

Alliston BIA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday APRIL 1ST 2021 – 8:00 a.m.
Via Zoom
Chair Mike Jerry

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Chair Mike Jerry, Secretary Treasurer Ro Davoodian, 2nd Treasurer Julia Stubbs, Director Kim Lyon, Director David Grossi, Director Ross, Director McGurk, Director Osbourne, Councillor Beattie
Regrets: Director Mike MacEachern

Welcome

Chair Jerry welcomed everyone to the meeting. He discussed the announcement regarding lockdown measurers with non-essential retail small business allowed 25% capacity and big box allowed at 50%. Chair Jerry shares that he has sent letters in support of small business and to ensure a level playing field against big box stores. He encourages our members to send letters to the Government in support for small business. If anyone would like contact information on where to send letters they can contact our ABIA office.

ABIA Good News shared by Directors

Highlighted was Director Lyon sharing that Liberty Tax has had their best month so far. Councillor Beattie shared the patio program application process is in full swing and we are all looking forward to the patios getting up and running as soon as possible. Chair Jerry shared that as he volunteers at one of the local vaccine clinics, he sees many people volunteering their time and wishes to acknowledge these volunteers who dedicate their time to ensure a smooth roll out for the safety of all.

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

One noted addition is the vote for the production of a video for Downtown Alliston that was discussed at our last marketing meeting. From the quotes submitted, the majority of Directors agreed that Brandon Murphy from Parallel Productions would be the best candidate as both Lachlan and Colleen have worked with him on other projects.

Motion for marketing video and to hire Parallel Productions for maximum of \$2550.00 plus HST was made by Director McGurk, second Secretary Treasurer Davoodian, carried.

GM Spurr to touch base with them and start the video process.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None noted

Amendments and Approval of Previous Minutes (MARCH 2021)

Motion to approve minutes: Director Ross, Second Director Grossi, carried

Treasurer Report

- Invoices to present – There are no invoices to present.

- Present financial statement – P & L was sent to Directors via email. GM Spurr advises that if there are any questions Directors can send to her directly.
- UPDATE 2020 Yearly Financial Audit – GM Spurr working with the ABIA Bookkeeper providing all necessary documentation for the Town Auditors to ensure the audit is done efficiently by mid – April.
- Annual General Meeting is set for April 27th via zoom, GM Spurr is trying to get the addresses of BIA Members from the town finance department as soon as possible. GM Spurr is preparing documents for AGM as well as invitations.
- Meetings with Town Finance – Last meeting we discussed that communication between town staff and ABIA should improve. The Finance department is not keeping ABIA up to date on changes etc. GM Spurr has since had meeting with town finance to review audit procedures and discuss our bylaws. Meetings will continue so that ABIA can be kept up to date on items affecting them such as BIA levy disbursement and yearly audits.

Council Report

Electronic sign variance came to council was passed on March 29th. Economic Development next steps are the get a working agreement to Alliston BIA to look over as soon as possible within two weeks. The agreement drawn up will cover topics regarding operation, design install and operating criteria. Councillor Beattie spoke to Darcy and offered help if needed. Alliston BIA wants to see this working document before the next agenda. Councillor Beattie suggests that this sign is an entry point to the Town of New Tecumseth and that it should reflect such.

Chair Jerry reiterated that Town Council needs to know, our ABIA Members are paying for this sign, and if there is any additional costs for a change in design above what the Alliston BIA has agreed to then the Town needs to pay.

By consensus the Board agrees to have both logos incorporated and directs GM Spurr to look into this further with the supplier.

General Manager Report

PROJECTS Updates

- **Electronic Sign**
 1. Adjustments were made to the suggestions from Town staff to modify what our Board deems necessary for the agreement.
 2. ABIA Chair Jerry made a deputation to Council regarding this agreement. Economic Development report regarding waving variance fees was presented and approved by council
 3. Economic Development officer has discussed with town lawyer and will respond to ABIA when they have prepared agreement proposal within two weeks.
 4. GM Spurr to speak to installer / Supplier regarding any changes in the aesthetics to include the TNT logo on the sign including additional costs to add Town Logo.
- **Pop up Patios**
 1. Town application process was passed by Council.
 2. Applications and notices sent to all ABIA restaurants.
 3. Williams responded quickly and we forwarded their application to Darcy upon their request.
 4. Paris Street Closure on weekends – Darcy has sent inquiry to Public Works (Mar 12)

5. Other applications being in progress: Williams, Kelly's, DaGrazia, Peake BBQ, and Wild Wing
6. We have offered information on the installer that ABIA used to all of our applicants.

Downtown Music System

1. SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Inviting environment	Costly as we have many speakers to keep volume down	Advertising	Complaints Weather
Elevate events	Limited to one area being the core and not really effective in West end		Damage to the Speakers Business having to control the playlist
MOBILE SOUND SYSTEM			
MOBILE allowing for all areas of our catchment	Reliant on supplier staff no show due to Illness	Advertising	complaints
Volume Control		Cost effective	
Great exposure			

GM Spurr was requested to do a SWOT analysis on a speaker system downtown (see above).

It was found that short term the ABIA should use the Mobile Sound System such as during the holiday season and Director McGurk and GM Spurr will look into a music system for future.

BUSINESS LICENSING IN NEW TECUMSETH

GM Spurr reported the following from other Municipal bylaws across Southern Ontario

Discovery

- Approximately 35 Municipalities across Southern Ontario require business licenses for all businesses operating in their Municipalities.
- Wasaga (population 20,675) and Shelburne (population 14,745) are the two Municipalities that are great examples.
- New Tecumseth has a portal which provides easy permit process to access for business of peddlers, taxi and tow trucks, this could be used for the purpose of registration / licensing for all businesses. The town does not require proof of insurance, health certifications etc. – This would be a must for the registration.
- In speaking with the Simcoe Muskoka Health Board, they have also noticed an influx of home based kitchens as the Ministry has now approved that home based kitchens do not have to be separate from home kitchen which makes policing for safety much more difficult for the Health Unit. The Health Unit said it would be much easier to find these businesses and carry out inspections for safety, if there was a business registry from the Town.
- Barrie is also a good example as they require approvals from the Fire, Building and Health as well as Insurance prior to obtaining a license.
- Wasaga Beach seems to encompass all businesses, requiring licensing requirements for all operating business within the township.

After discussing with Secretary / Treasurer Davoodian, who initially recommended we look into this, it is suggested we set up a meeting of our ABIA Board, to review the Wasaga model bylaw as well as any other pertinent information, and make necessary adjustments for a business license by law for New Tecumseth. Then send our recommendation to the Town of New Tecumseth. Town - To quickly produce a new bylaw requiring all business to acquire a license from the Municipality to operate with our town. Town of New Tecumseth By law to educate and enforce. Councillor Beattie asked GM Spurr to send the Wasaga Bylaw copy to him.

Councillor Beattie asks what the end goal is here. Chair Jerry shares that this is to ensure a level playing field for all business and for safety of food products. It's important to have an equitable landscape. To ensure businesses can and want to stay downtown. Secretary / Treasurer Davoodian states that mom & pop restaurants operate on a small margin but have large overhead costs. Health Department has trouble monitoring full meals being prepared and many consumers do not understand that these kitchens are not inspected. Director Lyon asks if New Tecumseth has a bylaw for this, GM Spurr shares that business licensing in New Tecumseth is currently only for certain business such as entertainment, taxi, towing. Director Ross, Osbourne & McGurk as well as Secretary/ Treasurer Davoodian and Chair Jerry agree to move forward, while Treasurer Stubbs and Director Grossi are torn on the issue. Councillor Beattie agrees we should move forward as long as the terms of the licensing is same for all. GM Spurr to send Councillor Beattie a copy of the Wasaga example bylaw as per his request.

PILLARS

- **Events**

Farmers Market preparations are underway and opening day is set for Saturday May 22. GM Spurr has started marketing campaign and found staffing for the event.
-GM Spurr has submitted request for Road Closure AUGUST 7th Open Air Market.

- **Beautification**

Update on Spring Décor- GM Spurr has ordered the spring wreaths to go on the poles downtown. They are a simple, subtle touch of colour until we get the plants in. She has negotiated with supplier to produce 40 wreaths and cost down from \$50 to \$40 ea. Town staff work order has been submitted for install and should be mid- April.

- **Marketing**

Marketing partners – At the marketing meeting (Tues) it was decided by the Board members that ABIA would take on a hybrid model for the work to be done part in-house and part third party. To be worked out for In house and specific quotes from RFP suppliers.
GM Spurr has drafted and sent out new request to suppliers, with specific list so the work can be compared fairly. GM Spurr is waiting on the specifics to come in.

GM Spurr started a draft for In-House marketing and will send working document to Board for suggestions on qualifications. From the quotes submitted, the majority of Directors agreed that Brandon Murphy from Parallel Productions would be the best candidate as both Lachlan and Colleen have worked with him on other projects.

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TBDCC is holding a virtual home show and ABIA in support and external marketing has signed up to participate. April 17 for two weeks. Vendors will be on TBDCC website and you click to see a video and information.

- **Communication**

Chair Jerry & GM Spurr attend Economic Development calls monthly along with Councillor Beattie and Mike MacEachern for Focus. The updates are from each local business group as well as MP and MPP and TNT Economic Development. Chair Jerry shares that he has repeatedly stated the big box stores have advantage over the small businesses as they are allowed to sell beyond the “essential” items, while small businesses are limited. Chair Jerry has sent letters to Doug Ford and encourages members to do the same. Councillor Beattie says that he would gladly co-author another letter with Chair Jerry. Chair Jerry to send another letter to parliament. Chair Jerry also shares that he has asked for more financial help from Feds, Province and Municipal Governments stating that taxes, insurance costs as well as utilities have all gone up, businesses are struggling.

New Business / Upcoming Events

Parking Downtown

Director McGurk asked about the 4 hour parking on Victoria Street sharing that with the new medical building in place now the street is jammed with the free parking all day long. He suggests we should reduce the parking limits.

Director Lyon agrees as she had a cube van parked outside her office blocking her signage all day. Two hours is appropriate.

Director Grossi agrees that 2 hours is reasonable.

Secretary / Treasurer Davoodian shared that the increase was to allow for visitors to spend more time downtown without being troubled to move their vehicle, however many business employees take advantage and as it is not policed often, remain the whole day.

GM Spurr to poll the merchants on Victoria Street to gather their thoughts to report next meeting in May.

Theft

Mike Jerry and Terri Jerry sharing there were thieves with hoop skirts in town last week. They have had this happen before in their store, where females enter the store with hoop skirts and have stolen from the store by placing items under their skirts. They pulled up in front of their store in a large vehicle with several people inside and one female came to the door and pulled on it then tried the second door. As the store was closed at this time the female got back into the vehicle and headed East on Victoria.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn Secretary / Treasurer Davoodian

Adjourned 9:26 a.m.