

Alliston BIA Board of Directors Meeting MINUTES
Thursday MARCH 4TH, 2021 – 8:00 a.m.
Zoom Conference
Chair Mike Jerry

Attendance: Chair Mike Jerry, Treasurer Julia Stubbs, Director Mike MacEachern, Director David Grossi, Director Colleen Ross, Director Kim Lyon, Councillor Michael Beattie, General Manager Linda Spurr.

Regrets: Secretary/Treasurer Ro Davoodian, Director Kevin Osbourne, Director Lachlan McGurk.

Chair Jerry welcomed all and thanked Directors for attending the call.

He stated how proud he is of our ABIA organization and our ABIA businesses and how they have developed and transformed through these unrepresented times.

He continued that our County has pushed back on the latest order to reflect the concerns of businesses. A letter from the Warden of Simcoe County was sent to Queens Park along with others from our Region. Chair Jerry suggests all businesses to send emails to Queens Park, this will open a file and help to make changes.

ABIA Good News was shared by Directors.

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

No noted amendments

Motion for approval: Director MacEachern, Second: Director Ross, carried.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None noted.

Amendments and Approval of Previous Minutes (FEBRUARY 2021)

No noted amendments.

Motion for approval: Director MacEachern, second: Councillor Beattie, carried.

Treasurer Report

- Invoices to present – No new invoices to present.
- Present financial statement – P & L sent to Directors for review.
- 2021 Levy - The Town Finance Department contacted the Alliston BIA recently to advise that they would like to allot our levy monies in three installments throughout 2021 at March / June / and September. The ABIA Board of Directors stated in last meeting that they wish to consider the levy in one payment. After discussion this meeting, the Board agrees that the ABIA is well run organization, and can budget accordingly to accommodate this change. GM Spurr advises that the first installment of our levy will be March 4th. The Board recommended that a letter be drafted to Town Finance to ensure that input from the ABIA goes into changes to the financial arrangement of our levy dollars. This is the second year that these financial decisions were made impacting the ABIA operation without our input. The monies are ABIA member levies and not community tax dollars

Yearly Audit - GM Spurr has requested that our yearly audit from town be done mid- March so that we can have our financials completed by mid-April.

- Kim Lyon spoke to the Board sharing that she and GM Spurr have added some extra controls to elevate our bookkeeping. She noted that there isn't much change needed as the Treasurers, GM Spurr and bookkeeper have many of the controls already in place. The addition of a controller is to ensure a quick monthly audit of entries and reports. Kim has met with the Town auditors and is helping bookkeeper to prepare for 2020 audit.

Council Report

Councillor Beattie confirmed that the first part of 3 for the Alliston BIA Levy will be ready today.

Councillor advised that the Pop up temporary patios report was ratified at Council and that Councillor Foster and himself had suggested that the program start earlier (April 15th).

Councillor Beattie thanked GM Spurr for sending him the truck study she had done a year or so ago and he shared that he would like to have one done through the town. This study is to record how many large trucks come thorough the downtown Alliston core. Instead they could use the by- pass on Industrial and the Alliston BIA wants better signage and the by-pass promoted by the town.

Councillor Beattie will look into having a further study done and report back to the Board.

Councillor also shared that the truck traffic bylaw pertaining to construction zones has a specific tiered system for fines and this has increased the compliance immediately.

Councillor shared that the town will be doing a parking study over the next few months. The town staff are working on updating bylaws and have just completed the update on the noise control bylaw. It will now be a \$250.00 fine.

The Community Improvement Plan (CIP) draft was presented to council and will be presented to be ratified in two weeks. This new plan has a suite of programs and more specific eligibility criteria. Chair Jerry shared that he and GM Spurr have been attending the stakeholders meeting and have contributed ideas to the plan.

Chair Jerry asks if the town will be putting money to promote the project plan as he and GM Spurr had suggested to town staff.

Councillor Beattie shared that there was some controversy over the sale of live pets. This was put to Council and they quickly decided for town staff to look into this bylaw update.

Chair Jerry also asks Councillor Beattie if the town staff produce a quarterly report, internally or public, regarding bylaw enforcement within the downtown catchment areas. The ABIA wants to support council and staff on bylaw updates, but needs measurables to do so. Councillor Beattie says he will look into this and report back to Board next meeting.

General Manager Report

- Wild Wing is now under new management, gone through some renovations and added larger televisions etc. GM Spurr reached out to the new managers and discussed the programs, grants and help offered from the ABIA, Town and Government, as well as asked them to send any info to share on social.
- Copper Bowl has been put in contact with Economic Development to discuss CIP program and upgrades to the building they occupy.

ABIA Projects

- **Update on Electronic Sign** – All required drawings have been sent to town Economic Development officer for distribution to all appropriate town staff. Waiting on responses of any concerns, questions etc. Once we received the go from Economic Development, a contract between the Town and the ABIA will be reviewed. GM Spurr contacted Economic Development Officer Darcy Brooke-Bischof to confirm when the ABIA will be getting the review and he said it should be over to ABIA by Friday or Monday (March 5th/8th). GM Spurr has been in contact with installer and updated them and has asked for the installer to be prepared to move quickly once all is approved.
- **Update on Street Patios** – GM Spurr has notified ABIA restaurants that the application is coming this week from the Town Economic Development office and to be prepared to submit applications. She has offered any help so that our members can act quickly and get their patios up as soon as April 15th.
- GM Spurr also contacted installer to keep them informed for those who wish to use the installer ABIA used in our Pilot Project last year.
- She also spoke to Economic Development officer regarding a request from members on Paris Street who wish to close the road weekends through summer to extend their patios.
- **Update on Downtown WIFI** – The WIFI project started strong, however we have run over some difficulties over the past year with the solar power not strong enough and some damage to the units. GM Spurr has reached out to the supplier and negotiated that the ABIA will not be charged the monthly fee for operation until the system is in good working order and all units are fixed. (Installer estimates early spring – April / May). Director McGurk was asked to look into this for a cost analysis. Chair Jerry shared that Director McGurk had discussed the project with him and suggested that it may be best to cancel the project and sell the equipment. After a hearty discussion, the Board determines that the ABIA should look into this further, possibly looking at another expert & installer to determine if it will be worth continuing the project or not. Director McGurk to further analyse.
- **Business licenses in New Tecumseth** – GM Spurr was instructed by Board to have a list compiled of Municipalities across Southern Ontario that require business licenses. GM Spurr reported that the research from across Southern Ontario suggests about 35 Municipalities have registration/licensing. Most are in larger Municipalities such as Barrie, Vaughan, Stouffville, Toronto, Guelph, Kitchener and others such as New Tecumseth have specific business licenses for certain types of businesses such as tow trucks and taxis, entertainment, food carts. The Board feels that all businesses in New Tecumseth should require a business license and registration with the Town as this will help regulate all to comply with town by law and health board requirements. Councillor Beattie said that the Town of New Tecumseth should look into Barrie and Wasaga Beach bylaws to possibly follow their policies. GM Spurr was directed to further the investigation and look into the bylaws of Barrie and Wasaga Beach noting their policies. GM Spurr to report back at next meeting.

ABIA Pillars

Events

- **Rurban Farmers Market** - GM Spurr is working with Secretary/Treasurer Ro Davoodian on the Farmers Market set up for this year. The start date for the market will now be Saturday May 22nd 8 am to 2 pm.
- **Rurban Sights and Sounds (Potato Fest Weekend)** - Director MacEachern shares that through discussions at the Alliston Chamber & Festival committee, Potato Festival will be cancelled this year again. The Board agrees that if this event is cancelled we should try the street shut down as we did last year if permitted by the Health Board. Only our local ABIA vendors will be permitted to attend as well as our Farmers Market to encourage Shopping Local. If next year allows for the Potato Festival then we can go back to accepting outside vendors as we have traditionally done in past.
- **Beautification** – Currently we have one set of Green banners for street and one Blue for winter. GM Spurr asked the Board for and suggestions on creative for new / additional banners. She suggested that that we could have the one stream of green banners along the road and alternate other banners with Alliston Logo, Image of products downtown with slogans like “Shop like you live here” Downtown Has It All, or simple words to go with image “Dinning” “Fashion” “Unique Gifts” etc. The Board agrees this is a good idea and Chair Jerry instructs GM Spurr to get this done as soon as possible.
- GM Spurr shared that the winter décor will be removed within the next week.
- GM Spurr also shares that she is looking into spring décor for downtown as everyone needs a pick me up and some colour downtown might help. The Board agrees. GM Spurr is looking into ideas and will have quotes on or before the next meeting.
- **Marketing** – GM Spurr asked for a meeting to be called to discuss marketing direction for 2021. The meeting was a great brainstorming session with some great ideas to continue our marketing efforts. One item on the agenda was that the Board wants to look into renewing our contract with a marketing partner and GM Spurr was instructed to put together an RFP with all the requirements for a marketing partner. She has send the final copy to the Board for any further direction and has sent out the Request.

GM Spurr suggested that we should use a multi-media campaign to support the Behind the Business idea and along with social, print and radio we should do a professional video to support local and Director McGurk offered to have someone he knows that is local contact GM Spurr to discuss the video project. GM Spurr has reached out to this contact and others including CTV to ensure we obtained 3 quotes for the project. She is waiting on feedback and able to report on or before the next Board meeting.

- GM Spurr has continued the social marketing campaigns since December when our Marketing coordinator left.
- Next Marketing Meeting March 30th, 8 am at Boston Pizza.

Communication

Chair Jerry shared that he and GM Spurr attend monthly meetings with MP, MPP, Town Council, staff and other local community business organizations to continue communication and updates on latest Government and Municipal programs. The ABIA stressed last meeting that our businesses are under a great deal of pressure with increased costs for insurance and taxes, and they require further assistance

from our Government and we need our Municipality to reduce property taxes. The Provincial Government has provided a mechanism where by the Municipality through a new sub-set property tax is able to make the adjustment to property taxes to reflect these challenging times. GM Spurr shared on the call that businesses want to open up with less restrictions. Businesses ensure safety measures are in place and opening for only a few visitors at a time, actually costs them money, (especially restaurants), but they are all pressured to open anyway. MPP Jim Wilson suggested that our organizations send letters to advocate for business members as the “squeaky wheel, gets the oil”. Chair Jerry shared he is working on a letter to send. Councillor Beattie who attends the calls too said that the Town Finance Department is investigating the tax reduction. He continued that out of every dollar, only 9 cents goes to the Municipality. Councillor Beattie offered to co-author a letter with Chair Jerry. Director MacEachern who is also on these calls under the organization Focus, had shared on the call that Regionally unemployment is about 3 times higher than this time last year.

New Business / Upcoming Events

- Chair Jerry raises the concern of snowbank removal in our downtown. The town’s current policy allows for removal after 72 hours once 30 cm has accumulated, which the Board feels is too long in the downtown core as this hampers and detours visitors to stores. The Board agrees that the timeline for removal should be reduced. Chair Jerry and the Board will come up with a strategy to help the town manage a faster timeline.

- Chair Jerry asks the Board if there is any new business they wish to share and discuss. None noted.

Motion to adjourn: Director MacEachern, second Director Lyon, carried.

Meeting adjourned 9:44 am.

TASKS CHART

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	DUE
LEVY Draft a letter to Town Finance to ensure that input from the ABIA goes into changes to the financial arrangement of our ley dollars.	Chair Jerry and GM Spurr	Next Meeting
Yearly Financial Audit 2020 year	GM Spurr, Controller Kim Lyon	End April 2021
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Preparations	GM Spurr	For April
BY PASS AND TRUCK TRAFFIC	Councillor Beattie	Next meeting

<p>Speak to Town Staff to see if a further traffic study can be done regarding the by-pass and report back to the Board</p>		
<p>BYLAW ENFORCEMENT</p> <p>Find out if town staff produce a quarterly report, internally or public, regarding bylaw enforcement within the downtown catchment areas.</p>	<p>Councillor Beattie</p>	<p>Next meeting</p>
<p>POP UP TEMPORARY PATIOS</p> <p>Send out Town Applications for Temporary pop up patios when received from Ec Dev</p>	<p>GM Spurr</p>	<p>As soon as received by Economic Development</p>
<p>DOWNTOWN WIFI</p> <p>Further analyse and do a cost analysis to confirm if it is worth continuing. Looking into a new supplier.</p>	<p>Director McGurk</p>	<p>By May</p>
<p>BUSINESS LICENSES</p> <p>Further investigate the bylaws for business registration in Barrie and Wasaga Beach areas noting policies from each.</p>	<p>GM Spurr</p>	<p>Next meeting</p>
<p>ELECTRONIC SIGN</p> <p>Send the review from Economic Development to Board as soon as it comes back. Board of Directors to review and add comments.</p>	<p>GM Spurr Board of Directors</p>	<p>As soon as we get it from Economic Development</p>

POLE BANNERS Spring Green banners to be up in downtown	GM Spurr	ASAP
Marketing Meeting Marketing Video Quotes	GM Spurr	March 30 By next meeting