our New Members and adding new components to Business After Hours our retention rate is at an all time high, the envy of other Chambers. Great Job done by a Great Team!

-Marie Embleton and the Membership Marketing Committee for another great Membership Drive Campaign!

-The Board of Director's and my great co-workers for your continued support over the past year!

I look forward to the upcoming year with excitement and great expectations for the Chamber and hope we will take our Chamber to the next level in both Membership and Benefits!

### **Event Coordinator's Report – Brianne Phillips**

If you need to network, make contacts, spread the word of an exciting new launch at your business, contact the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce to register for an upcoming event.

We offer over 50 events throughout the year. At each of these events there is the opportunity to meet new people and exchange business cards. The number of clients that you could possibly recruit may range from a crowd at our business after hours of 100-125 people or to a crowd of over 500 at our Business Excellence Awards or State of the Province Address.

One of our successful monthly programs is our Business After Hours. This is an excellent chance for the host to showcase their business in a relaxed manner. The waiting list to host this monthly program is already booked into 2007! The mix of people allows for a friendly environment for our new members to the Chamber. To help with the new task of networking, the Chamber Ambassadors are always on hand to ease you into the format and routine of the event.

New this year is our Business Education Series, which is held on the second Wednesday of each month from 11:30-1:30. We receive a number of requests for speakers to come in and talk on different areas from Human Resources, Sales or the IT Sector. We have had a great response from our members and will continue with this program into the 2005-2006 year.

On a larger scale, the Chamber annually host several major events, which draws a crowd from 250-550 people. Such as the Annual Golf Tournament, Business Expo, State of the City Address, Business Excellence Awards, State of the Province Address, Distinguished

Citizen Awards and Annual Banquet. The different major events offer a variety of venues appealing to different crowds.

The networking events at the Chamber are endless. For a list of our upcoming events contact the chamber office at 458-8006 or visit our website at [www.frederictonchamber.ca](http://www.frederictonchamber.ca).

### **Membership Services Coordinator's Report – Wendy Williams**

During the past year, the Chamber has seen an increase in memberships, which identified the need for an additional staff person to focus on member services and benefits.

In September 2004 work began to launch the new M2M Advantage Program in October. This program has been a huge success. M2M Cards were distributed to every full time employee of all our members enabling them to receive the discounts and special incentives offered by our participating members in this very worthwhile program.

I began this position in February of 2005 and work closely with Kerry in a support role dealing with the recruitment, retention and communication activities with the membership. Maintaining the Chambers membership data base, updating our website and communicating with our membership concerning upcoming events and important issues is always a number one priority.

The Chamber will be making major changes to the website over the summer which will make the site even more user-friendly. Information and links will be updated and changes to our online registrations and nominations will be even easier to use.

Although I have only been in this position for three months, I look forward to the changes and challenges the 2005-2006 year will bring and look forward to working closely with the membership to keep the communication lines open.

## **INTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Ambassadors Group – Suzanne Wood**

Committee Members: Mary Cudmore, Kate Mammen, Peter Spacek, Wendy Southworth, Peter Shaw, Joel Lapointe, Teresa Hatto, Kelly Kelly, Tracy Thibodeau, Judith Thompson, Jayne Wilson, Faye Heatherington, Kirk Cornell, Suzanne Wood – Chair.

Dedicated committee members have been busy meeting and greeting new chamber members throughout the year. Whether at the Business After Hours or visiting new members at their businesses, they have added to our Member's experience with their sense of fun, commitment and enthusiasm. Ambassador's have visited new members with a chamber gift, giving them the opportunity to meet face to face with another chamber member, ask questions and network.

The committee was responsible for creating a number of networking games played throughout the year at different Business After Hours events. The ideas and input make committee meetings as enjoyable as the Business After Hours events themselves.

At the December Business After Hours committee members entertained with Christmas carols which featured our own Christmas song! A collaborative effort on our part. Next year we will be happy to pass it along!

A special thanks goes to the dedicated staff at the Chamber office who help keep everybody organized and supported all of our suggestions.

### **Board Nominating Committee – Don Good**

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is an active and successful Chamber, providing benefits and networking opportunities to our members, as well as a strong voice in business advocacy issues and economic development. The Chamber's success is due in large part to the dedicated volunteers that serve on the Board of Directors, committees and task forces.

The Nominating Committee has the responsibility to select a slate of officers to serve on the Fredericton Chamber Board of Directors. This year, we have assembled an exceptional list of candidates for 2005/2006. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Dan Koncz, Laura O'Brien, Dave MacMullin and myself, I am pleased to present the following slate of directors:

President – Laura O'Brien  
First Vice President – Dave MacMullin  
Second Vice President – Ron Forsythe  
Past President – Dan Koncz  
Executive Member – Jim Mockler  
Executive Member – Peter Lindfield  
Treasurer – Ron Sauntry

In accordance with Article VIII, Section 2 of the Chamber's By-Laws, we are pleased to advise the following individuals have indicated willingness to serve a two-year term as members to the Board of Directors beginning May 31, 2005.

Ken Forrest – City of Fredericton  
Teresa Hatto – Freedom 55  
Leight Winchester – BMO  
John Eddy – Astral Media  
Stephanie Macdougall – Marriott Global Reservation Sales and Customer Care Center  
Joel Lapointe – Fredericton Appraisal Associates Ltd.  
Pam Lynch – P. Lynch Enterprises

The following directors have one year remaining in their two-year term of office:

Bob Hatheway – Hatheway Orthodontics  
Marie Embleton – Embleton Travel  
Darcy McKillop – CompuCollege  
Shaun Quinlan – Skillsoft  
Suzanne Wood – The Body Shop

**Business Excellence Awards Nominating Committee – Don Good**

The 2004 Business Excellence Awards were held on October 21, 2004 at the Delta Hotel.  
The recipients were as follows:

Aliant Telecom Entrepreneurial Achievement Award – Marjorie Tomlinson, Prudential River Realty.

The Daily Gleaner Micro Business Category – Inge Pataki, Gallery 78.

Business Development Bank of Canada Small Business Category – Rick Davis, Fredericton Home Hardware.

KPMG Chartered Accountants Intermediate Business Category – Ron Vaughan, Auto Machinery.

ADI Large Business Category – Janet Pratt, Ramada Inn.

Optimum Translating Community Impact Category – Audrey Lockhart.

**Business Forum – Steve Burns and Bob Hatheway**

2005-2005 marked a successful year for the Business Forum. The Fredericton Chamber has been working hard to address the needs of its members from a number of different aspects of business. The Business Forum is open to all members who would like to develop business skills, including HR Management, Sales and Marketing. The business forum meets monthly to discuss various topics of interest to the small businessperson. This past year saw a number of excellent topics covered, including seminars by the City of Fredericton on “Fred ezone: Wireless Technology Leads the Way”, and a seminar by Betty McCarthy on “Attracting and Retaining Good Employees.” One of our highlights was a seminar on “Everything You’ve Learned About Marketing is Wrong” with guest speaker Brian Bulley. I would like to thank all those who participated in this year’s Business Forum events, and encourage others to join us for informative information on a wide range of business issues. A special thanks to Brianne at the Chamber office whose work behind the scenes kept the Business Forums on track.

**Distinguished Citizen Awards Nominating Committee – Don Good**

The Distinguished Citizen Awards are given to citizens of Fredericton who have given themselves to our community without thought or reward. They are nominated by residents of Greater Fredericton and Fredericton Chamber of Commerce members. Nominations are reviewed by a selection committee and award winners selected. This

years awards were held on March 17, 2005 at the Fredericton Inn and Dr. Ellen MacGillivray, Bob Dewar and Stuart Blair were honoured.

**Economic Development Task Force – *Peter Lindfield and Bob Hatheway***

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce has established an Economic Development Task Force to explore the role of the Fredericton Chamber in economic development activities. Its membership includes Dan Koncz, Laura O’Blenis, Patricia Melvin, Bob Skillen, Darrin Lee and Weldon LeBlanc.

The Chamber’s 2004 membership survey indicated that Chamber members place a high priority on economic development. Recognizing that other organizations are tasked with the lead role in economic development activities, the challenge for the Chamber is to take an active role without duplicating efforts of other organizations.

The Task Force has a mandate to investigate and research answers to reoccurring questions:

- What are the major economic engines of the economy of greater Fredericton?
- What types of companies are the Province of New Brunswick recruiting?
- Does Fredericton meet with these companies' needs and objectives?
- Which industries are choosing Fredericton as a location within New Brunswick?
- What role can the Chamber of Commerce play to support Fredericton’s economic development activities?

The task force will prepare a written report outlining the findings of its research and present them to the Chamber’s Board of Directors. In addition, the task force will make recommendations to current programs and activities related to meeting the goals and objectives of the Fredericton Chamber as outlined in the Chamber’s strategic plan.

**Membership Marketing Committee – *Marie Embleton***

The 2004/2005 committee’s primary goal was to grow our membership as well as make existing members aware of the benefits. In early fall we asked members for feedback on the Member 2 Member Advantage Program and looked at ways we could best promote this program to members and perspective members.

Discussion was held on story topics and it was suggested that the M2M Program definitely should be a focus for the February Membership Drive Tabloid as well as radio advertising. The Membership Drive Tabloid was published on February 8<sup>th</sup> and stressed the fact we are not over 825 members and highlighted the major benefits on the front page as well as a full list of members in the centerfold.

I would like to say thanks to all committee members: Joel Banks, Patti Graham, Shelly Clayton, Ron Forsythe, Mark McDougall, Janet Pratt, Lori Young for their support and great ideas!

On behalf of Kerry and myself thanks to all the Board Members!

### **Municipal Funding Committee - Dan Koncz**

This has been a relatively quiet year on the municipal funding front. The provincial government has decided to freeze the Unconditional funding formula for the next four years. This has enabled municipalities to budget for the longer term. The City of Fredericton has welcomed this change as it ensures that our unconditional grant will not further erode as per the previous arrangement.

The governments' announcement that money would be available for critical infrastructure has ensured that the not only does the inequitable tax formula continue to exist but the gap will continue to increase on a per capita return of taxes remitted.

While we know that the existing formula is flawed the reality of the situation is that this will not be a pressing issue until the next election. In the mean time we will continue to monitor the situation so that we can be ready for the next time that this comes to the fore front.

Another issue that we have been following is how the provincial government will allocate the Federal gas tax refund that is earmarked for municipal infra structure. The provinces current plan has been to reduce the amount remitted to the municipalities by an admin fee and an amount for the rural areas. It is our understanding that that was neither what the federal government had intended nor what other provinces are doing. And we will continue to work with the other larger chambers to lobby the province to change their plan.

All in all the same issues as usual were faced. The main difference is in the new incentives and how they are applied.

### **Municipal Government Affairs – Dave MacMullin and Mitch Smith**

The Municipal Affairs Committee had a very busy year, and is pleased to be part of the exciting developments taking place in our City. Our Committee had the opportunity to meet with a number of senior City staff members in an effort to remain up to date on current projects the City is working on.

From these meetings our committee then met to formulate our Municipal Brief, which will be presented to city Council on May 16, 2005. Some of the items covered in our Municipal Brief include: Transportation, Tourism, Municipal Funding (Unconditional Grant), and Municipal Policing.

Over the past number of years our committee, and the Chamber in general has enjoyed a strong working relationship with City Council, and this year continues to be the same. In addition to Senior staff and City Council the Fredericton Chamber has had regular meetings with Team Fredericton and Enterprise Fredericton. This cooperative "Team" approach will be a key ingredient to Fredericton's successes in coming years.

Our Municipality is in the midst of a major revitalization. New construction has been at an all time high for the past two years and continues for 2005. City Council has made major commitments for infrastructure renewal, such as a new north side bridge ramp off the Westmorland St Bridge, two new rink facilities, the west end development project, and continued development of the Garrison district into a class "A" tourism facility, just to name a few.

These are exciting time for the City of Fredericton, and the Fredericton Chamber and its Municipal Affairs Committee are pleased to be part of the process. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of committee for their work: Terry Avery, Ryck Bourgette, Gerard Daly, Dan Koncz, Michael Riley, Judith Thompson, Weldon LeBlanc, and co chair Mitch Smith.

**Office Space Task Force – *Ron Forsythe and Dan Coleman***

The lease at the current Chamber office location expires in June 2006 and since the lease will not be renewed at the current location, the Chamber Office must re-locate.

Over the past several months, the Office Space Task Force has been investigating several options ranging from purchasing a building to leasing a location and many other combinations of options in between.

Discussions are also underway about the possible co-habitation of space between the Chamber, Downtown Fredericton and Enterprise Fredericton.

After much deliberation, a recommendation was made to both the Executive and the Board of Directors at their April 2005 meetings.

It was recommended that the Chamber purchase a building within 3-5 years. In the meantime, the following matters need to be considered and plans put in place to address:

- 1) find lease space (approximately 5000 - 6000 sq ft) that meets the Chamber's needs and that of our 2 potential partners (Downtown Fredericton and Enterprise Fredericton) for the next 3-5 years
- 2) establish a special line item in our budget for a "Building Purchase Fund"
- 3) create an annualized budget amount that will be deposited in an account to be used for the "Building Purchase Fund"
- 4) re-visit annually.
- 5) re-visit the 2005-2006 budget to see if changes need to be made to address item number 2 above.

- 6) update the Board at monthly Board meetings of progress on the lease options, with a objective of having specific options for Board consideration in September 2005

Motion: Ron Forsythe made a motion to approve the updated Recommendation put forward by the Office Space Task Force, seconded by Dan Coleman. Motion carried.

Motion: Dan Coleman made a motion to approve development of a 5-year plan, which will see \$100,000 placed in a building fund and will be reviewed annually, seconded by Ron Sauntry. Motion carried.

Through this recommendation, the option to purchase or build new office space has been deferred for 3-5 years and the Chamber will proceed with a lease for the next 3-5 years. The end result will be to build or buy which will give the chamber more opportunity for building on their equity. At this time, there are no options available to purchase or build that are conducive to the chambers needs, but there are leasing opportunities. The plan is to build up funds for a down payment, which will mitigate the risk and concern. The space will need to be 5,000-6,000 square feet and will be used to cohabitate with Downtown Fredericton and Enterprise Fredericton. The Task Force proposed to establish a budget line and start paying money into it immediately – starting with the 2005/2006 budget. Furthermore, the options should be revisited in 3 years with the option to revisit them sooner.

#### **Provincial Government Affairs – *Laura O’Blenis and Darcy McKillop***

The Provincial Government Affairs (PGA) Committee has a mandate of “Taking Care of Business” with provincial related issues on behalf of our members. Through our annual membership survey (*conducted in September 2004*), we received valuable feedback from our members on issues of importance for their business and for our community on a provincial landscape.

Primary issues addressed by our members included 1) Highway Signage, 2) Transportation, 3) Education, and 4) Health. As we progressed through the year, many other key issues were brought to the forefront and those became our emerging issues of interest. These such issues include: 1) Atlantica, 2) Immigration, and 3) Legislation, just to name a few.

Our PGA Committee had a busy and successful year working with various departments and ministers of the provincial government as well as key individuals with the official opposition party. We are pleased to report we had the opportunity to meet with the following ministers, departments and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs):

- Minister of Environment and Local Government
- Minister of Education
- Minister of Tourism
- Minister of Finance

- Minister of Business New Brunswick
- Minister of Health
- Department of Transportation
- Local MLA Caucus

To ensure our issues received the appropriate follow up, we also met with the following key individuals of the official opposition:

- Shawn Graham, Leader of the Opposition
- Local MLA Caucus
- New Brunswick MLA Caucus

We are currently in the process of finalizing our 2005 Provincial Brief. Our brief will include highlights of progress on the above noted issues as well as an overview and status update on our emerging issues. Log onto our website at [www.fredericton@chamber.ca](mailto:www.fredericton@chamber.ca) to view the brief and the document we will be using as a guideline for the 2005/2006 PGA Committee.

Thank you to our committee members for their input and assistance and to our members for providing us with a clear direction of provincial issues that affect your business.

#### **Special Projects – *Peter Lindfield and Shawn Quinlan***

The committee members included Dan Koncz, Jennifer Merrill and Weldon LeBlanc. It was involved in planning the continuance of the Entrepreneurship Challenge, a computerized business simulation game produced by CAPSIM, a Chicago company for the following year. In 2003-2004, the Chamber supported this exciting concept under the capable tutelage of the University of New Brunswick's Professor Barry Bisson. Teams played six rounds of the CAPSIM game until the winners were determined. Supported by the Bank of Montreal, the game featured fierce competition and rivalry. A number of Chamber members, including members of the Board of Directors, were players and some participants still meet socially on a regular basis. The Chamber plans to work with other stakeholders to support the reestablishment of this project later this year.

We would like to thank the Chamber's staff, whose support has been greatly appreciated by the Special Projects Committee.

### **EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Atlantic Provinces Chamber – *Dan Koncz***

The Atlantic Provinces Chamber of Commerce continues to focus itself. The primary areas of advocacy that they are working on are Immigration, retention/attraction of Capital and human resources, and Atlantica. Naturally the ongoing work of maintaining inter chamber relations is always on the agenda.

The whole concept of Atlantica is starting to gain some momentum and it will be up to the Fredericton region to devise a strategy on how we will plug into it. This is why we

chose our Guest speaker for the annual dinner to present an overview on the the Atlantica plan. We hope that you will find this very informative.

The Annual meeting In PEI offered a great inside look into the direction that the APCC will follow for the next few years. Oh and yes we at the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce were recognized for all the hard work of our staff and volunteers by receiving the Chamber of the Year award. Great work to one and all.

The most interesting new initiative launched that directly affects The Fredericton Chamber is the formation of the Urban Chambers Caucus. This is a group of larger chambers that meets quarterly through Teleconference to discuss issues and best practice methods of operations. The meetings are informative and offer a great way to stay in touch with others from the region. I look forward to seeing how the information from this forum will be used by the Atlantic Provinces Chamber, and how the participants will use the best practices to strengthen their respective organizations.

When Mr. Jim Quigley from BMO in Fredericton will take over the helm of the APCC next year we in Fredericton should have even more opportunities to build going and improved links to the APCC. All in all it was a very interesting year of change with a bright and strong voice poised to move things forward.

#### **Greater Fredericton Airport Authority – *Heather-AnneMacLean***

The year 2004 was a great one at the Fredericton Airport. It was perhaps the first year since the transfer of the airport from the Government to the Greater Fredericton Airport Authority (GFAA) in 2001, that we had at least some level of stability in the Aviation world. Domestic air passenger services at the airport provided mainly by Air Canada were quite stable over the year and traffic expanded to fill the domestic capacity that was available. Our transborder traffic also increased significantly over the year and traffic on our twice-daily service to Boston provided by Delta Air Lines grew enough to provide a significant increase in activity at the airport. In the end, our traffic grew by 12% over the year and we led New Brunswick in terms of traffic growth.

Our airport development and redevelopment program over the past few years has been focused on the airside of the airport. In 2004, we turned our attention to the terminal and groundside facilities. The airline customer service area of the terminal was expanded through a 1.2 million dollar project to incorporate the new baggage screening equipment at the airport. We also expanded our parking lot to accommodate the increasing traffic at the airport.

In March of 2004, the Fredericton Airport was the location of the deployment of the Canadian troops from Base Gagetown to Haiti. Operation Halo was a major event for us at the Fredericton Airport and it posed an exciting challenge for our facility with those very large Antonov and Ilyushin aircraft. And the challenge was met and we savoured the opportunity to demonstrate our capability. The excitement of it all was exceeded only by our pride in being able to serve our country and our soldiers and their families in our own community.

In July we hosted the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association and the International Air Rally. It was the first time that both of these events were held in Fredericton.

By the end of the year we had many accomplishments and expect many more to come.

**Greater Fredericton Tourism Association – Weldon LeBlanc**

The Greater Fredericton Tourism Association (GFTA) is a membership based tourism association that unites individuals, corporations, public agencies, associations, organizations and enterprises, in the Greater Fredericton Region. The primary objective of GFTA is to support promotional and development efforts of members that enhances tourism in Greater Fredericton. In terms of advocacy, the objective is to represent the membership at various levels of government in matters relating to tourism.

During 2004-05 GFTA focused its resources on a number of areas aimed at growing the membership, improving communication with members, and addressing issues and barriers to tourism.

Work continues on creating a website for the organization to serve as a source of information for the tourism community. .

The activities of the Northside Tourism Committee places strategic focus on tourism issues in Fredericton North. Various initiatives are being explored including existing wetlands adjacent to the Northside Super Store and enhanced directional signage

A Retail Committee was established Chaired by Ryck Bourgette (of Fredericton Mall) and is working to address issues and concerns of the tourism sector. In addition, the committee will be exploring improved marketing opportunities for the tourism sector.

**New Brunswick Chamber of Commerce Report – Dan Koncz**

This has been a year of turmoil at the NBCC. The Chamber has been in more of a reactionary role than moving ahead in a focused strategic direction. This has resulted in discussions between the Moncton Chamber, Saint John Board of trade, various others and of course ourselves as to the future of the NBCC. The final outcome of this led to two main points. The first was the withdrawal of Moncton from the NBCC and the second was a task force to revamp the Governance of the New Brunswick Chamber.

This task force has looked at the by-laws, and is making recommendations on how the NB chamber will progress over the next few years. Along with these recommendations the NB Chamber is working on finding several Key provincial concerns that it will pick as priorities to be tackled. This should result in a more vibrant, and effective organization focusing on the good of all NB chambers as opposed to dealing with individual issues.

The Key issue facing the NB chamber is finding strong board members from all regions to work towards bringing vibrancy and relevance to the NBCC without duplication of work being conducted by local chambers or the APCC. Identifying funding requirements as well as sources of revenues.

It will be interesting to watch where the NBCC is heading over the next year or two.