Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Full-Time, Permanent Position
Location: Chilliwack
Hours: Full-time, including evenings and weekends for Board meetings, member events and stakeholder functions
Compensation: Competitive yearly salary; health and dental benefits; paid vacation time
Reports To: Board of Directors, through the President and Executive Committee

Position Overview

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the senior staff leader of the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce and is accountable to the Board of Directors for the Chamber's performance, finances, people and reputation.

The Chamber's core purpose is to advocate for Chilliwack businesses and grow the local economy. The CEO keeps that purpose at the centre of every program, partnership and decision. The role leads a growing organization of more than 750 members, a small staff team, a diversified revenue model (sponsorship, membership, the Chambers Plan Group Insurance Plan, events and programs), and management services for the Harrison Agassiz Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber's reputation, events and relationships are strong. Its next stage is about building the foundations to match that growth: a stable and supported staff team, clear systems and controls, disciplined governance, measurable member value and a written strategy. The ideal candidate is an experienced team leader and relationship builder who is rooted in Chilliwack or ready to make it home, is committed to the role for the long term, and can bring people with strong and differing views together around a shared direction.

Organization and Structure

The CEO reports to the Board of Directors as a whole. Between Board meetings, the President is the CEO's primary point of contact, and the Executive Committee may give direction within the authority delegated to it by the Bylaws or the Board. The CEO keeps the President and the Executive Committee informed. The CEO is a non-voting member of the Executive Committee, is excused when it discusses the CEO's performance or compensation and may not serve as a Director of the Board. The Chamber's Board of Directors operates under the policy governance model. This means that the CEO is the only staff member accountable to the Board, and no individual Director, including the President, has authority over the CEO. All other staff members report to the CEO and are not directed by any Board member.

The following positions report directly to the CEO:

- Executive Assistant
- Member Engagement Coordinator
- Events Coordinator
- Communications Coordinator
- Contractors and service providers engaged by the Chamber (e.g., bookkeeper)

Core Responsibilities

1. Strategic Leadership & Mandate (Primary Responsibility)

- Work with the Board to complete and adopt the Chamber's 3–5 year strategic framework, building on the priorities the Board has set, and take ownership of delivering it
- Keep the Chamber focused on its core purpose: advocating for Chilliwack businesses and growing the local economy
- Apply a clear test to programs, partnerships and funding requests: does it clearly serve members and the local economy?
- Translate the strategy into an annual operating plan, budget and work plan with clear owners and timelines
- Recommend and track a small set of key performance indicators (KPIs), including membership, surplus/deficit against budget, revenue mix and member and sponsor satisfaction (Net Promoter Score)
- Identify new opportunities and risks for the Chamber and bring recommendations to the Board

2. Governance & Board Relations

- Support the Board in fulfilling its governance role, in accordance with the Bylaws, the Policy Manual and the policy governance model
- Deliver a monthly CEO report covering operations, finances, membership and sponsorship, staff, key risks and progress against the strategic plan
- Ensure Board and Committee packages are circulated at least five days before regular meetings, with calendar holds for all Board, Committee and Chamber events
- Support each standing Committee (Executive, Governance, Policy & Advocacy, Membership, Events) to meet regularly with a chair, terms of reference and a work plan; Committees set direction and staff support it
- Support the Nominating Committee as a non-voting resource, and assist with Board recruitment, orientation and succession planning
- Plan and deliver a bylaw-compliant Annual General Meeting, including the annual report and financial statements
- Review governance, finance and operational policies and recommend changes to the Board; maintain a central, secure record of bylaws, policies, minutes and contracts

3. Financial Stewardship & Controls

- Prepare the annual budget for Board approval, and manage the Chamber's finances within the Board-approved budget
- Present monthly financial statements, budget-to-actual results and a rolling cash-flow forecast to the Board
- Maintain sound internal controls, delegated authority limits and two-signature requirements under the Finance and Governance Policy
- Oversee accurate revenue recognition, accounts receivable, the doubtful accounts allowance and month-end processes with the bookkeeper
- Manage cash reserves and term deposits in accordance with the Board-approved Investment Policy
- Lead the annual review engagement and present the financial statements to the Board within 60 days of year end
- Oversee grant and funding agreements, reporting deadlines and annual filings (including the T1044 non-profit information return)

4. People & Culture

- Lead, coach and support the staff team, with clear roles, priorities, decision authority and accountability
- Hold regular staff meetings and one-on-ones, share relevant budget information with staff, and recognize good work
- Build staff stability and capacity so that the organization does not depend on any one person
- Recruit, onboard, evaluate and manage staff in accordance with the Hiring & Onboarding and Separation & Offboarding Policies and BC employment standards
- Maintain current job descriptions, employment agreements and a responsibility (RASCI) matrix for major tasks, programs and events
- Work hands-on with the team on events and programs when needed, and foster a respectful, team-oriented workplace

5. Membership Growth & Member Value

- Set annual membership growth and retention targets with the Member Engagement Coordinator, and support the sales and renewal cycle
- Ensure members receive clear, measurable value, and that the value is communicated well to members and prospects
- Track member feedback, retention and how many event attendees become members, and use what is learned to improve programs
- Champion programs that address members' real needs, including hiring and retention, small business support and access to government decision-makers
- Grow the Chambers Plan Group Insurance Plan in partnership with the Chamber's insurance service providers

- Ensure the Chamber is open and welcoming to the whole business community, including new, small and First Nations-owned businesses

6. Sponsorship, Pillar Partners & Revenue

- Lead relationships with Pillar Partners and major sponsors, and ensure every sponsor receives what was promised
- Renew and grow sponsorship revenue, and refresh sponsorship packages to deliver better recognition and value
- Bring in new sponsors and broaden the sponsor base beyond the same small group of companies
- Develop new revenue opportunities that strengthen the Chamber's financial sustainability and reduce reliance on a small number of events
- Ensure sponsorship and funding arrangements are transparent and reviewed for conflicts of interest

7. Events & Programs Oversight

- Provide oversight and direction for the Chamber's signature events (including the Business Excellence Awards and Annual Golf Tournament), networking events and educational programs
- Ensure events are well run, financially sound and engaging, and refresh formats (such as Chamber Connections) based on member feedback
- Review programs regularly for measurable results, and adjust, scale or retire them as needed
- Guide programs such as the Emerging Leaders Initiative, Women's Leadership Collective and Reconciliation Through Education so they support members and the local economy
- Approve event budgets and major vendor, venue and speaker commitments within delegated authority

8. Advocacy, Policy & Government Relations

- Serve as the Chamber's lead spokesperson on Board-approved positions and advocate for the interests of Chilliwack businesses
- Build and maintain working relationships with the City of Chilliwack, the Fraser Valley Regional District, MLAs and MPs, and economic development and tourism partners
- Support the Policy & Advocacy Committee in developing positions and policy resolutions for the BC Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce
- Organize roundtables, forums and other opportunities for members to engage directly with government
- Keep the Chamber non-sectional, non-sectarian and non-partisan, and never endorse a candidate for public office (Bylaws, Article 1)

9. Regional Collaboration & Partnerships

- Provide management and services to the Harrison Agassiz Chamber of Commerce under the arrangement in place, recognizing the distinct needs of that community

- Work closely with nearby chambers, including through the Fraser Valley Business Coalition, to share information and speak with a stronger regional voice
- Build cost-sharing partnerships with alliance partners (e.g., CERN Network)
- Build respectful economic partnerships with First Nations businesses and development corporations

10. Communications & Community Ambassador

- Act as the public face and ambassador of the Chamber in the business community and with media
- Oversee the Chamber's communications, brand, website and social media, in collaboration with the Communications Coordinator
- Approve media releases and public statements in line with Board-approved positions
- Maintain a regular communication plan with the Board, members, Pillar Partners and key funding and affiliated organizations

11. Operations, Systems & Risk

- Ensure the Chamber has documented systems and processes, so that work does not rely on individuals
- Oversee the Chamber's digital systems (GrowthZone, QuickBooks, Microsoft 365/SharePoint, website), with all accounts owned by the Chamber
- Serve as the Chamber's Privacy Officer and ensure compliance with the Personal Information Protection Act (BC)
- Manage contracts, leases, insurance and risk, including an annual risk review and insurance renewals
- Exercise signing and spending authority within the limits set by the Bylaws, the Finance and Governance Policy and the Board

Qualifications & Skills

- Post-secondary education in business, public administration, non-profit management or a related field; equivalent experience will be considered
- 7+ years of progressive leadership experience, including at least 5 years managing staff, budgets and operations
- Experience reporting to and working with a Board of Directors; knowledge of non-profit or association governance (policy governance an asset)
- Strong financial management skills, including budgeting, cash-flow forecasting, financial statements and internal controls
- Proven track record in revenue generation, such as sponsorship, sales, membership or fundraising
- Experience in advocacy, government relations or public policy, and comfort speaking publicly and with media

- Knowledge of the Chilliwack and Fraser Valley business community, economy and key stakeholders (strongly preferred)
- Chamber of commerce, board of trade, business association or economic development experience (an asset)
- Strong project management skills and the ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines
- Proficiency in Microsoft 365 and CRM/membership systems (GrowthZone and QuickBooks an asset)
- Valid BC driver's license and access to a reliable vehicle
- Flexible schedule with the ability to work evenings and weekends for Board meetings, events and stakeholder functions

Key Attributes

- Lives in, or will relocate to, the Chilliwack area, and is committed to being visible and active in the local business community
- An experienced, hands-on team leader who builds trust, stability and accountability
- A relationship builder who can work across strong opinions and diverse perspectives, and keep the relationships the Chamber has built
- Fully committed to the Chamber and its non-partisan role, which includes not holding or running for elected office while serving as CEO, and disclosing any outside commitments with the Board
- Strategic and business-minded, with a clear focus on member value and measurable results
- Financially disciplined, organized and systems-oriented
- Collaborative and open to working more closely with neighboring chambers and regional partners
- Professional, approachable and confident with members, sponsors, government and media

Success in This Role Looks Like

- A Board-approved strategic plan, with annual priorities, KPIs and progress reported to the Board every month
- A stable, engaged and supported staff team, with clear roles and low turnover
- A balanced budget, timely and accurate monthly financial reporting, and a clean annual review engagement
- Membership growth and retention targets met, and members who can clearly describe the value of their membership
- Strong sponsor retention, new sponsors added, and sponsors who receive what they were promised
- Well-run Board and Committee meetings, with packages circulated on time and Committees meeting regularly
- A credible, non-partisan advocacy voice for Chilliwack businesses, locally, regionally, provincially and federally

- Strong relationships with the City of Chilliwack, regional chambers, partners

This job description outlines the general nature and scope of the role and is not an exhaustive list of duties. The Board of Directors may amend it or assign other reasonable duties from time to time as the Chamber's needs, programs and service arrangements change.