

St. Jacobs Business Improvement Area Board of Management Meeting Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

8:30 a.m.

Online – Google Meet

- Present: Edward Denyer, Bob Wilbur, Michael Palmer, Brittany Burgess, Craig Miller, Phil Hipkiss, Nick Benninger, Graham Spence, Erin Schmidt - BIA Coordinator, Jenna Morris - Township of Woolwich, Eric Schwindt - Township of Woolwich
- Guests: Jeff Smith – Township of Woolwich, Richard Petherick – Township of Woolwich, Ross White – St. Jacobs & Aberfoyle Model Railway
- Absent: Dan Vandermolen, Leslie Kay - Social Media Manager

1. Call Meeting to Order (8:33 am) Edward Denyer called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Bob Wilbur

Seconded by Ed Denyer

That the agenda be approved as circulated

....Carried

3. Approval of the Minutes

November 1st, 2022, Board Meeting

Moved by Bob Wilbur

Seconded by Michael Palmer

That the St. Jacobs BIA Board of Management approves the minutes of November 1st, 2022, as circulated

....Carried

4. New Business

Land Acknowledgement

Bob read the Land Acknowledgement as presented to the BIA by the Township of Woolwich at the March 1st board meeting.

Bylaw and Levy Information

As discussed at 2022 AGM, the board is considering an increase in the levy to support more programs and staffing. Jeff Smith and Richard Petherick from the Township of Woolwich joined the meeting to explain the process around increasing the BIA levy. The last time a levy increase was approved, the process took 6 months, plus time in advance to prepare. The board would need to determine the new budget request and new minimum and maximum for the levy. Once ready, a request is made to council, followed by a 60-day notice period. Jeff mentioned that it is possible to set the levy higher than required in order to plan for future expansion of the BIA budget. Richard offered that his staff could run the numbers on a few scenarios for a levy increase. It would be very tight timing to do an increase in 2023. Planning should be started now to consider this for the 2024 budget. A subcommittee will be formed to look into this in more detail.

Budget Update

Erin provided a budget update with agenda. There were no questions or comments. Plan is to complete the 2023 by in January. Need input from the Events committee on that portion of the budget, all other committee heads have provided feedback.

Beautification Update

No updates this month.

Events Update

Brittany updated the board on Sparkles. We had very positive feedback on the Sparkles event this year. Some stores have reported seeing an increase in traffic over 2019. A survey will be going out for feedback from businesses. Santa was successful at Home Furniture and we plan to continue with that location next year. Great feedback on the 'SPARKLES' letter sign. Some feedback includes people wanting to have even more festive things to do, especially on the Thursdays when it is slower and requests for stores to be open later (9pm - particularly on Friday nights as there isn't much time to eat and shop by the time they finish work). We will gather feedback on having it over 1 weekend vs. 2 weekends.

Marketing

Mike updated us on the marketing committee's work. Working on some marketing stats for Sparkles that will be shared with businesses. We will be doing some updates to website where we link directly to business's site instead of having individual landing pages to help keep things up to date. Craig mentioned that their business was doing well on Mondays, but that very few stores (10%?) are open. We will add this to the agenda of the AGM to discuss with businesses the value of being open 7 days a week. Could advertise this directly on the website (stores open 7 days).

Member / Community Engagement

Dan updated on member engagement. He is continuing to have open discussions and gather feedback from businesses. Mentioned that there is approval for a fenced dog park in the village and the group organizing is looking for businesses to help sponsor it. Erin will pass along more information to businesses once it is ready. We will work on setting dates for the member and community social for 2023.

Grant Updates

Erin submitted a grant application for more Tourism Relief Funding from the federal government to purchase a skating rink and build storage near the firehall. Phil suggested that this could be used in the summer for ball hockey as well. We will not know about this funding until Jan 2023 at which point we will need to determine the final details. The project must be completed by end of March 2023. The HVT pavilion is proceeding well and will be completed soon. There is a bit more money that could be spent. Ed suggested looking into solar lights.

2023 Meeting Schedule

Discussed meeting schedule for 2023. Will continue to rotate having an in-person meeting (starting Jan. 10th) followed by 2 online meetings. Erin will send out invites and post new schedule.

5. Next Meeting

Tuesday Jan. 10th, 2023 4:00pm - Location – In-Person (Quarry)