

Minutes: The Thornbury Business Improvement Area Meeting



MEETING DATE: Wednesday, November 1, 2017
MEETING TIME: 8:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Town Hall Council Chamber
PREPARED BY: Donna Gorrie, Recording Secretary

A. Call to Order

- Vice Chair Casey Thomson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. with Board of Management Directors Kathryn Brown, Leslie Lewis, Tony Poole, Melanie Johns, and Renee Desrochers present. Absent: George Matamoros, Councillor Seguin and Skot Beaumont
Also in attendance were BIA Events Manager Sarah McNulty, Director of Community Services Shawn Everitt, Economic Development and Communications Elizabeth Cornish, Galen Ireland of Galen Ireland Dance Studios, Patti Di Florio from the Dam Pub, Josie Poole of Sincerely Yours, Melissa Twist of the Georgian Triangle Tourist Association (GTTA) and Scott Glover, Creative Director for Division 81.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Kathryn Brown

Seconded by: Leslie Lewis

THAT the Agenda of November 1st, 2017 be approved as amended with the correction of the spelling of Ted Sivell noted. Carried.

- **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest:** none

- **Previous Minutes**

Moved by: Tony Poole

Seconded by: Renee Desrochers

THAT the Minutes of the October 4, 2017 meeting be approved. Carried

B. Deputation: none

C. Meeting

C.1 Upcoming events/review Sarah McNulty: There was an even and steady flow of participants and visitors at this year's Apple Harvest Festival(AHF), though some felt the overall attendance was down in Thornbury, and in Blue Mountain Village. There's no real explanation why numbers were lower since there was more promotion and more engagement with Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RT07) and a digital investment. Trail counter numbers are still needed from Shawn.

A huge thank you goes to Deputy Mayor Gail Ardiel for her involvement this year with on-site apple tasting and education. Growers provided different varieties of apples for tasting which was well received. There was less vandalism, and more apples handed out, more music and more family activities. Financial support from Economic Development enabled the hiring of two

support staff, one running arts and crafts within the Town Hall and more interaction with children, and one helping with overall logistics during the weekend.

There is some question as to the usefulness of the police at the Fish Ladder as they sit in their cars rather than control the pedestrian crossing. Further discussion needs to take place regarding the policing for 2018.

Leslie Lewis assisted with a social media promotion which was appreciated. The photos displayed online are excellent and will be used for the 2018 promotion. It is hoped there will be a creative refresh for the Apple Harvest Festival for 2018 since most activities have been the same for 3-4 years.

Opening on Monday continues to be a challenge for some of the businesses. It was also noted that people were turned away from food establishments which were full. Sarah questioned the need for the Monday suggesting an alternative would be to hold more of those activities on Friday evening and take the pressure off of businesses to stay open on Monday. Kathryn mentioned how challenging it is for food establishments, and Tony stated that it wasn't just restaurants but other businesses that closed and feels a need to have a discussion with businesses on operating in a tourist area. He'd also heard that people were very thankful for the ones that remained open, and disappointed in the ones that were closed. Casey mentioned that a huge issue in this area is staffing so labour shortage will probably be getting worse instead of better and it is a matter of figuring out how to overcome this challenge. Does not believe that backing off is the answer and likes the idea of programming something unique to Thornbury for Friday night. The area population is slated to double within the next 10-15 years. Leslie felt it was sending the wrong message as a tourist area and it comes down to staff management. The BIA needs to keep working with businesses and assess this. It was requested to place Holiday Mondays on the Annual General Meeting (AGM) Agenda and have a discussion about this issue. It was noted that the Apple Harvest Festival is listed in the top 100 events in Ontario and that we should aim for top 25. It was also mentioned from a business owner that they'd heard that Thornbury was closed on Mondays so that this reputation needs to change.

Olde Fashioned Christmas (OFC): Sarah stated that most returning providers are confirmed with less things happening during the day and moving them into the evening slots. There will not be an artisan market. The reindeer will be returning but are dependent on the weather. Horse and wagon rides are being addressed and the library would like to host a one hour story time. Galen Ireland mentioned that her dancers would perform and would also like to help out volunteering this year on the street. There may be a slight problem obtaining a Santa House from Home Hardware and Sarah will keep abreast of this situation. OFC postcards were handed out during Thanksgiving and there are some still available at Evolution Him & Her if anyone needs more. A teaser poster should be ready this week, or next and will go up after Remembrance Day with a 2nd poster that contains a more complete schedule printed before the event. It was mentioned last year that some businesses would like to have/invite artisans into their stores and if so, they should contact Sarah. It is noted that this is not limited to Artisans. A BIA group email to members will be going out very soon with the event date and the offer of hosting an artisan from 12 noon – 4 p.m. on the Saturday. Patty questioned if the street would be closed Bruce to Alice which had been discussed earlier in the year. There was a proposed idea for tobogganing but this idea has liability implications which need further discussion between Sarah and Shawn. Sarah mentioned that in the past there has been resistance from the Dam Pub to have Bruce St. Closed at Alice. Patty mentioned that in this instance the Dam Pub would support a road closure from Alice to Bridge Street (highway 26).

C.2 GTTA Presentation and Video:

Elizabeth introduced Scott Glover and they showed the 30 second clip of the Thornbury Culinary Experience that included 14 restaurants. Casey preferred a release after Christmas

since the area is busy with holiday traffic. She also suggested that a copy of the clip be sent to the restaurants asking their opinion of when to release it. This will be a test, and connected to thornbury.ca. Elizabeth will return with a proposal at the December BIA meeting.

Melissa Twist of the Georgian Triangle Tourist Association (GTTA) presented the Tourism Activities and 2018 Strategic Focus identifying visitor services, demographic leaders, distribution, channels and content leaders. ~200,000 copies of guide in English and 90,000 with a 16 page flyer in french. Elizabeth asked if individual businesses should take part and Melissa advised that businesses should contact her directly. Casey asked Melissa to email the information to the BIA.

C.3 Flags: Casey Thomson

Casey reviewed what had transpired at the previous BIA meeting regarding the artistic examples from Ted Sivell, and "*Thornbury is...*" by Matt at Thornbury Graphics. Casey wanted some thoughts and feedback from the members present in order to move forward. Discussion ensued with some showing support of the *Thornbury is...* concept but also incorporating the artwork. It was noted that there was no youth representation in the ideas presented. Spring is the target time period and Casey will look into some of these ideas and report back to the board.

D. Adjournment

Moved by: Tony Poole

THAT this Board does now adjourn at 9:16 a.m. to meet again Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at 8:00 a.m. Town Hall, Council Chamber or at the call of the Chair.