

Downtown Stratford BIA

Board of Directors Meeting January 23, 2024

6:15 P.M. Stratford Public Library and via Zoom

MINUTES

Board in Attendance: Shawn Malvern, Stephanie Theodoropolous, Jennifer Birmingham, Mellissa Orr, Carly Douglas, Megan Chisholm, Councillor Burbach

Staff: Jamie Pritchard

Guests: Ryan O'Donnell, Nia Murray and Michael Strung*

1. Call to Order – Chair
 2. Land Acknowledgement
 3. Adopt Agenda for January 23, 2024 Meeting
MOTION: That the January 23, 2024 agenda be adopted as presented moved by Stephanie Theodoropolous, seconded by Carly Douglas. Carried.
 4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof:
The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act requires any member of a Committee of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of a Committee of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of a Committee of Council and otherwise comply with the Act.

Name	Item	Nature
None declared January 23, 2024.		
 5. Adopt Public Minutes of December 12, 2023, Meeting
MOTION: That the public minutes of December 12, 2023, be adopted, moved by Melissa Orr, seconded by Carly Douglas. Carried.
 6. New BIA Member – Nia Murray and Michael Strung, Good Vibrations Rock Shop Pieces for art, as well as for healing and wellness. Workshop and event space. Several practitioners: Tarot readers, hot stone massage, sound healing, intention workshops. Biggest challenge has been learning how to run a business. A mentor would help. Their Web site has an event page where what's happening is posted first, then to socials. The BIA General Manager will introduce Nia to Holly from the Perth Centre for Business. Inquiry from Nia regarding an accessibility grant for an automatic door opener. The BIA General Manager will stay in touch regarding any options for funding or programs. Also, an accessibility audit will be requested through the Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- *Nia Murray and Michael Strung have now left.
7. Annual General Meeting
The meeting will be held in person for 2024. The package is approved, as presented in the Board package, aside from the 2023 budget that will be discussed in agenda item #8.
 8. Treasurer Report
 - 2023 Year-End Budget
 - i. Late invoice
Motion to approve the 2023 invoice from Red Hot Creative for \$3,504.76 in

D275 Holiday Animation, acknowledging that this line is overspent moved by Jennifer Birmingham, seconded by Carly Douglas. Carried.

- ii. Rescinding of motions from December 12, 2023 Board meeting
Motion to rescind the 7 motions made at the December 12, 2023 Board of Directors meeting pertaining to the \$16,350 amount that was shifted between D238, D275, D201/D204, D235, D265, D261 and D260 in the 2023 budget moved by Jennifer Birmingham, seconded by Councillor Burbach. Carried.
- iii. Overspends and underspends in the 2023 budget
Motion to approve the overspends and underspends showing in the 2023 budget and that this budget be approved to be included in the Annual General Meeting package for members moved by Jennifer Birmingham, seconded by Melissa Orr. Carried.

- Purchase Orders

As one of the checks and balances, any expense that is over \$100 needs to have a Purchase Order submitted in advance to the Board Treasurer through DocuSign.

The maximum amount without a Purchase Order was a suggestion from the BIA staff.

9. Human Resources Update

- Performance Reviews

The review document is being reviewed and revised. Review documents will be shared with staff soon and review interviews will take place in February.

- Staff Gifts

In the past, on direction of the Executive Committee, there have been Downtown Dollars given to staff as a holiday gift from D200.

Motion that, at the discretion of the Human Resources Chair, staff gifts will be provided based on the available funds in D200 moved by Stephanie Theodoropolous, seconded by Carly Douglas. Carried.

10. Council Update

BIA budget approved by Council.

Approved a new bylaw officer for downtown to focus on bylaw infractions downtown. The focus is on assisting people downtown that have some challenges and may need assistance. This is coming out of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The next step for the BIA is to get contact information for this person to the businesses downtown and for the General Manager to meet them.

Erie Street construction starts at Ontario Street. Covered by the province as a provincial highway. The City has added a barricaded bike lane and a pedestrian crosswalk at St. David Street. The street will be one lane each way, plus a turning lane. Upgrades to the Erie Street parking lot for safety, as well. The BIA will need to work on communication from the City to the members.

Short term accommodation will be reviewed as part of the Official Plan update.

Reconfiguring some intersections as part of the 2024 budget, e.g. St. Patrick Street at the Avon Theatre and Downie Street at Douro. The BIA is looking into a coloured walkway.

Budget is currently sitting at a 8.5% tax rate increase.

11. Strategic Plan

<BIA Action Plan Nov 2023>

Sub-Committees are all using the Action Plan to make their 2024 plans.

12. Sub-Committee Update

- LOS Working Group
Anecdotal information from the businesses is positive. The BIA is looking for data. The BIA will be sending a survey to their members about the Lights On event.
- Beautification
Finishing up projects that were started in 2023 and looking to 2024 projects.
- Advocacy and Education
Shifting focus to some green initiatives based on the Action Plan, starting with getting behind the City's Green Recognition Program that is open to residents and businesses. The program is about recognition, but also about sharing green initiatives around.

13. General Manager Report

Downtown Dollar paper sales using an online platform, either our site or Shopify. The orders would need to be mailed out and the consumer would pay the mailing cost. The General Manager will pull together a proposal for consideration.

Working on getting a not-for-profit status with Google to get a Google Grants account. Spoke with the favoured digital Downtown Dollars supplier yesterday and there is no movement into Canada yet.

Regional Tourism Organization 4 (RTO4) has opened more grants to investigate. They are matching fund grants. Deadlines for applications are a quick turnaround.

14. New Business

Executive Elections

Taking place in February. If there are any questions about the roles, reach out to the current Executive or the Administrative Assistant.

15. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:45 P.M. moved by Councillor Burbach.