



GREATER KITCHENER WATERLOO
Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 2367 80 Queen St. N. Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6L4

Tel: (519) 576-5000

Fax: (519) 742-4760

www.greaterkwchamber.com

Volunteer Development & Orientation Guide

MISSION STATEMENT

“To serve business in the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Area and
be its voice in the betterment of the community.”

Approved by the Board of Directors

Date: December 1998

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The purpose of this guide is to introduce the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce to volunteers, and to provide information that will better enable the Chamber, through its volunteers and staff to:

- undertake its mission
- provide an orientation for Chamber volunteers
- enhance volunteer development opportunities
- improve volunteer and team effectiveness

VISION

The Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce is a business association of economic development champions.

As the voice of business for the greater Kitchener Waterloo area, the Chamber is a strong advocate for continued development of our community and a partner for prosperity.

By working together and focusing on initiatives that support growth, members use the services of the Chamber as an important catalyst for their business success.

Recognized as a leader in one of Canada's most forward-thinking business communities, The Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce always strives to be the best.

MISSION STATEMENT & GOALS

Mission

To serve business in the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Area and be its voice in the betterment of the community.

Goals/Objectives

1. To foster and support private enterprise, economic vitality and stability
2. To promote the economic development of the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Area.
3. To co-ordinate the efforts of commerce, industry and the professions in maintaining and strengthening a sound and healthy business climate in the surrounding area.
4. To provide creative leadership and effective co-ordination of all interested parties in solving community problems and in initiating constructive community action.
5. To provide a forum for idea exchange.
6. To be the advocate of business with government.
7. To develop and increase membership base.
8. To be financially responsible.
9. To create broad understanding and appreciation of the great opportunities in the surrounding area, and to promote the advantages and assets of the community.
10. To create a climate conducive to developing individual volunteers through participation and interaction.
11. To communicate effectively with members and solicit their opinions and feedback.
12. To provide challenging and stimulating employment that is productive and personally rewarding for staff.
13. To create an enthusiastic working partnership between staff and member-volunteers built on trust and mutual respect.

CORE VALUES & BELIEFS

Our core values centre on the beliefs that:

1. Serving our members' needs is the primary reason for the existence of the Chamber.
2. Volunteers are the key resource through which we accomplish our objectives.
3. Trust, open communication, integrity, personal accountability and initiative are critical to our organization's success.
4. The free market economy is the primary means to achieve a prosperous and well-balanced community.
5. Governments and publicly funded entities must be accountable, responsible, effective and efficient.
6. Business has an obligation to act in an environmentally responsible manner and to support necessary social, cultural, health and educational systems.
7. Effective, mission-focused partnerships are key to our community's success.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Adapt or die”. That’s the challenge that Charles Darwin, the father of evolutionary theory, said all species face. The species “**homo sapien chamberus**” is no exception to Darwin’s law.

Each of us must find ways to adjust to the changing times, to make the Chamber organization and its programs more responsive to the membership and to be more effective in fulfilling the Chamber’s mission to serve business and to act as its voice in the betterment of our community.

Principles to Guide Our Volunteer Development

- Volunteer’s responsibilities are clear
- Reporting relationships link related activities together
- Activities are linked to our mission and strategic goals
- The right volunteer is in the right job
- Volunteers and staff work in partnership
- All work begins with a plan with measurable goals

1.2 STRENGTHENING OUR STAFF TEAM

Over the past few years, the Chamber has made adjustments to its staff and committee structure in order to be more effective and membership focused. This is reflected in the re-focusing of existing positions, the adoption of new positions and the introduction of new administrative systems, technology and many new program initiatives designed to create improved value to our members.



1.3 KEEPING OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM STRONG

Two of our mission goals and strategic directions are:

1. *“to create a climate conducive to developing individual volunteers through participation and interaction”*
2. *“to create an enthusiastic working partnership between staff and member-volunteers built on trust and mutual respect”.*

A strong volunteer development program is needed as part of fulfilling these mission goals and as we seek to deliver the highest quality programs and services to our members.

1.4 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS?

Your comments are welcome! If you have any questions and suggestions please contact the Chamber office at 576-5000. We would be glad to help. We want your involvement with the Chamber to be the most meaningful and productive experience possible.



2.0 WHAT IS A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

Your Chamber of Commerce is an action oriented non-profit business association designed to meet the needs of the business community. It is a voluntary organization of individuals and businesses who join together to advance the commercial, financial, industrial and civic interests of our community. It is a public relations vehicle, a legislative monitor at the local, provincial and federal levels of government, an information bureau, and a research and promotion medium.



In summary, the Chamber provides a means to:

- **Get Immediate Returns**
 - Reduced Rates on Visa/Mastercard
 - Savings on group benefits and insurance
 - Receive Member-to Member discounts
- **Increase Your Sales**
 - Network with persons who will buy your product or service
 - Market your products or services
 - Receive business referrals from the Chamber

- **Lower Your Costs**
 - Increase your buying power through the Chamber
 - Get answers to your problems
 - Connect with suppliers who will save you time and money
 - Get your employees involved and enhance their job satisfaction & teamwork
- **Protect and Improve our Business Climate**
 - You can add your voice to the voice of business
 - Advance the Greater K-W area's economic prosperity
 - Connect with top local, provincial and national decision makers
- **Get the Edge on the Competition**
 - Learn about tips that will make your operation better
 - Learn from top business leaders
- **Belong for Your Own Good**
 - Benefit from rewarding volunteer opportunities
 - Improve leadership skills
 - Recognize and advance your employees
- **Belong for Our Community's Good**
 - Help the Chamber work on your behalf locally, provincially, nationally and internationally
 - Improve our community's quality of life

The Greater Kitchener-Waterloo area's economic well being is directly related to the work that is done by the Chamber. The Chamber has a major impact on business, income, future growth and the quality of life of our community.

2.1 OUR PROGRAM AT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

There are many opportunities for you as a member to benefit from your involvement with the Chamber. Here are just a few of the exciting opportunities to get involved with:

Business After Five

- A mini trade show every month

Networking and Breakfast Club

- A monthly learning and networking forum

Policy Committees

- Deal with critical issues at all levels of government, e.g. Federal Provincial Affairs Committee, Regional & Municipal Affairs Committee, Environment Committee, Training & Education

Special Events Committees

- These events promote team building and networking such as our Curling Bonspiel, Chamber Corporate Challenge, Comedy Auction or Networking Breakfast Club.



International Trade Seminars

- Learn about how to tackle the international markets

Seminars

- Learn about specialized issues that impact your business

The Chamber Advocate

- Share your ideas and opinions and learn about what's going on

Advertise

- Promote your product in the Advocate, Membership Directory and other venues

Tourism

- Get involved and help develop our tourism economy

Sponsorships

- Promote your business at our many events and programs

Business Development

- Grow your leads and learn at Chamber Plus Networks

Volunteer

- Develop your leadership skills and improve our community by volunteering on our many task forces, committees, the Board of Directors and events.

Website

- Check out our website at www.greaterkwchamber.com

As you can see, there are lots of opportunities for members to get involved, learn, develop their business, contribute to our community and have fun!

2.2 WHO IS THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

YOU are the Chamber of Commerce; you provide the ideas, the drive, the goals, the funds and the voluntary services to keep the Chamber doing what it does. You are the Chamber, and without you, the Chamber would not exist.

2.3 OUR HISTORY BECOMES OUR FUTURE



On April 26, 1886 an ad in the Berlin Daily News stated

“a meeting of all merchants, manufacturers and others specially interested in the future of the town of Berlin will be held in the American House on Thursday evening, April 29, at 8:00 p.m. When some important business will be transacted”

and thus the region's first Chamber was born. The Board of Trade in Waterloo was founded in 1890 and the Elmira Woolwich Chamber was founded in 1895.

These organizations played central roles in the development of our communities. In 1992 the Kitchener & Waterloo Chambers made a historic decision to merge to better serve the members and the community. In 2001, the Chamber of Commerce of Kitchener & Waterloo joined with the Elmira-Woolwich Chamber of Commerce to become *The Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of Commerce*.

This new Chamber is built on the vision and drive of volunteer leaders who, for more than a century, have known they could accomplish much more by working together and that the business community has a unique role in building our community.

In fact, your Chamber has played a central role in many important projects. To name just a few:

- The development of railways to our community
- Attraction of many key industries to our community
- Key proponent for the building of the expressway and airport
- Leader in the founding of both our universities
- Founder of Junior Achievement and the Better Business Bureau
- Key partner in the founding of Oktoberfest
- Founder of the Sounds of Summer and the Waterloo Busker Festival
- Founding member of Leadership Waterloo Region in 2000...and much, much more!

Thank you to all our members who make our Chamber the second largest in Ontario!

3.0 HOW THE CHAMBER OPERATES

Our membership is the foundation of our Chamber. More than 1,600 members belong to the Chamber. Sixty-six percent are small businesses with 10 or fewer employees. Many large companies in our community are also members of the Chamber of Commerce, including retail, commercial, technology, manufacturing and service organizations. Collectively, our members employ over **56,000** people in the community.

3.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is elected by the membership and is the policy-making body of the Chamber of Commerce. Its members represent the business and professional leadership of the community of the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Area. Its mandate is to set the overall direction of the Chamber in accordance with the Chamber's by-laws.

Our by-laws are the "constitution" of the Chamber and are the framework within which the Board of Directors must operate. The by-laws can only be amended at an annual general meeting or a special meeting of the members, which gives proper notice to all members.

The Board consists of **20 members**, of which ten are elected annually for a two-year period. The President sits as a member of both the Executive and Board in an ex-officio or non-voting capacity.

The Chair of the Board presides over all meetings of the Board. Individual Board Directors are assigned as Director Liaisons to all committees at the September Board meeting. The Board of Directors generally meets the first Friday of every month, except for July and August.

The Board employs a President, under the terms of the by-laws, who is charged with the responsibility of the Chamber's management, including the employment and direction of the staff.



3.2 CHAMBER EXECUTIVE



The Chamber Executive consists of **Seven Officers**: Chair, Chair Elect, two Vice Chairs, Treasurer, Secretary, Past Chair and the President who is a non-voting member.

The Chamber Executive deals with the on-going business of the Chamber in the absence of the Board of Directors. The Chamber Executive usually meets a week prior to the Board of Directors. The Chamber Executive reviews the important matters of the day, including long range planning, governance, and helps plan the agenda of the Board of Directors.

3.3 COMMITTEES

Committees serve at the direction and are responsible to the Board of Directors. Reporting to the Chamber Board of Directors occurs through their Board liaison or staff. *(See Section 3.8.)*

3.4 ADMINISTRATION

A group of professionals work under the direction of the President. All staff reports to the President whom in turn, reports to the Board of Directors. The President is in charge of operations and functions within the policies established by the Board.

The Board through the President ensures that policies and programs are implemented and provide an administrative unit for the organization. The President works closely with the Chair of the Board of Directors.

3.5 HOW THE CHAMBER IS FINANCED

The Chamber of Commerce is financed by membership fees and corporate sponsorships, program fees and event revenues. The Chamber seeks to operate as a “business” as it tries to provide the best value to its members.

As a matter of principle, the Chamber does not accept any grants from the government except fees for service contracts. The Chamber budget is developed and approved by the Board. Our year-end is June 30.

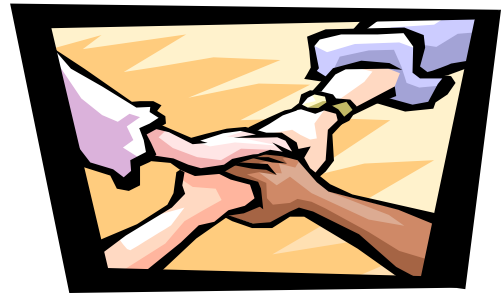
3.6 AFFILIATIONS

Each level of the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade systems (local, provincial/regional and national) is autonomous and financially independent. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce each serve as federations for community Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade. Our Chamber of Commerce maintains membership on the boards of these organizations.

3.7 PRESIDENT

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce.

The President is charged with the responsibility of the operations of the organization and is primarily responsible for implementing the policies and procedures as approved by the Board of Directors. The President reports to the Chamber Executive and Board of Directors.



The President is responsible for overseeing Chamber administration and staff, the hiring and establishing of contracts, the assignments and the execution of duties. The process of how this is to be done is the responsibility of the President. It is also the responsibility of the President to prepare and recommend a budget to the board for discussion and approval and to oversee its implementation once approved.

3.8 SPOKESPERSON ROLE

The President and Chair of the Board of Directors are the spokespersons for the Chamber. It is important that all media inquiries be appropriately referred to the President.

The spokesperson role can be delegated based on a specific issue or project. It is essential the Chamber speak with one voice and within the general policies and direction of the Chamber to ensure our continued credibility and consistency of messages.

In order to do this, however, it is essential that the spokesperson be identified and prepared in advance. It is the responsibility of the President to ensure that spokespersons are prepared and proposed releases and public materials have been reviewed and approved in advance.

All media conferences shall be held on Chamber premises unless agreed to otherwise and all media releases shall use standard Chamber formats and be approved by the President.

3.9 COMMITTEES – WHAT IS A COMMITTEE?



Committees are the backbone of the Chamber of Commerce: co-ordinating the activities of the Chamber; analyzing the concerns of the membership; and putting forward proposed solutions. In Chamber of Commerce activity, committees are the membership in action and the organization through which a “program of action” is carried out.

The following points cover the purpose of all committees:

- To study and report
- To act
- To recommend
- To promote

The committee will fulfill all, or any of these purposes within the mandate formation and nature of the work involved. Committee work also enables members to participate most effectively in the Chamber of Commerce programs, as well as providing valuable training for new members who must one day assume leadership roles in the organization.

Committees are typically comprised of a small group of active members who attend regular meetings. All committee members must carry up to date memberships with the Chamber. Politicians do not qualify for Chamber policy committee membership with the exception of the Federal & Provincial Affairs Committee, wherein selected MP's and MPP's are invited on an ex-officio and non-voting basis. Members who are municipal, provincial or federal government employees are eligible for committee membership only on a non-voting basis and are not eligible for committee leadership positions.

All committees are required to have a written mandate and objectives. In the case of task forces, a clear time frame for objectives is required.

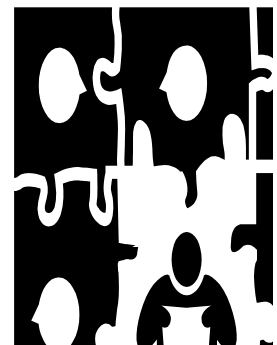
3.10 TYPES OF COMMITTEES

Committees broadly fall into two major categories – standing committees and task forces.

Committees which are continuing in nature are termed “standing committees”, while those created for a limited period of time are called “task forces”. Task forces and Committees are formed to carry out the Chamber’s program of action and to achieve our objectives while promoting our activities.

The following are a few of the Standing Committees of the Greater Kitchener Waterloo Area Chamber of Commerce:

- Ambassador
- Chamber Plus Networks (CPN)
- Corporate Challenge
- Contact Centre Committee
- Environment
- Curling Bonspiel
- Networking & Breakfast Club (NBC)
- Business After 5
- Comedy Auction



- Golf Tournament
- Regional & Municipal Affairs (RMAC)
- Training & Education
- Federal and Provincial Affairs (FPAC)
- Volunteer Management
- Membership
- Women's Leadership Committee
- Tourism Advisory

In addition, there are many special task forces and sub-committees or special committees such as:

- Health Care Sub-Committee
- Physicians Recruitment Task Force
- Tax Sub-Committee
- Communications Advisory

There is lots of opportunity for involvement. Please see the Chamber for a complete listing of information on mandates and time requirements. Your involvement is welcome.

Please note that the committees often have a selection process for membership. All members of committees shall be members of the Chamber of Commerce. Representation on committees is subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

4.0 COMMITTEE CHAIR

The quality of our Chamber is reflected by the quality of our leadership. The Committee Chair should have excellent leadership qualities, with an ability to recognize and use the talents of committee members.

A Committee Chair should be able to reconcile conflicting opinions of members in order to bring forth policies to which all members of the committee can agree upon. It is also important that the chair has a sound knowledge of the policies and objectives of the Chamber of Commerce and time for the work of their specific committee.

Committee Chairs should serve no more than two years consecutively.

In summary, a chair must be able to:

- Set meeting agendas with staff
- Manage meeting discussion so that all are heard
- Present the issue or project
- Clarify issues
- Stimulate group thinking
- Follow and summarize the discussion
- Delegate responsibility and work with staff
- State a deadline for completion of various jobs
- Check progress
- Report progress to the Board of Directors
- Keep committee enthusiasm at a high and sustained level
- See the job through to conclusion



4.1 THE COMMITTEE/TASK FORCE CHAIR IS RESPONSIBLE TO:

- Review in September/October annually, with their committee membership, the Committee Mandate/Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives. These areas can be updated at any time with Board approval.
- Monitor, with Committee members and staff, pertinent areas of concern or activity and channel referred issues to appropriate sub-committees for review and recommendation.
- Establish committee meeting agendas with the respective staff person and have the committee select a recorder for meetings
- Have the committee elect a Vice-Chair of the committee. This member will serve as the Committee Chair in the absence of the Chair.
- Conduct a periodic review of Committee member's performance and revise membership as required. Each committee should establish a minimum attendance guideline of 50%.
- Provide copies of any/all recorded meetings to staff and the Board liaison, responsible for their area. It is the general policy to have committee minutes available one week following a meeting.
- Contact any/all members of their committee who have missed three consecutive meetings to confirm their membership on that committee. Members who have missed three consecutive meetings will be removed from the committee and the committee call-up sheet.
- Follow-up with action taken as a result of the meeting.
- Attend Board of Directors meetings as appropriate to speak to any/all agenda items relative to his/her committee or to a resolution proposed from his/her committee.
- Organize an annual schedule of meeting dates, locations and time of meetings. Committee meetings should be held at the Chamber office or in Chamber member establishments. This list is to be provided to staff to include in the Chamber calendar of activities.
- Work with the staff person to prepare an annual budget for the approval of the Board. This is generally to be completed by early-April in any given year to be submitted to the President for review and inclusion in a final budget submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.
- If money needs to be spent, over and above the annual budget, prepare a budget for the specific activity and consult with the President.
- Keep an updated, accurate Chair Binder for management and succession purposes
- Delegate responsibilities to members of the committee. Follow-up as required.
- Prepare a report for the board, outlining committee highlights, once a year.
- Be clear on the "chain of command" regarding public statements. The Chamber Chair or President speaks for the Chamber. Pronouncements carry more weight if they are made in the name of the whole organization. *See section 3.8*
- May be asked to participate in strategic planning sessions with the Board of Directors.



4.2 VOLUNTEERS & STAFF PARTNERSHIP

- A correspondence file, specific to each committee is available to be picked up by Committee chairs prior to meetings.
- Committee binders are in the Chamber office and contain past minutes, committee mandates, meeting and dates attendance record.
- Committee meeting RSVP's are made through the Chamber, they can be obtained prior to meeting by contacting the office.
- Staff will keep agenda/minutes/background material.
- The respective staff person is there to provide advice, direction, support and encouragement.
- The staff person works closely with the Chair in preparation of the agenda in advance of the meeting.



4.3 COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIR

- Represents the Chair when required and assumes assignments made by the Chair.
- It is suggested that the Vice-Chair consider this position as a training ground for possible assumption of the position of Chair.
- Assist Chair in the follow-up of members who are absent three consecutive times without explanation. The purpose of the contact is to provide encouragement, remind members of the next meeting and when necessary, discuss their continued involvement in the committee or an alternative.
- Keep an updated, accurate Vice Chair Binder for management and succession purposes.

4.4 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Maintain active Chamber memberships.
- Participate fully and in a spirit of teamwork.
- Keep prejudices in check and respect the other person's view.
- Attack problems not people.
- Stick to the point.
- Declare conflicts of interest when necessary.

4.5 ARRANGING COMMITTEE MEETINGS



At the commencement of the fiscal year, a schedule of meetings for the specific committee should be established and distributed to all committee members.

It is recommended that committee meetings generally be held monthly, every other month, quarterly, or at the call of the Committee Chair. Unless deemed necessary, no committee meetings will be held during July or August.

The list should clearly set the date, time and place of the meetings. When choosing the time of the meeting, it should be convenient for all members. Meetings are to be held at the Chamber or in Chamber member facilities.

Committee meetings should be kept as brief as possible. They should be informative and to the point.

The Committee Chair will provide and/or work with the respective staff person to produce an agenda for each meeting. The staff person will complete and send a copy of the agenda and any reference material necessary, to all committee members at least one week in advance of the meeting.

4.6 KEEPING A MEETING SUMMARY

The Committee Chair is responsible for appointing a recorder for each meeting to complete a meeting summary. This meeting summary is then passed on to the respective staff person who will complete the formal meeting summary. The staff person will forward a copy of the meeting summary to each committee member before the next meeting.

Motions should have a mover and seconder and noted if approved by the committee members.

Immediately following each meeting, no later than one week following, a proper summary should be prepared and distributed by the staff person to the President to be included as part of the monthly board package to the Board, if required.

4.7 INFORMING THE CHAMBER EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Although the Chair of the Board of Directors and President are ex-officio members of every committee, time does not normally permit him/her to attend all committee meetings.

To keep the Chair of the Board of Directors, President and the Board of Directors informed, minutes from committee meetings and any/all other meetings/activities related to the committee are to be forwarded by staff to the President to help keep the Board informed.

4.8 PRESENTING RECOMMENDATIONS

When conclusions have been reached and recommendations are to be presented to the Chamber Board of Directors, a brief should be prepared in consultation with the respective staff person.

The brief should be logical and supported by provable facts according to the general format:

- Purpose
- Background
- Options (if any)
- Recommendation
- Financial Implications

Any outstanding objections should also be included in the brief so it may be seen that conclusions have been arrived at after full consideration of the facts.

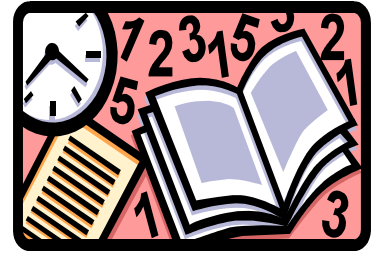
Copies of the brief should be given to the President a minimum of seven working days prior to a Chamber Executive and/or Board Director meeting so that it can be delivered in advance and the brief is complete.

4.9 COMMITTEE PLANNING

In order to be effective, committees need to plan ahead. It is the responsibility of each committee chair in concert with the respective staff person to ensure that the following tasks are completed during the year:

September:

- Introduction of committee members, review mandate of committee and key goals and tasks.
- Review responsibilities for Chair, Vice-Chair and members and Committee schedule. Committee government must fit within the mission and strategic goals at the Chamber.
- Review of Volunteer and Orientation Guide



December:

- Review progress towards key goals.

April:

- Prepare annual budget for submission to the Chamber President.

May:

- Consider and approach persons to succeed Chair and Vice Chair in consultation with staff person.
- In concert with staff consider committee budget.



June:

- Finalize succession of Chair and Vice Chair.
- Final evaluation of Committee work.

Please note that the Chair should, prior to June, consider carefully who would make the most suitable candidate for Chair and Vice Chair. The respective staff person could help the Chair with suggestions as well. Consideration should then be given to approaching those individuals to confirm their willingness to standing as a candidate before the June meeting.

5.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

An important value for the Chamber of Commerce is integrity. In order to make good decisions it is important that when a committee is making a decision and a member has a direct, specific and immediate interest in the matter it is advisable to declare a conflict of interest and not participate in the discussion. Declaring a conflict of interest is not intended to hinder discussion but rather promote open discussion and fairness.



GREATER KITCHENER WATERLOO
Chamber of Commerce

COMMITTEE AGENDA

Name of Committee _____

Date of Meeting _____

Time of Meeting - Start: _____

Finish: _____

Location of Meeting _____

Summary by: _____

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Declaration of conflict of interest
4. Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting
5. Business items for discussion and action

Actions from last meeting:

- 5.1.1 _____
5.1.2 _____
5.1.3 _____

New Business:

- 5.1.4 _____
5.1.5 _____
5.1.6 _____

6. Date of next meeting
7. Adjournment



GREATER KITCHENER WATERLOO
Chamber of Commerce

MEETING SUMMARY

Name of Committee: _____

Date Of Meeting: _____

Chair Of Meeting: _____

Time: _____

Attending: _____

Summary By: _____ Phone: _____

1. Approval of Agenda: Motion _____ Seconded _____

Carried

Not Carried

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest: _____

3. Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting:

Motion _____ Seconded _____

Carried

Not Carried

ACTION RESULTING FROM LAST MEETING

