



Westboro Village Business Improvement Area

Board of Management Meeting

February 18, 2021

Zoom Meeting ID: 837 8047 9163

MINUTES

In attendance: Alan Whitten, Erin Crowell, Rick Eisert, Fiona Mitchell, Molly van der Schee, Judy Lincoln, Sheba Schmidt, Jeff Leiper, Tara Hamilton,

Regrets: Sharon Bosley

Call to Order: 4:40 PM

Approval of Agenda was motioned by Erin Crowell, seconded by Alan Whitten. No opposed the motion was carried.

Approval of the November 19th, 2020 Meeting Minutes was motioned by Alan Whitten, seconded by Erin Crowell. No opposed the motion was carried.

Advisement re: Pecuniary Interest or Conflict of Interest – there were none.

Treasurer's Report - Alan Whitten

Nothing to report on since it is the beginning of the year and there has been no expenses as of yet.

Judy L did want to call the Board's attention to the remissions line as there was an expectation there would be some remissions from 2020.

Councillor's Report – Jeff Leiper

Section 37 Agreements: Section 37 of the Planning Act allows a municipality, with appropriate Official Plan policies, to pass Zoning By-laws permitting increases in the height and/or density above what is in the existing zoning, in return for the provision of community benefits. There is a fair number of section 37 agreements in Kitchissippi ward for example Trail Head development might generated approx. \$800,000 in community benefits, the councilor in the ward determines how the funds will be spent. The province is changing and tweaking the benefits regime in ways we don't fully understand at this point so for the next 8 months we will be taking a look at what these new rules mean. One of the key questions on our mind is who do we consult with. It's very lose right now but Judy L has requested to be a part of these discussions. These community benefits result in capital projects somewhere in the vicinity of the area of the development.



Judy requested the BIA be included in the conversations for the park planning in the new development at the west corner of McRae and Scott early on. It is part of the BIA and the BIA would be interested to know what our responsibility will be vs the City of Ottawa. Should there be a need for an MOU similar to what is in place for Winston Square.

Jeff L responded siting Winston Square is different because it is not a park but a right of way, it is still a road. Not part of the Parks Department. The park at McRae will be an official park and BIA will not have any responsibilities. Judy initiated water and power would be beneficial.

Executive Director's Report – Judy Lincoln

Dovercourt Sponsorship

Westboro Village BIA and Dovercourt Community Centre have worked together in partnership and community building for decades, going back to Westboro Days and the years of parades. We have been sponsoring their community building programs for a value of \$5000 for several years. We have not had a written agreement previously. This year John Rapp sent a letter outlining the goals of sponsorship and how we can continue to work together through COVID and times without events.

Motion to approve the sponsorship of \$5000 for Dovercourt

Moved by Erin Crowell and seconded by Rick Eisert. No oppositions, the motion was carried.

~~This year we have continued our sponsorship of the SJAM Winter Trail, including updating signs at trail entrances, and coordinating videos with Groomer Dave. We have also sponsored the Coldest Night of the Year walk in support of Cornerstone Housing for Women.~~

We currently do not have a formal strategy for donations and sponsorships. For the past few years, they have been very hyper local, including Cornerstone, Westboro Region Food Bank, Salus Housing, SJAM, and Dovercourt. Is there any feedback on how we are currently supporting hyperlocal organizations or a desire to expand? I would recommend we survey our members to see what organizations they support.

The Board agreed a survey would be a good way to receive feedback and thought it was important to ask the members. As a form of engagement.

Whiskey Jack Contract Addendum

We are in the second year of a contract with WhiskeyJack Media as part of a contract originally prepared for FUSE. We added an addendum last year, and we have another one for this, the final year of the contract to cover other outreach and social media services. The services provided in 2021 were very successful and included many giveaways. The addendum for this



year includes quite a bit of flexibility to account for every changing public health guidelines and regulations.

Motion to approve the second addendum to the existing the Whiskeyjack contract. Moved by Rick Eisert and seconded by Erin Crowell. No oppositions, the motion was carried.

RFP For street maintenance

We are preparing the RFP for street maintenance this year. We are currently in a cycle where we are putting the contract out to tender each year. Neither Tara nor I are sure if there was a reason it is on a one year, or if we could move to a 2 or 3 year contract to reduce the frequency of tenders. The other large contract we have is for the holiday lights. Ideally, we could have these contracts out for tender on alternating years. Are there any objections to a multi-year contract?

The Board had no opposition to offering 2-year contracts going forward.

Subcommittee for street beautification and wayfinding

As part of the strategic plan and as discussed at the AGM, Judy would like to set up a subcommittee to begin looking at a five-year strategic plan. With the great amount of change coming to both Richmond Road and the McRae/Scott intersection now would be a good time to begin planning. Additionally, the BIA office have seen several funding opportunities arise in the past quarter, but we don't have any "dream" projects left in the quickly implement. Judy asked if there anyone who would like chair this subcommittee? The BIA office can work on recruitment to the committee from the office, and Judy anticipate meeting every 6-8 weeks with much being accomplished via email.

Erin Crowell has agreed to chair the Subcommittee for street beautification and wayfinding.

Judy also asked the Board if anyone has a relationship with Ashcroft and could make an introduction. It would be important to engage them in conversations about street beautification since the BIA office is not able to hang baskets from the street poles at the east end of the street. The City of Ottawa is not in support of our request to hang baskets from the street poles, a conversation with Ashcroft would be helpful to determine what planter could be planted, if we need to speak with the condo board etc. **Jeff L said he would provide an introduction.**

Website

We have continued to have security challenges with the website, however Blackiron is committed to working through the problems.



A more pressing issue is that when we had the website built in 2019, it was not done to be AODA Compliant. There are two levels, A and AA. AA is required this year. The cost for Blackiron to make the website compliant is \$1,000.

My recommendation is to go ahead and have this done as part of all the other work that Blackiron is working on.

Question from Rick E. What is the difference between A and AA?

Answer Judy L. A is the most basic, minimum level of conformance. Compliance with Level AA is considered “acceptable” for most websites. Level AA standards often involve compatibility with widely used assistive technology such as screen readers, or issues pertaining to specific areas of disability, such as low vision or cognitive disorders. AA is required for all government websites and being a board of management for the City of Ottawa, the BIA website should be AA compliant.

The deadline to be compliant is June, the BIA office will circulate information about compliance while we wait and see what challenges may come after the site is migrated to a new server. The site is constantly being attacked.

Rick E asked if it was a hosting issue or a Word Press issue?

Judy L responded it's a hacking issue and Blackiron has never seen an situation like this before. It's been migrated from Liquid Web to Nexcess. The move was done in the hopes the attacks will now stop.

Erin C asked how does waiting compare in cost from now to later?

Judy L responded The BIA just paid \$20,000 to have a new website built in 2019. We would prefer not to have a new site built. Hopefully, the migration fixes the issue and then there is only the need to have the website brought up to AA compliance with AODA.

Erin C asked if a new site is built would the BIA use Word Press again?

Judy L said Word Press has a user-friendly backend so The BIA office can make updates, change content and fresh pictures. Otherwise, you would have to pay a company every time you wanted to make changes.

B2B Campaign

Part of the marketing budget for this year is to support the many members who are not Dining or Shopping. We expect there may be an increasing number of vacancies in second floor offices. As part of this the plan is to create a landing page on our main website with information that can help with business recruitment. This would be “Doing Business in Westboro Village” style page. I would include interviews with newer BIA members about why they chose to open in Westboro.

Currently, our public facing members (not-property owners) are:

13 % (38 businesses) Dine,
17% (50 businesses) Shop,
51% (147 businesses) Services.



We estimate we have 40 vacancies and 7 properties under development.

We are lacking recent research and details about the Village, and I have been reaching out to other BIAs to see what kind of research they have done recently and what they find helpful. We have not done extensive research since evaluating WestFest in the final year.

I would like to create an RFP for a B2B campaign to see how a firm could help us build a framework for a 3 year plan. Business recruitment and further engagement with this sector can be a key part of the economic recovery. When discussing with companies it can give us an idea of what we need over a multiyear period and how to best make the investments. Many of our

street level businesses, especially the coffee shops and quick service dining have seen the impact of empty offices and businesses on the second floor on the Monday to Friday business.

The Board is in favour of exploring the cost of a B2B campaign and comparing quotes.

Panel Discussion with Vanier BIA: The Future of Physical Retail & Main Street in Post Pandemic City

Nathalie Carrier and I have been invited to sit on a panel by Urban Land Institute Ottawa Chapter Management Committee to discuss the future of physical retail the date is TBC after a reschedule from February 24th.

Sign on McRae

We received \$750 towards the installation of a sign, similar to our gateway sign at Island Park into our planter on McRae as part of a winter grant program from the city. ROW as given their approval to move forward with the sign. The sign will include a QR code that brings pedestrians to the website directory.

Insurance

Our insurance costs in 2020 were quite low, and it was because the city was renegotiating the policy due to a need to find new underwriters. They have successfully done so and we will be paying for the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 premiums this year. They are \$4682 & \$3226 respectively. I am just waiting to hear back from Emilie at Insurance and legal services with the city to clarify a few questions I have on the application.

Position paper from Vanier BIA to OCOBIA

This calls for a moratorium on HST for the hospitality industry to allow them to recover more efficiently. I received the paper just before 3pm, and they are looking for support to send it out under OCOBIA name. It was developed by Vanier BIA and DAS Lokal restaurant. It is based on the EU VAT rebate as a model for success. I am happy to support and will send circulate to all of you for your consideration. I support it as a proposal forward.

The Board agreed they would like to review the proposal.



Adjournment: 5:24 PM