

Minutes: The Thornbury Business Improvement Area Annual General Meeting



MEETING DATE: April 11, 2018
MEETING TIME: 6:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Town Hall Council Chamber
PREPARED BY: Donna Gorrie, Recording Secretary

A. Call to Order

- Chair George Matamoros called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. with the following BIA Directors in attendance: Melanie Johns, Tony Poole, Leslie Lewis, Renee DesRochers, and Kathryn Brown. Absent: Skot Beaumont and Councillor Michael Seguin.

Also in attendance were Acting Director of Community Services Ryan Gibbons and Communications and Economic Development Coordinator Elizabeth Cornish, Anne Wildeman of Birch & Benjamin, John Gyles of Gyles Sails and Marine, Casey Thomson of The Cheese Gallery and Josie Poole of Sincerely Yours Boutique.

- Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Renee DesRochers

Seconded by: Leslie Lewis

THAT the Agenda of April 11, 2018 be approved as circulated. Carried.

- Previous Minutes**

Moved by: Tony Poole

Seconded by: Melanie Johns

THAT the Annual General Meeting Minutes of March 29, 2017 be approved as circulated. Carried.

- No member declared a pecuniary interest with any matter as listed on the Agenda.

B. Deputation: none

C. Meeting

- C.1. Welcome:** Chairperson George Matamoros welcomed everyone and began by highlighting some of our successes as a BIA. He thanked Melanie Johns for her good work in getting the new banners produced. We have twelve new banner designs, six for winter/spring and six for summer/fall. The banners were on display and were praised by everyone in attendance. They feature works by local artists, and are designed to convey emotion. He praised the video about dining in Thornbury, crediting Elizabeth Cornish for

bringing the idea and the Town for funding the production of the video. This year's draft budget includes funds to produce more videos promoting the assets of our BIA area and members.

The Town has received a \$43,000.00 grant to beautify the north side of Bruce Street towards the harbour. Ryan gave a brief description of some of the plans that may include signage to increase visibility for the harbour area. The plans will be developed in consultation with the BIA board.

On behalf of the Board of Management, George also thanked Casey Thomson for her contributions as Vice Chair of the BIA Board of Management, helping grow the events and promote Thornbury.

2018 is an election year and so the current term for the BIA Board of Management directors comes to an end in December. George confirmed that he would stand for re-election. Kathryn Brown and Skot Beaumont have both indicated that they will not stand for re-election, which with Casey's resignation brings the number of directors back down to six. George would like to see more BIA members involved and encouraged those present to spread the word. He mentioned he would be willing to go and speak to those showing interest.

The 2018 Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) conference will be held in Collingwood from April 15-18 and four Thornbury BIA directors are attending. On Tuesday, April 17 a mobile will arrive in Thornbury and George will be tour guide for the delegates throughout the town. A membership email was sent out in the last week encouraging BIA members to spring clean prior to this event. Town staff will put up a few of the new banners for the visitors to see.

C.2 Presentation and discussion of the 2018 budget

The BIA 2018 draft budget was presented and members were invited to comment. George went through the draft budget line by line, highlighting that there are two areas of focus, beautification and events. The cost of putting on events is rising every year. The organizers of the Apple Harvest Festival in particular demanded more animation at the event last year which resulted in a sharp increase in the cost of the event. Olde Fashioned Christmas also went over budget partially on account of the higher costs of the reindeer and wagon ride. Both events were considered quite successful. In order to accommodate the higher budget needs of those two events, the board proposed to eliminate the summer dance and the music in the Parkette. New to the budget were funds to make up to four new promotional YouTube videos, and to designate \$20,000 of reserves to be made available should they be needed to support the Bruce Street North beautification effort by the Town. The \$20,000 does not impact the levy as it is an allocation of reserves.

Comments from the members present focused on the deletion of the summer dance and music in the Parkette. The consensus was that they would like to see both items continued as they create a lot of goodwill with the local community as well as enhance the shopping experience on Bruce Street. One member stated that although their business is not within the immediate area, that the music downtown was comparable to the banners helping to create the ambience. Tony stated that it would be nice to do more events but it comes down to making sure there is value for the funds being spent. He mentioned that the BIA budget is

not a big budget with the reality being that there is only so much money to spread around. Kathryn stated that the events need more board supervision and that the Summer Dance can be changed to save costs and that it is very well received by the residents. Casey mentioned that other areas are increasing their events and it is important that Thornbury not step back in our events.

The question of changing the basis for collecting the levy to an assessment based model from the current flat fee model was raised and George advised that it is an ongoing project but that little is likely to happen until a new council is elected.

George summarized the comments from the members present as being unanimously in favour of keeping the Summer Dance and music in the parkette, and as there is little wiggle room on the cost of the current events that the levy be increased to accommodate these two items. The members present confirmed that this was a correct summary of their comments.

George asked for a motion that the draft budget be amended accordingly and that the revised budget will be voted on at the May 2nd directors' meeting prior to submitting it to council for adoption.

C.3 Vote

Moved by: Leslie Lewis

Seconded by: Kathryn Brown

That the Thornbury Business Improvement Area increase the proposed BIA levy to \$115,000. Carried.

Melanie Johns asked that the minutes record that she voted against the motion.

A revised budget will be prepared and sent out with the agenda for the next directors meeting.

D. Adjournment

Moved by: Leslie Lewis

THAT the BIA Board of Management does now adjourn from the Annual General Meeting at 7:55 p.m. Carried.