

Historic Downtown Bowmanville Business Centre (BIA)
Board of Management Meeting Minutes

Tuesday October 13, 2020; 6:30pm

Virtual Meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic

Present: Edgar Lucas, Chair
Laura Holmes, Secretary
Gerri Lucas, Treasurer
Justin Barry
Cathy Holmes
Ron Hooper (departed at 6:55pm)
Erin Kemp

Absent: Carrie Hooper

Delegations Present: Laura Knox – Clarington Tourism

The meeting was called to order by the Chair.

1. Presentation by Delegations

Laura Knox is the Tourism Coordinator for Clarington. The Visitor Centre is closed to the public and staff is working remotely and/or out of Rickard. Tourism is now transitioned under Community Services. Visitor Centre is temporarily being utilized by Durham Region Health for flu vaccine clinics.

TAIO and FedDev funding was focused on agri-tourism for the fall season, particularly promotion of farm markets. There has been great engagement with the campaign and trails and fish ladder are packed with visitors. Orchards are seeing record attendance. Leading into the holiday season, the funding and promotion will be focused on shopping locally, particularly in the downtowns of Clarington that have many small family-run businesses.

Tourism is looking for ideas for a roll-out on a holiday shopping local campaign and has been working with CBOT on development of ideas. Timeline is for release after Remembrance Day for week of November 16. Looking at marketing in a variety of ways – advertising via print, radio, social, possibly direct mail with Canada Post. Last year there was a holiday hometown promotion. Tourism is speaking with all three BIAs to develop ideas on how to promote the downtowns. Care will be taken to ensure that the promotion of shopping/spending money is considerate of those who are experiencing financial difficulties.

Tourism would like to collect information from businesses about how they will be operating during the holiday season, if there are any special offerings/promotions, and any charitable components. Information will be used for highlights in the campaign. Tourism will develop an online link for submission that can be circulated to BIA businesses by email.

Tourism is willing to partner with the BIA to promote any BIA initiatives such as giveaways, events, etc. The BIA is asked to give some consideration to how they would like to promote holiday shopping downtown and to submit ideas by the end of the month.

Ms. Knox thanks the Board for their time and is looking forward to helping promote local business this holiday season. Departs at 6:55pm.

The floor is opened for discussion of ideas.

E. Kemp suggests a virtual shopping event. Could take place over several days. Businesses could be asked to submit a promotion to be featured on the BIA social media. Customers would then view the promotion and visit the store to purchase.

E. Kemp suggests instead of hosting an evening shopping event (ie. girls night, moonlight magic) to expand the shopping event to include several days. This way the crowds would better dispersed.

The Chair suggests asking the businesses to decorate the exterior of their stores. Concerns are raised over the lack of hydro availability.

The Board is asked to continue brainstorming ideas to promote local shopping.

2. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by G. Lucas, seconded by J. Barry

THAT the minutes of the meeting of September 15, 2020 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

(a) Updates from Task Force Meetings with Mayor Foster

The Chair announced that meetings have moved to once per month. Awaiting a scheduled date for the combined BIA meeting.

(b) Parking in Downtown Bowmanville

Last meeting, the Chair requested support from the Board on the following measures: a) elimination of bagging parking meters for December b) elimination of two-hour free parking c) increase of hourly parking rates. The Board expresses reluctance to support these measures particularly in light of the unprecedented conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board recognizes that issues arose with the December bagging of parking meters during the 2019 pilot project, particularly that of business owners and employees parking all day. However, given the current financial difficulties experienced by many businesses and families, eliminating the barrier of parking fees for shopping downtown would be advised for this year. Pausing enforcement, without bagging meters, may be a way to deter all-day parking.

Moved by J. Barry, seconded by G. Lucas

THAT due to special circumstances related to COVID-19 a letter of request be sent to Council asking that parking enforcement be paused for the month of December 2020 only, without formal bagging of parking meters.

CARRIED

4. Correspondence

Correspondence was received from

- i. Sarah Allin, Planning Dept MOC, regarding COVID CIP updates (via email)
- ii. Cassy MacDonald, Clerks Dept MOC, notifying of JC-120-20 regarding remote participation in meetings (via email)
- iii. Anne Greentree, Municipal Clerk MOC, regarding status of staff parking report (via email)
- iv. Kasey Schewaga, Finance Dept MOC, providing audited financial statements and adjusted journal entries (via email)
- v. Laura Preston, Legislative Services MOC, requesting comments on draft staff report on December free parking and providing unofficial parking revenues (via email)

Moved by G. Lucas, seconded by C. Holmes

THAT the correspondence be received for information.

CARRIED

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the following:

- i. \$128 319.42 in current account
- ii. 2019 audit is complete. No action is required.

Moved by E. Kemp, seconded by J. Barry

THAT the Treasurer's Report be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

6. Directors' Reports

- (a) Council Liaison – R. Hooper:

Not present

- (b) Events – C. Holmes:

Reported that this coming Saturday would have been the 31st Applefest. With the restrictions changing frequently and community concerns it is difficult to plan for any future events including those in 2021. The Moonlight Magic tree-lighting and Christmas Market is

cancelled this year, but suggests that the tree be decorated and lit anyway. Whether Girls' Night Out scheduled for November 12 can occur will depend on the restrictions in place at the time. There was some discussion on whether a virtual visit with Santa, or a facebook live with Santa could be planned. There was also discussion whether socially distanced photos were a possibility.

(c) Membership Relations – J. Barry:

Reported that there is a tattoo shop moving into the former Turquoise location. The Bees Knees announced that the shop will be closing at the end of November. There is a new BBQ restaurant on Division St. Boho Beauty Microblading and Spa has moved from Temperance St to Division St. The Toasted Walnut is preparing to move locations.

(d) Streetscape – G. Lucas:

The Chair reported that the watering is finished for the season and the summer hanging baskets will be removed soon. The flower vendor expressed to the Chair about disappointment over the state of the baskets, particularly related to watering and fertilizing. There was some discussion whether a tender should be sought for a new water vendor, but the Chair asked that the discussion be deferred until a conversation could occur with the current vendor. The Chair reported that despite numerous requests, Rekkers Garden Centre has not yet provided a quote for winter hanging baskets and that he has been informed that this quote is handled by the retail division, not the wholesale division that handles the summer flowers. The Chair reported that quotes will be sought from Van Belle's and The Willow Branch for winter hanging baskets. To date, no discussions have occurred related to the large winter planters for the downtown. Remembrance Day banners from the Legion have been installed on main street and will be removed following Remembrance Day.

(e) Communications - vacant:

L. Holmes reported that information continues to be distributed to the members by email.

(f) Website – L. Holmes:

Reported that updates on event cancellations and removal of vendor application forms is complete. Website redevelopment needs to be a priority and suggests that the BIA needs to hire a project manager to accomplish this. The BIA is responsible for providing a template for the look, feel, and functionality of the new website, in addition to providing all of the required data to the web developers. This will be a significant undertaking and no one has stepped forward to volunteer for this task. Collection of business information for the directory will be very time consuming and labor intensive and will involve direct contact with each business owner. Experience with the downtownsofdurham.ca project, Clarington Tourism directory, and CBOT directory show that less than one third of our BIA business owners will submit information when asked to do so by email or with an online link. The project manager could set up a focus group of local business owners for ideas, and/or send a survey around to determine key ideas. The Chair asks to defer the discussion to a later meeting. Concerns are raised that redevelopment was budgeted for in 2020 and deferral

will further delay and push redevelopment efforts in the 2021 budget year. The Treasurer is asked to examine the finances related to hiring a project manager.

(g) Media Relations – C. Hooper:

No Report.

7. New Business

(a) Holiday Shooting Star Decorations

The Chair has been unsuccessful so far at finding a solution for raising the height of brackets on the decorations. The company was contacted about the problem, and they were unable to provide a solution. The Chair will consult with a welder to see if an attachment can be added to the star to raise the height.

There was some discussion whether the BIA should investigate selling the stars and ordering a new winter decoration that would be less prone to damage by trucks and buses. The Chair requests more time to find a solution and will report back to the Board next meeting.

(b) Proposal for Additional Holiday Decorations

C. Holmes proposed that the BIA divert event funds to make the downtown core look attractive using lights and garlands, since traditional Christmas tree-lighting event cannot move forward this year. There was some discussion about the lamp post GFIs not being able to handle an extra power draw on main street, so solar or battery options should be explored.

Moved by J. Barry, seconded by L. Holmes

THAT the Chair will contact Classic Displays about solar and/or battery powered garlands.
CARRIED

(c) Proposal for 4x8 signs

L. Holmes proposed that the sign posts that usually promote the festivals be used to promote shopping downtown for the holiday season. This would see a removal of the Thank You signs that were installed during the COVID shutdown and replaced with signs promoting and thanking customers for shopping downtown this Christmas.

Moved by C. Holmes, seconded by J. Barry

THAT design proofs from James Printing be obtained for review and selection vote next meeting.
CARRIED

(d) Proposal for shopping local giveaway

L. Holmes proposed that the BIA continue to support local business by giving away vouchers for shopping local. The contests on social media over the summer months were very successful with over 400 entrants on Instagram each time. A 12 Days of Giveaways promotion was suggested, where the BIA could purchase gift certificates from downtown businesses to ensure that funds are distributed to various businesses. The giveaway would run through social media and Clarington Tourism could be asked to promote. There was some discussion whether businesses should be asked to contribute a portion of the gift certificate, as a partnership may encourage more promotion of the giveaway by individual businesses. The Chair asked that the discussion continue next meeting.

(e) Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Management is scheduled to be held on Tuesday November 10, 2020 commencing at 6:30pm in Clarington Meeting Room 1-C, unless COVID-19 restrictions are still in place, in which case the meeting will be held virtually.

(f) Adjournment

Moved by G. Lucas, seconded by J. Barry

THAT the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:44pm