



### Call to Order

An Executive meeting of BIA was held on Weds, August 14th at the Seniors Centre in Strathroy. It was officially called to order at 8:05am, presided over by Cate O'Neill, with Raegan Harding as secretary.

### Attendees

Voting members in attendance included Dave Brock, Brad Richards, Robin Tiller, and Demetri Makrakos. Municipal staff included Greg McClinchey (CAO) and Staff included Raegan Harding. Regrets were sent by Chris Traczuk and Sue Looman. Tina Hawkins was not in attendance.

### Approval of Minutes

Motion **1908-01** was made by Dave to approve the minutes of July 10th Executive meeting. Demetri seconded. All in favour, carried.

### Actions/Main Motions

Dave has drafted a formal letter to the Downtown Market re: leaving enough room on either side of vendors, allowing better access and visibility for storefronts, while also addressing the prospect of the Market offering reduced rates as an incentive for BIA merchants to actively participate in the weekly Market.

It was suggested that perhaps the existing 2ft vendor buffer should be increased to 3ft and also that side walls and visibility issues should be taken into account, stating that these Market vendors should be placed in front of vacant storefronts or businesses that are not open during the Market's operating hours.

Greg indicated that there is an official policy currently in effect stating that there must be a min. 2ft gap on either side of vendors, but it was suggested that perhaps the issue lies more in enforcement of this policy. It was also noted that larger vendor spaces will be made the next time curbside Market numbers are stamped.

Motion **1908-02** was made by Demetri to accept Dave's drafted letter to the Downtown Market Executive. Brad seconded. All in favour, carried.

#### • Construction update

It has been noted that the Caradoc St Reconstruction Project has an updated timeline that will see a reduced scope of scheduled work for 2019, now expected to get underway in late August. Greg stated that there is a meeting with the contractor on August 15th. The majority of 2019 work will be from the bridge to Garden Lane.

- Victorian Christmas

Plans for this year's Victorian Christmas got underway with Cate, Leslie, and Raegan meeting on July 25th. The Holiday Market will run again this year and we will work together to ensure that both merchants and vendors are well represented. Our collective goal is to disperse people as much as possible, as a lot of last year's merchant feedback indicated that crowds and vendors were too concentrated around town hall.

The BIA and Strathroy's Downtown Market are proposing closing the streets for this year's Victorian Christmas event, which would encourage local residents and visitors to use outlying parking areas and walk, creating lots of foot traffic in the core. The closure would ultimately follow the Market's existing footprint, starting at Caradoc & Front, extending west down Front St to where Libro is, and south down Frank Street towards James St.

This is the first time the streets would be closed for the Victorian Christmas event and it's important to note that this event is growing in attendance and popularity and, as such, needs to be adjusted accordingly each year as we gain momentum. We've enjoyed great success over the last couple of years, injecting plenty of dollars into our local economy.

Motion **1908-03** was made by Sue, via email, to close the roads for Downtown Strathroy's Victorian Christmas and Holiday Market. Dave seconded. All in favour, carried. It's important to note that the BIA and its Board of Directors moved, seconded, and voted yes in support of this closure via email on August 27th, 2019.

#### Officers' Reports

##### **Treasurer's report**

Dave noted that the current BIA account balance sits at \$60,341.64

It was noted that we have approximately \$33K in "reserves" which have been earmarked for streetscape beautification as a result of upcoming changes in our downtown's infrastructure. It was also noted that approximately half of this reserve fund (\$15K) came from the town's levy adjustment which spanned five years, from 2012-2017. Dave suggested that these BIA reserves should be moved to a separate savings account, rather than sitting as a lump sum in the operational chequing account. There was also a suggestion that a conversation is had with Bill Dakin re: opportunities for long-term investment of these funds.

Motion **1908-04** was made by Dave to open a separate savings account at the credit union and transfer approximately \$33K in "reserves" into this account. Brad seconded. All in favour, carried.

##### **Promotions**

The 2019-2020 CTV ad campaign is undergoing preparations, with creative production having been completed at the end of July. It was noted that there's a total of 18 spots, making up 6 commercials which will begin airing on Sept 16th.

A suggestion was made that, moving forward, the BIA, Market & Municipality join forces to submit one of these commercials. It was noted that the existing Municipal commercial does address both the BIA and the Market, but this commercial will only run until September 15th.

## Beautification

Considerations were discussed regarding Christmas decorations and it was noted that we will be investing in new commercial christmas decor once downtown infrastructure changes are complete, which could be a few years from now. It was suggested that we seek input re: urn decor from BIA merchants. It was also suggested that we try to have another tree put up at the parkette.

## General Manager's report

As discussed, planning for Victorian Christmas has begun and ongoing administrative functions have been performed, including accounts payable & receivable, CTV account management, BIA Buzz, email and MailChimp campaigns, meeting agendas, minutes, and reports etc. Substantial efforts have been made to increase our social media presence, with work still to be done to increase follows on Victorian Christmas and Instagram.

Facebook:

- Downtown Strathroy BIA - total page Likes: 1,256 people and 1,326 Follows (note: up over 300 from this time last year)
- Downtown Strathroy's Victorian Christmas - total page Likes: 270 and 278 Follows

Instagram:

- @downtownstrathroy - 366 followers (note: up almost 200 from this time last year)

## Communications

It was noted that there will be no meeting in August, but the committee will meet again on September 18th in discussion of creating a network of BIA ambassadors to help coordinate and communicate information to and from our BIA members, and also with the general public. To this end, we will be actively seeking BIA volunteers that would act as BIA block liaisons (similar to a block parent-style program).

## Business Development & Advocacy

It was noted that the Business & Breakfast workshops series will continue this year, running from October to May. This initiative, including a free breakfast, is brought to business owner-operators as a complimentary collaboration by Downtown Strathroy's BIA, the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc and Strathroy and District Chamber of Commerce.

Next Meeting(s)

- Executive Meeting: Weds, Sept 11th 8am at the Seniors' Centre
- General Meeting: Thurs, Sept 12th 7pm at the Seniors' Centre

## Adjournment

Motion **1908-05** was made by Demetri to adjourn at 9:33am. Robin seconded. All in favour, carried.

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_