

## **Special Board Meeting Minutes | Monday July 26, 2021**

### **In Person Meeting 21 Charlotte Street**

**Attendance:** Jesse Boles, Alicja Kniffen and Taylor Mynlieff.

**Regrets:** Amy Thibodeau, Ed Cleveland, Karrie Haynes and Councillor Donna Kalailieff.

**Absent:** Rob Carter, Karen Donnelly, Michelle Benest-Tananer and Norbert Gieger.

**Staff:** Mary-Lou Ambrose-Little.

#### **Welcome**

Chair Jesse Boles welcomed everyone to the meeting. No motions to be made as this meeting is to plan for 2022 budget and strategic plan.

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Jesse Boles.

### **Summary of Discussions Lead by Chair Jesse Boles**

#### **2022 Budget Proposals**

- Consider raising the levy by \$10,000 to provide more resources to offer better wages and services to the BIA area.
- The current levy is based on 104 businesses in downtown to support BIA programs and services.
- To expand the BIA area to include much of the east-side, which is currently not part of a BIA. Business have been approached as well as Councillors and the response has been very positive to this proposal.
- Consider a service contract with the Main Street BIA to assist with their administration of that BIA area. See Growth under strategic planning)
- WIFI for downtown would cost more than \$10,000 to install and if considered should be recommended to the City of Port Colborne as a project they should take the lead on. Blanket coverage may not be necessary as many tourists have their own data plans as do most residents. Perhaps a hot spot system which would be less expensive could be considered.  
*Action: Report to the City of Port Colborne recommendation that staff look at the feasibility of expanding their WIFI service to include downtown.*
- Security cameras for downtown did make sense to those present at the meeting. Jesse has been looking into the costs and will report back shortly. Currently the cost is thought to be around \$10,000.

*Action: Jesse to report back on security costs as soon as possible.*

### **Farmers' Market Update**

The Farmers Market account is a separate budget from the regular budget and it is recommended that it stay separate for now. There is more than \$10,000 in revenue to date. This money can be used for other events but should have start up funds for the 2022 market. A reminder that the market is a two-year pilot project.

### **Fall/Winter Events**

Proposed schedule of small events for 2021. These are all small events which can be managed with staff and a few partners and volunteers.

1. Harvest Festival - Friday, September 24 & Saturday, September 25 (BIA)
2. Christmas Open House Friday, November 12 & Saturday, November 13, 2021 (BIA)
3. FaLaLa Ladies Night Friday, November 26 (West Street Businesses)
4. Tug Boat Santa Saturday, December 4 (BIA)
5. Annual Santa Parade Saturday, December 4 (City) TBC
6. Moonlight Madness Friday, December 17 (BIA)
7. City's Residential Christmas Lighting Contest (City) TBC November 15, 2021 to Friday, December 10, 2021
8. Downtown Storefront Lighting & Décor Contest (BIA) November 15, 2021 to Friday, December 10, 2021. Winners announced on Monday, December 14, 2021

### **Brainstorming**

- Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony
- Adding ribbons to the Sailboat Lights
- Add more seasonal lighting to downtown
- Produce a bingo card, gift certificate (PC Forge) or digital cards that can be uploaded like a credit card.
- Expand the Harvest Festival to include a harvest table dinner on West Street in 2023.

No time left to continue with the Strategic Plan. To be tabled to the next meeting. The date to be announced.

***Adjourned at 8:00 PM***

## Strategic Plan – Homework for Everyone

### ***Questions to consider?***

What is our mission and vision for the Downtown BIA?

Do you know what the current ones are?

Do you know the current Terms of Reference for the BIA? If you don't know what the BIA is about now, how can you set new direction for the BIA?

### ***Samples of BIA mission and vision statements***

#### ***Barrie***

The Business Improvement Area (BIA) consists of commercial properties and their non-residential tenants within a defined boundary. Working in partnership with the City of Barrie, the Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) focuses its efforts into maintaining a strong and vibrant community within downtown Barrie for property owners, business owners, residents, visitors and tourists alike. The Downtown Barrie Business Association (BIA) is organized into five components (Executives, Board Members, Partners, Staff and Organizational Framework), all of whom work and co-ordinate together to fulfill short-term goals and long-term strategies. Apart from staff, these members are volunteers.

#### ***Stratford***

To maintain Stratford City Centre as an active and viable area.

To beautify the City Centre and to encourage preservation of the City Centre's architectural heritage, including appropriate building renovation by private businesses.

To encourage more use of the City Centre businesses by both local residents and by visitors.

To encourage a forum in which the downtown business community can develop opinions and programs which will benefit the social, economic and physical quality of life in Stratford.

To work in a co-operative manner with city officials and other business groups, never neglecting to maintain the City Centre's unique position.

To promote Stratford City Centre as a special place in which to shop, work, visit, or live.

#### ***Downtown Welland***

Experience shopping at quaint and unique shops and boutiques. Experience our rich History and Heritage. Experience Welland Bridge #13 and the night lighting of this historical and magnificent structure. Take in the Welland Farmer's Market or a Concert on our beautiful floating amphitheatre. Enjoy a quick bite at a cozy bistro, a delicious meal at one of our fabulous restaurants, or a quick cuppa from our coffee lounges and cafes. There are myriad ways to explore Downtown Welland and we hope you'll visit us soon. Stay connected with what's going on downtown via social media and explore our website to learn more about our tight-knit community. Come Downtown and Experience our Heart!

#### ***Grimsby***

The Grimsby Downtown Improvement Area was created by a municipal by-law of the Town of Grimsby and encompasses the area bounded between Kerman Avenue and Robinson Street, the foot of the Mountain and the CN Rail line. Every commercial property in that area pays a special tax levy which is to be used for the promotion, beautification and revitalization of the Downtown.

The Merchants of Downtown Grimsby are your friends, neighbours and trusted retailers who work tirelessly to keep the downtown as vibrant as possible and the destination of choice for those who shop locally. We are committed to providing excellent customer service, a pleasant shopping experience, a safe environment and a vast retail choice. Come and visit us and discover how “friendly by nature” we really are!!! Do you have an event? Submit your event to [mike@wn3.ca](mailto:mike@wn3.ca)

***In order to get started on your vision for the BIA use the framework of our committees to set goals and objections:***

#### **Governance**

- Review the governance documents for updates, revisions and additional policy development
- Look at the attendance records to decide what commitment will be necessary for future Boards?

#### **Human Resources**

- Review resources required to operate the BIA
- Do you need a social media/marketing person?
- What about the farmers market – do you need a market staff to operate the weekly market, which would free up the Executive Director to do other work?

#### **Financial**

- Do you need to consider an increase in revenues? Increasing the levy?
- What other ways can you recommend to generate more revenue for the BIA?
- Do you need to apply for more grants and find sponsors for events and festivals?
- Do you need to partners with others to make events fabulous i.e., Taste of Port Colborne and Lift Festival?

#### **Marketing**

- Review the current market for the most efficient use of funds and time
- Complete the rebranding of the BIA with new approached to social media and web-site

#### **Events & Festivals**

- Review the festival and events that we traditionally offer?
- Is the focus smaller monthly events or quarterly events to draw new visitors to downtown?
- Do you see value on offering a Christmas Market?
- What other holiday events need to happen?
- Do you see the need to do seasonal décor and more lighting i.e. Christmas ribbons, coloured lights for each season, picnic tables and Muskoka chairs in downtown and permanent self cleaning, washroom, WIFI, Information/Storage booth in downtown.

#### **Growth Plan**

- To offer assistance to the Main Street BIA via a service contract to help them move forward with planning for their business area.  
*Action: Jesse to contact the Main Street BIA re: proposal.*
- Expand the BIA area to include much of the east-side, which is currently not part of a BIA.  
*Action: Seek Board support to move forward with this to Council.*
- Offer Associate Membership to businesses outside the Downtown Area.  
*Action: Draft application has been completed with Mary-Lou to present to the Board for approval in September 2021.*