

Minutes



Thornbury Business Improvement Area Annual General Meeting

Meeting Date: May 1, 2019
Meeting Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers
Prepared by Donna Gorrie, Recording Secretary

A. Call to Order

George Matamoros welcomed everyone and called the (AGM) Annual General meeting to order at 6.03 p.m.

In attendance were BIA directors Tony Poole, Melanie Johns, Councillor Rob Potter, Matt Cundy, Keith Turner, and Renee DesRochers. Also in attendance were Acting Director of Community Services Ryan Gibbons, Casey Thompson of The Cheese Gallery, Josie Poole of Sincerely Yours Boutique, John Gyles of Gyles Sails and Marine, Joe Halos of Kings Court, and Nicole Craig of Cherchez la Femme.

A.1 Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Councillor Potter

Seconded by: Matt Cundy

THAT the AGM Agenda of May 1, 2019 be approved as circulated. Carried

A.2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof: none

A.3 Previous Minutes

Moved by: Keith Turner

Seconded by: Tony Poole

THAT the Thornbury BIA Minutes of April 3, 2019 be adopted as circulated. Carried.

B. Deputations: none

C.1 Welcome: Chairperson George Matamoros explained that this meeting was to allow members of the BIA the opportunity to express comments regarding the proposed budget, but not to vote. The board members' role is to take into account all comments received and to then decide whether the budget should be modified accordingly. George identified that the banners were a disappointment aesthetically, and from the point of view of durability. He also stated that the lights are in terrible shape, and that going forward his hope is that the Board is able to do more planning and more strategizing. From general comments the sense is that

business traffic is on a downward spiral and so the board needs to pay closer attention to bolstering the town as a destination. He felt that events were a place to start, making them more interactive with more activities. Landmark will be hired to improve the lighting on the posts, which will help to improve the look of the town at night. George stated that he is looking forward to working with the current board and that we need to find different ways to work, and more ways to strategize and plan with a longer vision for what the BIA wants to achieve. The gateway signs need improvement, along with developing an east end strategy. George stated that he and the board welcome members' suggestions, and that the BIA needs to work more closely with the Town and Council.

C.2 Presentation and discussion of the 2019 Budget: George spoke that this meeting was for feedback, and comments that members wished to share on the proposed budget. He stated that the goal this year was to keep the levy amount where it was in 2018.

Joe spoke to the need for a procedural change to allow a time on the monthly meeting Agenda for comments from the members. This would allow more communication to get feedback. Tony felt it was a good idea since some issues are not necessarily on the agenda. Keith stated that the current chair is very inclusive in terms of allowing comments from the floor but could see the benefit of formalizing the need into the agenda.

Joe questioned the budget lists and items under tangible capital assets. He would like to see a more detailed breakdown i.e. banners, lights. George explained that the capital assets were accounted for in the financial statements and that the budget reflects anticipated cash expenditures for the year. Capital purchases that have a life greater than one year are capitalized and amortized over their expected life, but this is not reflected in the budget.

Joe spoke on the summer event and doesn't agree with placing money into a summer event. Keith explained that this item is still under discussion at the committee level and including an amount in the budget gives the flexibility should we decide to proceed with an event.

Casey spoke on the gateway signs and green parking signs and questioned why it was not in the budget. George stated that these are larger issues of a capital nature and will be brought to the board at the next meeting. Ryan mentioned that the parking signs are being discussed internally and will follow up with the board with further information.

Councillor Potter stated that the Town's budget process starts early, in July and that any requests from council for 2020 should start early. George said he was looking for guidance from Councillor Potter on how and when to approach council with regards to delegations.

Nicole asked why the BIA pays for the flowers and lights and not the Town. George explained that the BIA was formed to include beautification and it is under their mandate. The flowers are a decision of the BIA board and not the Town.

It was also mentioned that more print advertising would be nice. George explained the reasoning behind the BIA using more social media and less print was because the latter was very costly and of limited effectiveness. He suggested that the social media side could use funds to support a person to perform this function more effectively.

Further to Joes' comments on events, George added that the current thinking on events is that they need to be interactive rather than passive. So he agreed with Joe as far as traditional events are concerned, so it is important that going forward, any new event is interactive. The board must look at how we do events, to be targeting towards an end goal of bringing more visitors to this area. In order to stay relevant we need to be doing something.

John asked about the differences in the costing for events. George explained the differences related mostly to the timing of when bills are posted, so that some years end up being charged for two year's expense.

George asked Ryan to look into what guarantee there is from Flags Unlimited because there was so much loss due to wind damage.

Casey mentioned that the dates that the town will be analyzing their 2020 budget by is this summer, and that the current BIA budget covers January to December 2019. George stated the goal is always to have the BIA complete their budget in January/February and hopefully this will happen in the future. We should certainly be looking at where we want support from the Town in order to have those requests addressed in the upcoming Town budget.

Ryan stated that this is a unique year for the town's budget process because it follows an election. Ryan agreed that it was important to have these conversations earlier, versus later.

Joe thanked the board and the business owners who show up who help make it all better.

George mentioned that the board now has a committee called Member Relations with the goal of improving the relationship between the board and the members.

George asked the board whether after evaluating the comments, did they wish to make any changes to the proposed budget? Discussion ensued.

Moved by: Keith Turner

Seconded by: Tony Poole

THAT the Thornbury Business Improvement Area acknowledges receipt of comments regarding the 2019 Proposed Thornbury Business Improvement Area Budget. Carried

Moved by: Matt Cundy

Seconded by: Keith Turner

AND THAT the Thornbury Business Improvement Area direct the Thornbury BIA Board to present the draft 2019 Proposed Thornbury Business

Improvement Area Budget to Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains for consideration and adoption. Carried

C.3 Comments: George stated that the BIA is restricted in the way it does its business. For example, being an arm of the town, the BIA cannot hold meetings with more than 3 directors present without publicizing the meeting. As long as they advertise that they are meeting, they can meet and he would like to see if the directors would like to meet more often. This makes working on issues between board meetings more difficult.

Renee asked who was responsible for the lampposts and George mentioned it was the town. One came down on the corner Louisa and Bruce near the Parlor and Renee was concerned about whose responsibility it was.

Tony spoke on the perception in the town with businesses that only place brown paper on their windows. It might be better to have something that states 'coming soon' to help alleviate negative perceptions.

Nicole mentioned that she sees foot traffic growing and that most of her clientele drive. She noted that Thornbury is quaint and would like to see some more benches out in the summer.

Councillor Potter stated how the town is interested in sustainability, and economic viability is a huge part of this. The importance of the downtown area is core to any town.

D. Adjournment

Moved by: Melanie Johns

Seconded by: Tony Poole

THAT this meeting does now adjourn at 6:59 p.m. to meet again on June 5, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. at The Town of The Blue Mountains Council Chamber or at the call of the Chair.