

DIGBY AREA TOURISM ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MAY 8, 2019

ANNUAL STANDING COMMITTEES REPORT May 2018 through April 2019

The 2018-19 fiscal year was very busy. One of DATA's main objectives is the promotion of the Digby Area as a tourism destination. We have been working toward this goal with the following initiatives.

September 28, 2018

Expedia names Digby the fourth most charming historic town in Canada (Chronicle Herald, September 27) Digby is a town founded on history and today a travel company is appreciating that history by listing Digby as one of the top Charming, Historic Towns in Canada. Expedia, a globally recognized travel and technology company, created the list and named Digby the fourth. "There are so many interesting towns with strong ties to history, and we wanted to give them a spotlight. We selected the destinations by looking for towns with important historic sites and unique origins stories," says the author of the article, Jennifer Cuellar. "Digby caught our attention, as it has always represented a safe harbour for travellers. With tranquil beauty and historic buildings around town, it's an excellent spot to visit."

Announcement!

In association with ACOA and their Accelerated Marketing Readiness Program DATA is moving forward with the Unique Selling Proposition (USP):

Canada's Natural Aquarium

DATA sent out an RFP for local artists to submit their rendering of a new, unique logo. The best design was submitted by **Linda Wielinga** of the Hillside Landing B&B on Queen Street. Linda's logo design has been chosen to represent DATA as we move forward. Thank you, Linda!

It is hoped that all DATA members will display and link our new logo on their websites. If any member wants the logo please email us and it will be sent to you.



*"At the edge some of the most dynamic marine wonders in the world, Digby is Canada's Natural Aquarium, a key destination in the tidal-phenomena **Bay of Fundy**: home to world famous **Digby Scallops**, the Digby Area features some of the most **engaging and authentic experiences** anywhere. Millennia of history, centuries of stories, whale watching, coastal intertidal excursions, hiking, fresh seafood and tidal rivers highlight this beautiful area."*

1. Executive Committee: No meetings were called; all issues covered in Board meetings. The Executive Committee rarely meets unless there is an issue that needs attention. Consists of Chair, Vice Chair, Past Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Members of the Board of Directors represent their geographic area to act as a liaison with businesses and bring ideas and concerns from their area to the table.

2. Marketing Committee:

- Constant communication with Town & Municipality.
 - DATA will support the Town of Digby Summer Music series with advertising.
- Bay Ferries: A strong partnership with Bay Ferries.
 - DATA attended the Boston Globe Travel Show in January. Live show on culinary stage with Laura Muise. Suggested two representatives to attend if we go in 2020.
 - VIC ferry employee–financially supported. New Brunswick has withdrawn their support.
 - Digby Area radio promotion in Saint John. Two radio personalities, a videographer and a Bay Ferry rep will visit the area on June 14.
 - Maud Lewis: partnership to show the movie, Maudie on the ferries this summer. Our Maud Lewis promotional brochure will be available. DATA will financially support this initiative. New DATA pamphlets will be printed and available soon.
 - Kiosk Committee: Not tech ready yet and cost is still to be determined.
- TourismNS: VIC Digital Marketing; Synergy Screens – Inspiring Content videos and photos in provincial VICs.
 - Digital Marketing partnership (Canada and New England)
 - SEM – Search Engine Marketing. (optimization of website to drive people to our website)
 - IC – It is hoped DATA will be contracting with Tourism Nova Scotia to do an updated Inspiring Content program in 2020.
 - Trip Advisor: All accommodations must now have a Trip Advisor account.
- ACOA
 - Destination assessment and Accelerated Market Readiness for 9 businesses.
 - Innovative Communities Fund workshop held on November 20, 2018.
 - Communities of Interest workshop with Harvey Sawler
 - Web site update funding.
- TIANS 2018 Tourism Summit: attended by Mary Tibbetts and Linda Graham.
- Spring Into Summer: DATA shared a table with the VIC. This event will not happen this year.
- Richard Ellis Golf Tournament – DATA has supported this event.
- Display of IC photos and members' ads in window of downtown business and at VIC.
- Halifax Guide: a hyperlink to the digbyarea.ca website is in the online Halifax Guide.
- Summer Employee: approved for 2019 summer. Last year both the VIC and the Scallop Days Festival borrowed our student. Decisions will be made on a time and need basis.
- Cruise Ships: DATA took on an advisory role with MODD and Dan Harvey; how can we attract more small cruise ships. There was a Cruise Readiness Workshop offered on November 15-16 which was well attended. The Committee needs someone to take charge; Dan Harvey has stepped down.

- Marketing opportunities and subjects of interest are emailed to all members.
- UNESCO: On November 13, 2018 Meeting with Brian Mood of UNESCO updated DATA and municipal units.

3. Education Committee:

- ACOA: The AMR (Accelerated Market Readiness) program which arranges for an expert consultant to give direction to individual businesses.
- Host Program: ongoing. Word of mouth is the best education.
 - Working with interested businesses to educate staff on Digby Area experiences.
- Social Media: DATA is active with Facebook, YouTube, Trip Advisor, Instagram and Twitter.
- Working with Trails Coordinator Jonathan Riley on updates for the Digby Neck and Islands map.
- Events: Reminder: digbyarea.ca does have an events calendar; please email us at tourism@digbyarea.ca to get your non-profit events posted.
- Digby Harbour Port Association: letter of support sent to the Port Authority on behalf of DATA. They were successful in getting a grant to hire a professional consulting service to develop a business plan to meet increased port demand.
- Business awareness: Greg made a presentation on tourism in the Digby Area to the Digby Area Board of Trade. Members should network whenever possible and all should link the DATA logo on their websites.
- Website: Our recently updated website, digbyarea.ca, continues to be our main vehicle to get the message out. This site is a valuable resource for members and visitors and we hope recent improvements and updates meet our partners' and members' expectations.

4. Product Development Committee:

- DATA rack cards were produced to have on hand to supplement/complement the guide. A free printing of 5,000 rack cards was won at the TIANS Conference.
- Maud Lewis: pamphlet produced for distribution. A second printing is in the works.
- Experience Digby Area Visitors Guide (on website, can be downloaded, printed or saved and every business is individually linked) With the closure of the Halifax Distribution Centre we had to do all of the distribution ourselves. A raffle will be starting soon for early ad placements. One lucky winner will receive a one quarter page ad and 2020 membership for free with order placed before Sept. 15. The DATA guide has been recognized as one of the best in the industry.

5. Membership Committee: Ongoing initiative.

Hopefully, with the hard work of our Marketing Committee, and with your help, we will "inspire" others to become involved. Attendance at meetings is important. It is our goal to make DATA compelling enough for businesses to want to join. The below figures do not reflect the in-kind memberships DATA has with the Municipality, the Town, and Board of Trade. DATA membership has tripled under the current Board of Directors. Thank you to our members.

2014: 24 members / 2015: 27 members / 2016: 30 members / 2017: 40 members /
2018: 52 members / 2019: 60 members

This year new members attended meetings to introduce themselves and meet the Board members.

Membership fees are increased to \$75 for businesses and \$50 for non-profits.

6. Finance/Funding Committee:

- Request for funding: Summer employee: approved.
- Request for funding from Town of Digby. \$5,000 approved.
- Request for funding from the Municipality of the District of Digby. \$10,000 approved.
- AMR – Accelerated Marketing Readiness through ACOA.
- Grants: constantly being searched

Of Interest:

- Visitor Statistics show 2018 visits are up over 2017.
- Shared Services Committee: Jeff Sunderland attended a DATA meeting with an update on Municipality and Town discussion regarding an accommodations levy. This is not a DATA initiative. Public meetings will be announced.

DATA thanks Carol Barnes and Tom Goodwin for their years of support and service for DATA.

DATA encourages all members to promote and share the new logo on their websites and forward pictures and videos that can be posted on our social media pages.

The Board of Directors of the Digby Area Tourism Association extends a huge thank you to all members and partners for their generous support.

We invite you to email us at tourism@digbyarea.ca with any comments, questions, suggestions or compliments!