

This document can be made available in other accessible formats as soon as practicable and upon request

Minutes: The Thornbury Business Improvement Area Meeting



MEETING DATE: July 4, 2018

MEETING TIME: 8:00 a.m.

LOCATION: Town Hall Council Chambers

PREPARED BY: Sarah Merrifield, Clerks & CS Admin

A. Call to Order

- Chair George Matamoros welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. with Board of Management Directors Melanie Johns, Leslie Lewis, Renee DesRochers, Tony Poole, and Skot Beaumont present. Absent was Kathryn Brown. Also in attendance were BIA Events Manager Sarah McNulty, Matthew Cundy of Thornbury Graphics, Interim CAO Shawn Everitt, and Acting Director of Community Services Ryan Gibbons.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Skot Beaumont

Seconded by: Leslie Lewis

THAT the Agenda of July 4, 2018 be approved as circulated. Carried.

- **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest:** None.

- **Previous Minutes**

Moved by: Tony Poole

Seconded by: Renee Desrochers

THAT the Thornbury BIA Minutes of the June 6, 2018 meeting be approved as circulated. Carried.

B. Deputation

None.

C. Meeting

C.1 Events Committees Update for Apple Harvest Festival & Canada Day: Sarah McNulty

Apple Harvest

Sarah advised the group that a meeting is set with the Apple Harvest Festival Committee in the next two weeks to discuss the event. To date, the Blue Mountain Village Association has not been in contact regarding the Apple Harvest Festival.

Canada Day

Sarah confirmed that overall, the Canada Day weekend events were a success, but noted that participation was down significantly, perhaps due to the weather or rumours of event cancellation. Sarah advised that the group should consider adopting a formalized inclement weather policy, to ensure there is a communication plan in place if the event must be cancelled.

George commented the decision to cancel these types of events should be made the day before, rather than the day of. Shawn noted that Ryan worked with the Grey Bruce Health Unit and did a good job of communicating the possibility of event cancellation. The Town's primary concern is for the safety of participants, volunteers, and event organizers. Shawn advised that by 11 o'clock the day of the Beaver Crawl and the parade, the temperature did not raise above the threshold, so it was determined the events could continue. To George's point, Shawn advised that if the BIA provided direction for day-prior event cancellation due to potential inclement weather, the Town would support that decision, but noted the community may disapprove. George commended the Town for their efforts to communicate the potential event cancellation, and monitor the temperature to ensure safety. George suggested that in the future, event messaging can be focused more around how to stay safe in the heat, and perhaps have provisions such as cooling centers set up for participants to utilize.

Melanie commented that the fireworks display was excellent and overall the event was spectacular.

C.2 Discussion of Patio By-law: George Matamoros

George provided some history on the need for urgency regarding discussion of the Patio By-law. He noted that several businesses that have set out chairs for passersby or customers to stop and sit were asked by By-law Enforcement Officers to remove the seating areas, citing the Patio By-law. By-law advised the business owners that if they wished to have seating available on the sidewalk, they would be required to apply for a yearly permit, costing \$50 and carry \$5 million in insurance. George commented this is a harsh stance, given that the Patio By-law states it is enforceable at businesses where beverages are being served, and many businesses providing seating are not serving drink.

George confirmed that By-law Enforcement has since softened its stance on the outdoor seating. Shawn advised the group that Rob Collins, Fire Chief and Director of Enforcement Services is away on extended leave and in the interim, Shawn will be overseeing the Enforcement Division. Enforcement Services has been asked in future to bring these types of concerns to the BIA first, prior to sending letters.

Tony commented that open patio areas are a feature that bring ambiance to a community. Further, he questioned if there is an opportunity to have patio spaces expand into the County road. Shawn confirmed this option has been explored in the past. One of the main concerns is creating accessibility issues and making sidewalks and thoroughfares difficult to navigate for individuals using wheelchairs and scooters, or similar. The road is County jurisdiction, but the sidewalk is under the purview of the Town.

George added that Bruce Street business owners have discussed the idea of doing a full closure of Bruce Street for the summer months to encourage residents and visitors to sit and linger downtown. It would be necessary to review this option with the County if the BIA wished to pursue a pedestrian-friendly closure. Leslie noted that a successful strategy for long term implementation may be to introduce the seasonal closure in

phases, noting the County has been very accommodating in the past with more minor closures for events. Shawn commented the County may be open to exploring this option, but should be approached as soon as possible to initiate discussions. Shawn suggested starting with a Bruce Street closure several weekends per month and build from there. Shawn emphasized the need for strong communication with residents, along with permanent signage installation to ensure motorists are using alternate routes if closures are put in effect. George commented that weekend closures might be very expensive due to the requirement of police presence during periods of short-duration closures. The issue of parking was also discussed with attendees noting that parking availability in the downtown core is an ongoing issue.

Tony mentioned the need for bike racks, noting that a number of individuals are visiting downtown on bikes, resulting in bikes being leaned against store fronts, garden features, and planters. Shawn wondered if putting additional bike racks in a parking spot would be an option, also recognizing this is an inconvenience for motorists to limit parking further. A 12 capacity bike rack would fit in a standard parking spot, and perhaps would enable accessible parking locations to be moved behind Bruce Street (ideal because there is no curb to navigate). Shawn noted if bike racks will be placed in several parking spots, communication with residents will be key for successful implementation.

Renee questioned whether a by-law is in place prohibiting individuals from riding bikes on the sidewalk. Shawn confirms there is a by-law, as well as enforcement. George noted that children are permitted to ride on a sidewalk for safety reasons.

Tony commented that many individuals are using the Bruce Street parking for all day parking, and wondered if there is the ability for Enforcement Services to monitor this. George commented that there is no desire to ostracize visitors who are parking downtown to shop and browse, and staying longer than a few hours. Shawn added if more effort needs to be focused on the downtown core, it can be arranged.

D. Adjournment

Final comments included George advising the group he is unable to attend the next BIA Meeting, being August 1, 2018. Melanie advised she also will not be in attendance. George reminds the group of the need for 4 members to obtain quorum.

Lastly, Shawn advised the BIA that Elizabeth Cornish is no longer with the Town. Recruitment for her replacement will likely begin in the coming weeks.

Moved by: Leslie Lewis

THAT this Board does now adjourn at 8:37 a.m. to meet again Wednesday, August 1, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. Town Hall, Council Chamber or at the call of the Chair.