BVEDA 1st Quarter Report

**Administration and Finance:**

January 2015 – Organized minutes and other auditor documentation for Vandergaag and Bakker

January 2015 – Submitted a declaration of support for the BC Acceleration Network and Venture Acceleration Program for BCIC’s entry into the National Business Incubation Association’s annual awards

January 2015 – Scheduled 7 VAP client meetings for Carl on January 15th

February 2015 – Rented the Boardroom walls to Synergy Arts for $100/mo so he could display his pictures and meet clients

* Lease agreement is for 3 months

February 2015 – Began writing the renewal proposal to BCIC for continued support for the VAP program in the northwest

February 2015 – Booked appointments for Carl’s visit on Feb 18

February 2015 – Worked on the workplan/budget/proposal to BCIC to continue the VAP program through to April 2016

March 2015 – Requested the town to get back to CityWest regarding their sign questions

* CityWest had said they had a positive experience dealing with the Town so far
* Town and CityWest have connected and questions are being answered

**Community Relations:**

January 2015 – Met with CF board member Larry Miller about the future of CF Nadina

* Larry said there is a lot up in the air with their funder Western Economic Diversification
* He talked about CF Nadina wanting to have a better presence in Smithers as they have no ‘face’ in the community
* They will be reaching out more to engage with communities outside of Houston
* Most of the business CF has is in Smithers
* I asked if there was an opportunity to cooperate with them on projects such as a venture capital corporation
* Asked if they had interest in co-locating in Smithers
* He’s going to talk to other board members about what they want to do, nothing set in stone

January 2015 – Submitted a proposal to the BV Credit Union to sponsor the purchase of canvas shopping bags for 5 Small Town Love communities in their region

* Smithers, Telkwa, Houston, Granisle, and Burns Lake put in a joint proposal

January 2015 – Did a market research survey for Northern Development on their Small Town Love, InvestNorthWestBC.ca, and Supply Chain Connector projects

January 2015 – Attended a labour needs meeting at WorkBC with concerned private and public partners

* Identified concerns over employment and employability were discussed

January 2015 – Wrote Letters of Support for the following projects

* Village of Telkwa water reservoir
* Town of Smithers airport terminal expansion
* CityWest fibre network to Lake Kathlyn/airport

January 2015 – Attended Roundup

* Distributed 20 SEG directories to mining companies
* Met with Pacific Booker Minerals about their project
  + Looking to start construction in 2016
* Met with Kandice Morrison of WD to discuss options for CF in Smithers
* Met with Nadine Diner of BCIC to discuss a major project coming in the natural resources side of the BCIC
  + Potentially a larger pot of money available to the BVEDA to be the office running the program

February 2015 – Met with BVCU Ec Dev committee to go over a proposal

February 2015 – Met with Jane Stevenson to discuss Small Town Love and new business reception plans

February 2015 – Met with CF Nadina board member Larry Miller about ways to work with CF to bring the organizations closer together

* Suggested coming to a board meeting

February 2015 – Met with Planner Liliana Dragowska about STL and the Town’s role in it

* She wants to meet more often to discuss needs of businesses and ways she can help

February 2015 – Attended the New Business Reception put on by the Chamber

* Sponsored the event with LoveSmithers.com and LoveTelkwa.com
* The BVEDA was thanked profusely by CityWest CEO Don Holkestad for all the help the office provided in every part of them coming to town
* From reaching out to finding office space

March 2015 – Met with SEG director Rob Maurer to discuss the potential of having a Smithers section at RoundUp

* SEG doesn’t want to manage it
* SEG might not have a booth in the future but maintain a presence
* Rob thought that having a Smithers event might make more sense

March 2015 – Met with a candidate who is interviewing for the GM position with CF

* Told her that CF had no presence in Smithers or Telkwa

March 2015 – Attended the TransCanada announcement at NWCC regarding funding for projects

* Donated a car to help with a driver’s license program
* Donated $250,000 to NWCC for the program as well as others

March 2015 – Participated in the Startup Canada working call for all communities

* Pitched in on how to get sponsors to help with programs
* Suggested partnering with Ec Dev offices on events on the promise of filling the room which makes the Ec Dev office look good and builds that relationship quickly.

March 2015 – Met with Paul Kariya of Clean Energy BC regarding the projects they are undertaking and to learn more about the organization

* Talked about the ability to build small scale wind, ROR, solar projects cheaper and easier than large scale projects
* Wants to be involved as part of MN2016

March 2015 – Met with Tom Havard to discuss growing businesses over the past 5 years

* Talked about tourism operators, construction, transportation, service and supply companies

**Communications:**

January 2015 – Submitted an article to the Interior News on the Futurpreneur program taking place

January 2015 – Created 35 save the date letters for Minerals North 2016

* Written to keep us in mind when thinking about sponsorship next year

January 2015 – Added 3 startup profiles to StartupSmithers.ca

* Smithers Gunworks
* WellSpring Home & Community Services
* BV Energy Managers

January 2015 – Added an article to StartupSmithers.ca

February 2015 – Reached out all of the mining companies on the mining list to say that the BVEDA is willing and able to help them find what they are looking for

February 2015 – Assisted Melanie Robson of Ingenia Consulting with some local information for a book coming up talking about northern BC

* Asked about business organizations, major projects, aboriginal peoples, transportation, commercial real estate, business opportunities, local resources, and what makes Smithers unique

February 2015 – Email marketed to 15 new businesses about Small Town Love and LoveSmithers.com

* Also looked into a billboard for on Main Street (old Crazy Mike’s billboard) as well as on Hwy 16

February 2015 – Submitted an article on where professional organizations should look for their next hire

March 2015 – Participated in the Startup Canada Twitter conversation around the state of the Internet in Canada

* Major exposure for Startup Smithers as well as our community

March 2015 – Retrieved 40 LoveSmithers.com bags to use for the athletes coming to Smithers for the National Ski Cross Championships

* Asked businesses who had received them to donate them back

March 2015 – Wrote an article on the co-working Space for the Interior News

**Economic Development Programs and Services:**

January 2015 – Edited a VAP client’s pitch material to potential investors/partners

* DisruptiveLegalInnovations (Gansner Law) had their pitch document trimmed from 5 pages to 1.5

pages

January 2015 – Emailed 7 special projects in the $1M to $10M range to 215 local contractors/businesses

January 2015 – Helped CityWest find a storage space and loading bay for their incoming fibre groundwork in the next couple months

January 2015 – Met with Andrew Hill of Springbok Fabrication and Welding about opportunities with projects

* Turned him onto Imperial Metals, Avanti Mining, pipeline company vendor lists

January 2015 – Attended the Vancouver Resource Investment Conference

* Acquired information on several projects happening in the area
* Less active this year compared to last year

February 2015 – Emailed 216 local businesses the mining project list for 2015

* 160 projects for them to each contact

February 2015 – Engaged 2 potential clients for the VAP

* Helix Electronics
* Coast Mountain Wireless (Terrace)

February 2015 – Attended the Chamber luncheon featuring TransCanada PRGT project president Dean Patry

* Told him that I’d help them find an office in Smithers to which he said that the CGL folks will be managing that
* Reached out to Kiel Giddens at CGL in Prince George to offer my services of which he was grateful

February 2015 – Met with entrepreneur Peter Greene

* Wants to develop an app for fishing licenses and regulations
* Turned him onto Carl and the VAP program

March 2015 – Talked to Rimas Zitkauskas about Salmon Trails

* Was part of OBAC that agreed to fund the project
* Doesn’t want to see it die
* Wanted to know if a consortia of EDO offices would take it over
* Told him it will cost money to market and that I would see if any tourism dollars are available with the impending increase

March 2015 – Began organizing Tech Talk 3 with Etienne St. Onge

* Fairly low cost event with venue, speakers, refreshments, already lined up

March 2015 – Worked with Chris Duncan of Synergy Arts Photography to better improve his sales techniques and increase his margins

* Encouraged him to follow up with his clients
  + Resulted in a sale!

March 2015 – Recruited Alfred Shaefer and Peter Greene into the VAP program

March 2015 – Met with Warren Wilson of the Dze L K’Ant Friendship Centre about their social enterprise feasibility study

* Talked about identifying what they are good at (expertise in local fauna and flora) and finding a way to commercialize it
* Talked about selling locally grown food to high end restaurants in Vancouver etc.
* Talked about the best way to go about things is to find a good team, then a market, then an idea
* Also suggested a transportation system for workers to get to and from Smithers from Moricetown

March 2015 – Connected TransCanada to a dozen local suppliers for their new office space in our building.

* Electricians, office movers, appliance repair, construction, and others were all needed

March 2015 – Connected 3 separate job seekers to avenues to apply at to 3 different projects

March 2015 – Reached out to Loblaws about expanding our Extra Foods as part of their 1.2 Billion dollar investment in their stores across the country

March 2015 – Connected with Startup Canada program manager Robert Decher

* Rolling out a potential funding avenue for events and such that Startup Smithers can take advantage of

March 2015 – Fergus and I discussed the idea of a “Destination Dining” program for Smithers or a “Smithers Dining Week” to encourage people from far and wide to (PR to PG) to visit to dine here.

March 2015 – Connected with Nathan Murdoch of SoKo Construction on the development of an idea for energy efficient housing

* Getting him to ask people in the community who know about low income housing
* Asked him to find out what potential customers want and need

March 2015 – Provided a CEO of a low cost retailer a list of available dates for arena rental should he want to operate a pop up store in Smithers in the summer

March 2015 – Went to the ThriveNorth competition in Prince Rupert to recruit new companies into the VAP program

* Found two companies that could possibly be clients in Divine Rides and a social media app for connecting first nations youth to mentors

March 2015 – Carl Anderson came up to meet with companies

* Met with 7 companies