

**GREATER VICTORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
**Board Meeting**  
**07:00 hours – 25 August 2009**

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**Present:** John Juricic (Chair), Margaret Lucas, Richard Gordon, David Vinnels, Rose Arsenault, Ray Kolla, Roger Skillings, Pauline Rafferty, John Espley, David Nicholson, Dave Marshall, George Fuller, Mike Black, Gerry Brimacombe, Bruce Carter (CEO), Shannon Renault (staff) Annie Wong Harrison, David Rand, Captain Marcel Halle,

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The meeting was called to order at 7:30 AM

1. **Motion to approve the meeting agenda**  
**Moved by** David Rand  
**Seconded by** Gerry Brimacombe  
**Carried**
  
2. **Approval of May 09 Minutes**  
**Motion to approve the minutes of July 2009 Board of Directors meeting with minor grammatical amendments**  
**Moved by** David Rand  
**Seconded by** Rose Arsenault  
**Carried**
  
3. **Chair's Remarks**
  - The Chair commented on a recent meeting with Minister Gary Lunn and the discussion regarding federal funding for infrastructure investments
  - The Chair also noted the significant work that has been taking place regarding gathering information on the Harmonized Sales Tax and noted today's agenda would be a full board discussion of HST
  
4. **HST Discussion**
  - The CEO presented a power point outlining findings to date of effects of the HST on the regional economy and the economy of the province
  - After the presentation, a prolonged discussion took place amongst the board of directors.
  - Some discussion points included:
    - i. The likelihood of whether service businesses would pass any embedded PST savings along to customers
    - ii. A discussion arose as to whether the chamber should be putting more or less emphasis on consumer concerns as they relate to price increases. Given that many of our members are small business to consumer companies, it was decided that consumer concerns are important
    - iii. A number of our businesses will not be impacted by the HST or indeed positively affected as they deal business to business and HST will simply be a flow through cost to their business customers who then claim ITCs
    - iv. The general sense of public malaise was noted as complicating the factual conversation on HST
    - v. The board discussed similarities and differences of the impact on business when GST was introduced. It was noted that GST was simply a new tax to everyone while HST is not.
    - vi. Noted that the affects of service based economies, like Vancouver Island and Vancouver are more pronounced than on resource based economies.

vii. Comments were made regarding concerns of other tax or pricing changes that may be on the horizon that we are not currently aware of.

- The Chair then led the Board of Directors to focus on the Chamber's position on the HST.
- It was suggested the chamber could either support or not support the HST in its entirety or look to a more sector by sector approach

**Motion to approve the following approach on the HST on behalf of the GVCC:**

1. Develop a preamble that recognizes the overall provincial benefit of HST but highlights the local impact
2. Describe the anticipated impact on Greater Victoria and on the members of the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
3. Describe, on a sector-by-sector basis, the anticipated economic benefits for the province as a whole
4. Develop an action plan that includes:
  - a. Working with Industry partners
  - b. Seeking specific exemptions and mitigation measures
  - c. Expanded communication and education with and for our members

**Moved by** Pauline Rafferty  
**Seconded by** Dave Marshall  
**Carried**

All committee reports attached to minutes.

**Motion to adjourn at 9:05M**

**Moved by** Richard Gordon

Next board meeting will be September 22, 2009 at 7:30 AM at the chamber office.

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**Secretary**

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**CEO**

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**Date**