Downtown Huntsville BIA
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE – Council Chambers, Third Floor
AGENDA: Thursday November 21, 2019
8:00 am – 9:00 am

Present: Rachel Hunt – Chair
           Joan Wager
           Will Lougheed
           Christine Kropp
           Nate Smith
           Karin Terziano – Council Representative
           Scott Ovell – Town of Huntsville Representative
           Morgan Richter - Staff

Regrets: Michelle Gardiner
         Lindsay Buttus
         Steve Campbell
         Kathy Sheridan
         Kelly Haywood
         Michelle Gardiner
         Catherine Cole

1. Call to Order: The Board Meeting of the Downtown Huntsville BIA was called to order at 8:07 a.m. on November 21st, 2019 in Council Chambers by Chair, Rachel Hunt.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest: No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MOTION: To accept the Agenda (please note, next board meeting is November 28th at 8:30am, not 8:00am.
   a. Motioned by: Christine Kropp
   b. Seconded by: Joan Wager
   CARRIED

4. MOTION: To accept the minutes of October 17, 2019 BIA Board Meeting
   a. Motioned by: Joan Wager
   b. Seconded by: Christine Kropp
   CARRIED

5. Delegation – Muskoka Maple Festival
   • Jeff Suddaby, the chair of the Muskoka Maple Committee spoke on their behalf regarding the $5 admission fee for the Maple Festival.
• The purpose of the Maple Festival is to develop an event that brings people to the Town of Huntsville in the shoulder season, by marking local producers and culinary aspects. If the event/admission fee is impacting Downtown in a negative way, this needs to be addressed. That is not the purpose of the event and that is a point to discuss if it is.

• The Maple committee would like the Festival to continue to be Downtown Huntsville, but in order to do so they will need to charge an admission fee of $5 (similar to Fire and Ice in Bracebridge).

• The event has to sustain itself, without replying on funding sources. The committee would like to see the event grow. In 2019, if the event did not charge it would have lost money and the event would not be happening in 2020. Currently, there is no slush fund, making it hard to plan for the next years event.

• A reserve of buttons will be distributed to groups who may not be able to afford the admission fee to ensure people are able to enjoy the festival. Suggestion, perhaps a reserve of buttons goes to the BIA as well. Children under 12 are free.

6. Muskoka Maple Festival Discussion

• Downtown Huntsville is a great location for the Maple Festival, would hate to see the Maple Festival leave Downtown.

• Although $7,000 was generate last year in admission fee sales, the event still went is going into a deficit for 2020.

• Is there a solution to generate revenue without charging the public? You should not be confronted to pay to downtown. It is not ideal to have an event charge on Main Street. Perhaps the vendor fee needs to be higher. Perhaps $2 is better than $5 – there is not a large attraction at the Maple Festival – Fire and Ice has an activity (tubing hill). Perhaps the Municipal Accommodation Tax is a source of funds. Perhaps the $5,000 the BIA gives the Chamber goes toward this event, and the BIA creates an agreement with the Chamber of Commerce outlining this.

• Entertainment, infrastructure and marketing are the largest expense.

• Charging an admission fee is a challenge for service industries Downtown.

• If the BIA was opposed to this, it would go through the SEAT team for conversation and a decision – the BIA does sit on the SEAT team.

• If there is a fee, there needs to be volunteer training and a cohesive sales pitch explaining the reasoning and where the money is going. The admission fee needs to be advertised extremely well – allowing people to know and make the choice. This BIA can help with this.

• Perhaps BIA members do not have to pay the vendor fee to be on the street.

• Suggestion to charge an admission fee but have something tangible to give the public (sample jar of maple syrup or a tongue).

• Ultimately, the BIA does not want to see the Maple Festival leave downtown. The BIA will not disagree with the charge, but will set parameters around it and make suggestions (kids are free, if you are not coming to the festival, you do not have to pay, appropriate signage, communication and volunteer training etc.)

7. Financial Matters
a. Financials

Year Financials

- The BIA is at 83% spent for 2019 – expenses from Girlfriends Getaway and downtown lighting will be a large expense next month.
- The BIA has overspent in some accounts and underspent in others, so when working on the 2020 budget we have moved numbers around to reflect this.

Draft 2020 Budget

- Broke out advertising – working with local agencies (HBR, Moose, Forester, Country 102) to build an annual campaign and an annual budget.
- This draft budget doesn’t reflect the skating rink expenses – we currently have $3,000 in sponsorship, with a goal of $4,575.
- Need to add a budget line for lighting of $5000.
- $5,000 ask from the Chamber – this needs to have a presentation and parameters around it.
- Next board meeting come prepared with a break down of where 2019 sponsorship dollars went.

5. Reports – New Business Only

a. Town Report
   Karin Terziano

- Karin, Nancy and Dion will be the judges again for the holiday window contest.
- Karin will send Morgan information about reusable bags and Independent Grocer.

b. Promotions and Events
   Joan Wager / Morgan Richter

   See Attached - BIA November 14

c. Snow Fest
   Morgan Richter

- Snow Fest is requesting that the snow stays on the road / the road remains closed beyond OFSAA’s proposed event. The road closure would extend to Friday night (February 21st) and Saturday (February 22nd). The snow would be removed Saturday night at midnight. This is not Family Day weekend.
- The BIA board supports the request for a 3-day road closure.

d. Chairs’ Report
   Rachel Hunt

- Girlfriends Getaway was busy, and a great weekend for Downtown Huntsville.
- Next year, work with other hotels and provide more shuttles, work with the Theatre and request for MAT funding. Need to advertise earlier with save the dates.
- Customer Appreciation Crawl is next Thursday.
- King William construction – the construction workers are doing a good job and are being proactive. The District communication plan was off to a slow start, but now there is more information available. There is an employee with JP that is directly related to communication and is working with all businesses. For the Main Street project, the BIA needs to focus on communication and marketing. Use the Engage Muskoka portal to direct people for more information.

e. Municipal Accommodation Tax Program Up-Date
   Christine Kropp / Scott Ovell

   See Attached – October 10
• Request for proposals is live.

f. **BIA MAT Application**

Morgan Richter

- $10,000 toward a videography campaign to market Downtown Huntsville in the winter months.
- To further leverage funds the Huntsville BIA will approach Explores Edge through their partnership program and request for a 50/50 match ($10,000). Partnership with Explores Edge would happen after approval from the MAT board.
- The MAT application requires the organization to provide 25% of the funding request – the BIA would utilize existing money ($2,500) from the 2020 Events and Promotions budget.
- Videography would take place this winter into the spring.
- Marketing efforts would take place in the fall and winter, this would be the first step in building a program to market the downtown, leading into Streetscape.
- Directly impacts heads in beds during the shoulder season and provides a good marketing tool for streetscape.
- The BIA should work towards a bigger plan geared at streetscape marketing.

6. **New Business**

7. **Closed Session**

- Request for a closed session for Thursday November 28th.

8. **Next Meetings**

a. BIA Special Board Meeting (Digital Main Street Grant) – **Thursday, November 28, 8:30am Council Chambers**

b. Events and Promotions Meeting / FIRESIDE CHAT – **Thursday, December 5, 5:00pm Mill on Main**

c. BIA Board Meeting – **Thursday December 19th, 8:00am Council Chambers**

9. **Adjournment:**

   **MOTION:** to adjourn at 9:25 a.m.
   **Motioned by:** Rachel Hunt
   **CARRIED**

Minutes submitted by: Morgan Richter