

**Westboro Village Business Improvement Area
Board of Management Meeting
March 26, 2020
Video Conference call**

MINUTES

In attendance: Molly van der Schee, Darren Prashad, Rick Eisert, Jeff Leiper, Fiona Mitchell, Michelle Groulx, Alan Whitten, Sheba Schmidt

Regrets: Steve Harding, Richard Bown

The meeting was called to order by Chair Molly van Der Schee at 4:33.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Sheba Schmidt, seconded by Darren Prashad, the motion was carried.

Approval of February 20th meeting minutes

Motion by Sheba Schmidt, seconded by Alan Whitten, the motion was carried.

Advisement re: Pecuniary Interest or Conflict of Interest

No pecuniary interest or conflict of interest

Treasurer's Report - presented by Alan Whitten

Just completed the revised budget with approval from the board.

The new budget

1. 15% overall reduction
2. 15% drop in the levy

Until the crisis the budget was on course. If the situation as it stands continues longer than the month and more changes are needed, it is possible to postpone Shop the Village and combine with FUSE. FUSE is scaled down, significantly. Overall we are well situated with a reduced budget and a reserve fund if needed.

Councillor's Report - presented by Jeff Leiper

Working on 2 things:

Small businesses vacancies: Working on convening a meeting with landlords, property managers and commercial landlords with Michelle Groulx and Dennis Van Staaldinien

The Mayor's office is interested in seeing how that goes. The plan is for early next week.

Inviting Deputy City Treasurer, Cindy Van Buskirk.

Preparation for the second wave of people diagnosed with COVID-19. I am not convinced there will be the ability to deliver food and groceries to everyone who needs them. So between the Food Bank, Parkdale Food Centre, Ottawa West Community Support and Dovercourt we are

trying to hammer down a concrete plan of how we are going to deal with the big wave of illness still to come.

Questions:

M. van der Schee - Can I attend the property owners meeting?

J. Leiper - Yes, as the chair of the board yes you may attend.

A. Whitten - Are capital expenditures like the Scott street work continuing? Along with others in the city?

J. Leiper - There is no mention of any work in our ward not moving forward, including the Scott street construction. The city does not benefit financially by placing the projects on hold.

The city isn't cutting capital projects as they look to turn to development packages to help with COVID-19.

Executive Director's Report - presented by Michelle Groulx

Michelle circulated a letter to the Board of Management that will be sent to all BIA members. The letter communicates the measures Westboro Village BIA has taken by reducing the levy and overall expenditures. It is our desire for the property owners and tenants to talk to each other and find solutions during this crisis. This letter will be posted on our website and LinkedIn for all to see and sent out to all members via email; positioned as a letter from the Westboro Village BIA Board of Management, via Michelle Groulx.

The letter will be posted and sent out to the members tomorrow March 27th.

Michelle has spoken to anyone who is affected by the BIA budget changes, including staff and contractors.

It was agreed by the board, the budget for street maintenance would not change as there was a desire to prevent the street from looking desolate during the COVID-19 crisis. However, the hired contractor for the wreaths and holiday lights is considered a non-essential business which means the BIA will have to wait 2 more weeks minimum for the lights and the wreaths to come down.

Darryl Prashad had a concern regarding the letter's focus on small businesses in the BIA; however there are a lot of large businesses in the same boat and could the letter be more inclusive to include all of the businesses of the Westboro Village BIA.

Michelle agreed and said she would adjust the letter.

New Business

The BIA office is promoting a sharing kindness and supporting businesses contest.

FUSE changes, the event will be more like Shop the Village, no street closure. Closing the street and having security to support the closure is a huge cost.

The BIA is still marketing Shop the Village. If Shop the Village is not able to run then the side walk sale will be combined with FUSE in August. Ottawa Tourism is planning a large marketing campaign around Ottawa Staycation for the summer. The WV BIA office is adapting to any changes as they come for our planned events.

Questions

Rick Eisert - Will there be a large marketing push " We are Open for Business" when this is all over and are you planning for this?

M. Groulx - Yes, back in business, staycation and inviting people to come to the street. I am hoping this will align with the completion of the mural and other activities happening in the Village. The message will be - our doors are open there are so many things to see. This campaign will be big and we will be spending the marketing dollars that are just sitting right now. If the BIA is not able to host some of the planned events, the marketing dollars will be used for additional promotions in the year.

The BIA has not been purchasing gift cards at this moment but is pushing the public to support businesses now through various means (including purchasing gift cards). When shops do open again, the BIA will purchase gift cards and will be giving them out as prizes.

Darren Prashad proposed an idea. Hosting a virtual brunch in the Village...here are the places you can order from. A discussion followed to flesh out the idea.

- 10-2pm Westboro brunch
- Breakfast and lunch
- Messaging - a feeling of togetherness and support our restaurants

Michelle will reach out and see what businesses would be interested in participating in this combined effort. Darren Prashad said he is available to help organize.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm.

Motion by Sheba Schmidt, seconded by Alan Whitten, the motion was carried.