



Downtown Simcoe BIA  
 (Business Improvement Area)  
 MINUTES OF  
 Monthly Board of Management Meeting

DATE: Wednesday December 13, 2023 at 12:00 Noon LOCATION: JK’s Restaurant, Simcoe  
 PRESENT: Board Members: Brian Jones, Lyndsey Ross, Tiana Moe, Marianne Ward, Councilor Alan Duthie, Councilor Doug Brunton, Kathy-Ann Judy Fearon, Laura Downey (Quorum = 6)  
 STAFF: Judy Phibbs, Les Anderson  
 GUESTS: Amy Fanning (Norfolk County Treasurer) and Rob Fleming (Norfolk County Manager of Revenue & Taxation)  
 REGRETS: Shauna Poulton (OPP), Sue Gardner (Norfolk County), Cam Carter, Joe Botscheller, Clarence Burke

<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Call to Order / Welcome / Declaration of Pecuniary Interest / Review of Agenda</u></b></p> <p>12:00 Noon. Brian Jones chaired the meeting, called the meeting to order. Brian reviewed the Agenda. No additions to the Agenda. Brian Jones declared a pecuniary interest in items related to digital services provided to the Simcoe BIA as he is a partner in Shop Our Town. Councilor Alan Duthie noted pecuniary interest on Agenda item #8. There were no other declarations of pecuniary interest.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b><u>Q &amp; A With Norfolk County Treasurer, Amy Fanning &amp; Norfolk County Manager of Revenue &amp; Taxation, Rob Fleming</u></b></p>
a)	<p>To answer questions re Exemption of Taxes and Exemptions of Levy (not-for-profit businesses). Does Riverside 83 and Indwell pay levy? Retail space clarification. Anything exempt would not be charged levy. Reductions/vacant land are charged back to BIA. Anything with commercial designation would be brought into tax. Everything in BIA boundary assessments were pulled and reviewed. Total assessed value divided by levy. Need to confirm those 2 properties and which other ones are existing currently. Refer to other BIAs who have lists of property owners for garbage infractions, etc. MPAC is keeper of that info. OBIAA has access through MPAC for this info and would need to request the information we need for Simcoe. Les stated that he has contacted OBIAA previously, got a password but the information needed didn’t come up through MPAC or OBIAA. The assessment roles can be obtained through Assessment Role Books at Norfolk County. Municipality can’t share because of agreement signed with our individual BIA. Riverside is restaurant/commercial space - Charitable and may be exempt, although unknown at this time. They rent space for meetings. Assessment Act is very broad historically. Only applies when non-profit owns the building.</p>
b)	<p>How do we get exemption list? Rob may provide and pull some information for us. Doug asked how many are exempt and who are they. Since Art For Heart doesn’t own their building, they can apply for the rebate. Rob Fleming will look into this.</p>
c)	<p>Levy amount is based on previous year’s budget. We should look at operating/admin perspective summed up from budget which forms the levy we need. Increase our budget and have Council</p>

	<p>approve, then they divide it out between those levied businesses. Les mentioned that we do a zero-based budget and would be leery of adding \$14K for waste collection services to the budget. Budget cuts could follow that we would have no control over. \$14K went onto property tax for those across Norfolk County. We know its residential garbage, and we shouldn't be in the business of garbage collection. Is there someone who can do it quicker and cheaper? In a commercial area, quick matters. Also applies to snow removal.</p>
d)	<p>Les – Purchasing Bylaw: Amy Fanning will get back to Les tomorrow regarding the approval of the policy.</p>
e)	<p>Use of reserve fund: Councilor Doug Brunton mentioned that funds were transferred a couple years ago. Should anything transferred or used be included for as a line in our budget. Can we apply for a special event? Do we apply each year or use as a budget item? What's not used, stays in. If it's a frequent item, include as budget item. Show expenses with application. Les explained that each year the BIA includes in their budget an item for Transfer From Reserves. This is identified as a revenue item which is offset by the equivalent expenditure. Council approves this as part of budget submitted to them.</p>
f)	<p>Chargebacks: We received 2022 chargebacks in 2023. Although budget may be approved and gone to Budget Committee, it puts us in the hole right off the top. 2022 was \$5,700. We don't get a list of what charge-backs are ie: insurance, audit fees, etc. Any item that changes year to year, the Budget Advisory Committee does a year end reconciliation at starting point and end point of chargebacks. In 2023 audit fees were paid by us, although they were previously a chargeback. For the insurance, Norfolk County could invoice us and we could at least claim the HST.</p>
3.	<p><b><u>Shauna Poulton – OPP</u></b></p> <p>Unable to attend. Attached report was emailed to all board members prior to this meeting. Also emailed separately was the Year-To-Date Report of the Norfolk OPP Occurrences.</p> <p>Joe had asked if cameras were helpful in the identification of individual(s) involved in an incident. Shauna had responded that for the most part, they do assist the OPP, however she does not see all of the end results of the investigations that take place. How do other municipalities finance cameras? Perhaps take to Police Services Board for rebate/help. Can we partner with OPP? Ask Shauna if she would back us up. We would not ask for all fees to be paid, only fees pertaining to monitoring and cameras. Annual \$4,800 for WIFI and tower (each \$200 per month). We will request funding since the OPP do benefit. Police Services Board contacts are Councilor Kim Huffman and Councilor Linda Vandendriessche.</p> <p><b>MOTION</b></p> <p><b>Moved by:</b> Councilor Alan Duthie  <b>Seconded by:</b> Tiana Moe</p> <p>That a request be sent to the Police Services Board for reimbursement of partial operating costs of the cameras in the downtown core.</p>

**Motion Carried**

**MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Marianne Ward

To accept the November 2023 OPP Report and the Year-To-Date Report of the Norfolk OPP Occurrences presented.

**Motion Carried**

**4. Guest: Sue Gardner (Norfolk County)**

Unable to attend. Brandon Sloan sent the Economic Development Strategy Report to Committee of Council.

Amplify Norfolk: In 2023 the 2 funded events were the Fairgrounds Festival and Pumpkinfest. An interesting fact reported was that 18% of attendees had not been to an event on the Fairgrounds. Funding to be a grant that organizations can apply for. 3 grants available (2 of \$40K and 1 of \$20K) for not-for-profit for new programming element with matching funds. Goal is to create 3 other large-scale events.

Economic Development Report: Alan presented John Regan's report which is also available on Norfolk County's website.

There are 3 key elements to be added to the Budget Committee for approval in January 2024.

- 1) Hire an Economic Development staff/analyst.
- 2) County staff meeting with business owners.
- 3) Determine which lands are available as place to visit. When approved, BIA will receive copy.

Amplify Norfolk: Agreement is already in place for Fairgrounds Festival and Pumpkinfest. 50% each year (2023 & 2024) to help in infancy. Year 3 they are on their own. Grant applications can be made by BIA's.

**MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Laura Downey

To accept the Economic Development Report as presented.

**Motion Carried**

**5. Acceptance of Minutes – November 8, 2023**

Councillor Duthie noted some changes that are required under item 8a and 9e.

1. Under Section 8a, Executive Committee, there was a motion to have items for the Board meetings forwarded to the Executive Committee for review. The motion is not recorded.
2. Under Section 9e, The motion by Councillor Duthie and seconded by Marianne Ward, to defer this topic to the next board meeting, should have appeared after paragraph four in section 9e and prior to the motion by Cam Carter and seconded by Marianne Ward, to extend the current Shop Our Town digital services contract until March 31, 2024.

**MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Tiana Moe

To accept the November 8, 2023 meeting minutes with Councillor Alan Duthie’s changes.

**Motion Carried**

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes/Updates**

Items will be covered under Other Business.

**7. Correspondence**

No correspondence received.

**8. Financial Report: Lyndsey Ross, Treasurer**

The Financial Report for November 2023 was emailed to Board members, who reviewed it and had no questions or concerns. Lyndsey reported nothing unusual. Candy Cane Crawl expenses shown. There is a surplus in the operating budget, so some materials and services may be purchased prior to year-end such as office supplies and radio ads. Councilor Alan Duthie noted pecuniary interest on radio ads and did not vote.

Professional fees on audited report were higher. Les explained that 2021 had not been previously billed. Cost was \$1,500 plus HST for each year 2021 and 2022.

**MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Laura Downey

To accept the Treasurer’s Report for the November 2023 Financial Report.

**Motion Carried**

Joe Botscheller and Les Anderson have started the BMO signing authority paperwork. Lyndsey Ross and Brian Jones may go in today for their signatures.

Treasurer Lyndsey Ross will open a BIA savings account to transfer funds in/out of. This will earn minimal interest. Need to inquire if transfer of funds requires 2 signatures. We are not calling it a reserve fund. Les has banking card and password, but funds will only be transferred after an approved motion from board members.

The current accounting program (MYOB) is not adequate, and is not compatible with Mac. Suggest we switch to QuickBooks online. The Basic Easy Start plus basic payroll program is \$49 per month (2 users) and up to 4 employees with possible 50% off the first 4 months. Councilor Alan Duthie inquired how it compares to Simply Accounting (Sage). Lyndsey mentioned that Sage is comparable in price but is a little antiquated.

### **MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Laura Downey

To switch our accounting program to QuickBooks for January, 2024.

**Motion Carried**

## **9. Committee Reports for Board Discussion**

**Executive Committee:** Meeting held Wednesday November 15, 2023. Tiana took on role of executing Board roles.

### **MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Councilor Doug Brunton

To accept the November 15, 2023 Executive Committee Report.

**Motion Carried**

**Communications / Special Events:** Meeting held Tuesday November 7, 2023. The 12 days of Christmas are expanding. New businesses signed up who are not usually involved. In past 28 days, 118% increase in our reach on Facebook. 60 posts. 3.26K followers. Comparison to: Tillsonburg BIA has 2.8K, Port Dover Board of Trade 2.6K, Delhi BIA has 1K, Woodstock Chamber of Commerce 3.7K, Long Point Chamber of Commerce 1.7K, Simcoe & District Chamber of Commerce 1.3K, Tillsonburg Chamber of Commerce 992, Hagersville Chamber of Commerce 521.

Social media getting lots of interactions. Candy Cane Crawl was a great success and was very well received. Titos handed out free pizza. Santa did a great job. Salvation Army kettle did quite well.

**MOTION**

**Moved by:** Tiana Moe

**Seconded by:** Marianne Ward

To accept the Communications / Special Events report of November 7, 2023.

**Motion Carried**

**10. Other Business / Round Table**

**a)** Attendance Policy for Board Members: We are required to keep attendance. We will keep track in the office. If someone misses more than 3 meetings in a row, Tiana will take hold of keeping board members reminded. If quorum is in danger, we need to know prior to the meeting. After 2 meetings without regrets, the Vice-Chair (Tiana Moe) should follow up.

**b)** Purchasing Policy – **DRAFT Policy** attached. Sent to Treasurer November 17, 2023. OK should be received within the next couple of days.

**c)** Update on Draft RFP for Digital Services: A lot has been done already and hopefully next week a DRAFT will be emailed out. Lyndsey Ross would like to call a Communications meeting before next Board meeting so all boxes are checked off. Deferred until January 2024.

**d)** 2023 Budget and Projections to Year End as of November 30, 2023 (attached)

**e)** Wayfinding Signage: Establish committee to include reps from Norfolk County Roads Dept. and Planning Dept. to begin in January 2024. 2 volunteers from the Board to sit on the committee. Brian Jones will and Joe Botscheller is considering it even though he is resigning from the board. Planning & Roads Dept. has been contacted.

**f)** Update on Robinson Street lighting: Installation may be done between Christmas and New Years and will take approximately 3 days to complete. The lights and poles are stored at the Schellburg yard. Buch Electric can go in to pick up items as needed. Plugs near ground level are open and will be capped off.  
Discussion on BIA paying for lighting through grant process. May approach the County after installation regarding reimbursement. Doug will make some calls. Les to send installation costs to Councilor Doug Brunton and Councilor Alan Duthie.

**g)** Larry Dawson plaque – His son Barry can't make it during week and inquired if we could hold off until spring. The Board agreed to hold the ceremony in the spring 2024.

**h)** Request for donation to Routes to Roots Film Festival Christmas family event.

**MOTION**

**Moved by:** Lyndsey Ross

**Seconded by:** Councilor Doug Brunton

To make a donation of \$250 to Routes to Roots Film Festival.

	<b>Motion Carried</b>
	i) Garbage cans: Council has heard a lot about this issue. This morning Devan Hunter said they only removed 2 for winter control and relocated.
	j) Schedule of Board Meetings for 2024. See attached.
11.	<p>MOTION</p> <p><b>Moved by:</b> Councilor Alan Duthie  <b>Seconded by:</b> Marianne Ward</p> <p>That the Simcoe BIA Board of Management meeting be adjourned at 1:10 PM.</p> <p><b>Motion Carried</b></p> <p><b><u>Next Meeting Date:</u></b> Wednesday January 10, 2024. Location: JK's Restaurant</p>

**2023 Downtown Simcoe BIA Board of Management**