

CYNTHIA MACKENZIE'S AGM SPEECH

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Thank you, Debbi. I have been looking forward to this opportunity to speak to our membership.

Ladies and gentlemen, as this year's Chair of the Board, it has been my privilege to be an active participant in the recent strategic planning sessions. It has been just over a week since our Board approved the goals and objectives that comprise this strategic plan and I am pleased to say they encompass a strong commitment to our members, current and future.

Through the process of strategic planning, our Board has focused and prioritized new opportunities, new directions and new partnerships. These new strategies will propel the Board forward for the next 5 years. We are truly excited about the prospect of setting these goals and objectives in motion.

The Board of Directors is a strong team committed to our membership and focused on improvements. We are very excited about this change in the Board's direction and focus.

Your “Voice of Business” embraces change. We are determined to be a more effective and more efficient Board.

We are resolved to take advantage of every opportunity to improve our provision of products, services, networking and partnerships.

Our strategic plan is based on a “Grow and Build” strategy.

This Board will channel our energies on efficiencies and improved member benefits.

We will search out and create new initiatives to foster membership growth and membership retention. We will find new products and services that our members want. We will position the Chamber as an ally, an advocate and a partner of local business interests.

In the midst of change, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce's foundation of advocacy will remain rock solid. As an active part of this community, your Chamber will continue to strongly advocate at all levels.

We will continue to play a role in the business prosperity of Greater Sudbury.

Your Chamber has recently sponsored two All-Candidates nights. In a further commitment to business advocacy, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce requested a seat on the Fair Wage Policy Committee. Our representative, Past Chair Michael Luciw, is taking part in those deliberations.

Your Chamber also recently applied for, and received, funding from the Ontario Chamber to advance the Global Experience at Work Program. This project will develop a plan to attract, train and re-train highly skilled immigrants to our community.

Part of the Skilled Labour initiative, this partnership with MIRARCO, the Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation and community partnerships will put in place a network to bring professionals to Greater Sudbury.

At the provincial level, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce asked for, and received, our input for a policy resolution for the Northern Residence Income Tax Deduction. The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce reviewed the policy recommendation and provided our comments.

Debbi Nicholson, Brian Gatien and I attended the Canadian Chamber Convention last week and I am very pleased to announce that the policy resolution was passed. Our input into amending that resolution was instrumental in its approval.

Here at home, your Chamber and your Board of Directors will continue to work for the best interest of our members.

These are exciting times for us all. Our members, current and future can count on this new focus and direction to carry forward for the benefit of business and commerce in Greater Sudbury.

Thank you.