Ottawa St. Business Improvement Area

Annual General Meeting

MINUTES

Date: November 1, 2023

Location: Cheecho's, 1430 Ottawa Street, Windsor

Present: Cheecho's Sanswich Shop, Wendy Golevski; Holland Consignment Shoppe, Lawrence Holland; Smootheezz, Byron Griffith; POP, Tracy Paterson; Ettore Salon & Aesthetics, Ettore Bonato; Bella Shanti, Margaret Jones; Bella Shanti, Karen Juniper; Freeds, Mike Osborne; The Walkerville Optical, Mark Trudell; Siblings, Jessica Ryan; White Feather, Tracey Rogers; White Feather, Ron Taillieu; Holland Consignment, Andrea Huhtley; Storytellers Book Store, Linda Ward; Remnant House, Mary Anne & Dave Aitken; Blackframe Sudios, Syx Langemann; City of Windsor, Mark McKenzie; Stereoland, Clark Wiggins; Archway Dental, Eric Bellis; Busy Bee Education, Bri Macpherson; K&S Convenience, Gopel.

Recorder: Tracy Paterson

Meeting Called to Order: Ettore Bonato, 7:02 PM

(Welcome statement) (We have quorum)

Chair's Report:

- Introduction of Board members
- Introduction of Social Media Team
- A BIA is created for improvement and beautification, support of businesses through advertisement, entice new businesses to locate on Ottawa Street
- The BIA is an extension of the City of Windsor so all decisions have to be made following Provincial and Municipal laws, rules and regulations.
- There is a new by-law book out for the BIA's to follow; all BIA's are on the same page now

Approval of Agenda:

- Mike Osborne,1st, Mark Trudell, 2nd, CARRIED

Disclosure of Interest:

- None

Adoption of Past Minutes:

Tracey Rogers, 1st, Mike Osborne, 2nd, CARRIED

Presentations:

- Syx from Blackframe Studios informs us on what we have to do to promote Ottawa Street even more
- #meetyouuptown should be used in every post on Facebook/Instagram
- This will help keep how many hits we get on the BIA site because it is directly connected
- No matter what platform you choose, tag and support to help Syx be the best megaphone for us
- When on the radio, Syx gives a big shout out to Ottawa Street and promotes what events are happening at the time.
- White Feather offered prizes to Ottawa Street BIA to help promote more involvement by everyone; Syx mentioned that some businesses can't afford that and could be considered favouritism
- Syx also suggested if a merchant needs some help with social media, contact him through Facebook/Instagram
- Hallowe'en was a great event; one small detail, there were over 1200 children compared to the normal 500-600; all merchants should be reminded next year being on October 26, 2024
- Pride weekend had much support; would like to see more participation by merchants
- Password/private Facebook page was started during covid but no long exists
- Ottawa Street Dollars were discussed; what do they look like? Wendy from Cheecho's had some to show us
- Do they ever expire? For contests, yes; for regular purchase of them to use as gifts for someone, no.
- There is no cash value; when someone uses them, no change is given.
- Andy Suthers has been assigned to all the BIA's now; if there is a problem, contact 311 or phone the non-emergency Police number
- Discussion about the homeless problem; removing them somehow, crime is up, fecal matter in front of stores, loud, lingering at our doorways

- Mike and Ettore attended the councillor meeting; we do have Officers and Outreach Services coming out in the morning and asking the homeless to move along
- When there is an issue, contact 311 or e-mail them at 311@citywindsor.ca
- Tracey from White Feather would like to have benches removed from the street, especially in front of her store; even change them to small squares
- Mark McKenzie offered an answer; there is discussion of removing them completely; there is a by-law change that could be happening to support this
- He also gave information on how to contact the City with concerns
- Ettore requested information for all of us on what is on the outreach questionnaire outlining the help provided to the homeless
- Also, they are sent to Street Help of provisions and food; they are the BIA's charity of choice
- Gopal from K&S Convenience talks about increased crime and problems in his store
- Lawrence from Holland Consignment suggest we should have a merchant group chat so to share possible crimes with everyone in the group; give them a heads up; Gopal appreciated the idea and will wait for outcome
- Mark McKenzie talked about ways to prevent crime; more lighting for a suggestion
- Talked about Barry Horrobin coming out and doing another lighting survey
- Also talked about approaching the restaurants giving away free food to the homeless; try to make them stop
- Lawrence from Holland Consignment upset there is a blitz going on downtown, what about the Ottawa Street corridor? There is one coming up that will last one week assured by Mark McKenzie
- Councillor is also looking at getting services to help with the homeless for after hours
- Councillor also suggests we need more affordable housing; some are coming but the homeless tend not to enter this programme due to the fact they would rather have the drugs they use
- Councillor also talked about Lanspeary Park, being the largest playground in Ontario
- Ettore has discovered that some of the homeless are just refusing help; all businesses should have Narcan on premises just in case
- Can the BIA pay for security? Answer, no; it's too expensive. The BIA had $72,000 in the bank but it was used for the extra lighting in the alleys
- There is a grant programme by the Federal Government that offers up to $4 million to a BIA to help with housing projects, Ettore will look into it
- Gopal suggests that businesses put money into our fund specifically fighting crime and towards security
- Security on the street would cost up to $20,000 per guard needed

- We can't solve the homeless issue at this meeting; further discussions can be arranged at another special meeting
- We also have to look into speeding on Ottawa Street; can we get some cameras at intersections?
- If there are light standards that are not working, please report it to 311

Treasurer's Report:

- We are in good standing; we have $14,500 in the bank and awaiting the final amount of $35,000
- Part of that money will be set aside for banners; the last time it cost us $18,000 and it could be as high as $30,000 this time
- If the BIA is allowed to expand, Marentette to Walker, we could put banners on every other light standard to save some money; and also get banners made to use during the holiday season

Board of Management Report:

- The sidewalk sales were not as attended as the past; less merchants participating
- Some merchants used social media to promote their sales and reported a great turnout
- The road closure for Pride event was great; more participation from merchants would be appreciated (suggestion on setting up business outside their store fronts)
- All in all, everyone enjoyed the day; lots of foot traffic
- The BIA gets insurance for any event and there were some bad actors in our area that took advantage of the road being closed in front of them; merchants can set up on the sidewalk in front of them but not on the street, and if they do and something happens, the BIA and the City could be sued
- 2024 will bring 2 street closures, Pride in August and Open Streets in September (Erie, Ottawa, Ford City, Pillette, Riverside BIA's will be participating)

Coordinators Report:

- It was discussed earlier
- QR codes have been delivered to all merchants and will be able to be used for the whole year, whatever event is going on
- Holiday window contest will be judged on December 16 @ 5:30PM

New Business:

- New proposed budget, $71,965.00 for the year
- Discussion on how it will be broken down and where the money is going (attached)
- Questions were asked about specifics according to the budget given to the City last year
- Once it is approved, the budget will be further broken down for the City budget that needs to be filled in and sent to the City before the end of the year
- Motion to approve the budget, Mark Trudell, 1st, Lawrence Holland, 2nd, vote to approve the budget by all, CARRIED
- Everything about the budget should be posted on the City Website by March/April 2024
- Discussion of expanding the BIA to Walker road and benefits to it
- Motion made to expand the BIA, Ettore Bonato, 1st, Mike Osborne, 2nd, vote to expand put to members of the BIA attending the AGM, CARRIED
- Unfortunately, Byron Griffith will be leaving Ottawa Street which means there is a position open on the board; the nomination page was handed out to give back to the board and sent to the City for approval

Adjournment:

- Motion to adjourn, Byron Griffith, 1st, Mike Osborne, 2nd, CARRIED.
- Adjourned at 9:32pm