



Third Annual BIA Awards

Prior to the Business Meeting, the awards were handed out by Sara Porter. A record number of nominations and votes were received this year!

They were:

Service of the Year, Kendall Johnston - Sawyer, Sonas Esthetics

Community and Collaboration: Re:Mind Wellness

Hospitality: The Beach Motel and The Southampton Inn

Rising Star(s) of the Year: Vintage Vault and Larkspur Books

Associate Member of the Year: Launch Properties

Volunteer of the Year: Muirgen Coady-Mahoney

Business of the Year: Refresh Juice

Business Achievement: Carol Norris, for 25 years in Southampton!

Service to the BIA Board and the community at large: Paul Schendel, 173 High Street

HIGH STREET REVITALISATION PRESENTATION BY RJ BURNSIDE ASSOCIATES

Vic Bohdanow of RJ Burnside presented the revised plan that will be put forward to Town Council on November 25th. The Plan reflects the overwhelming number of comments and suggestions from the public and BIA subsequent to the Public Information Consultation.

The Plan will be visible in its entirety on Engage Saugeen Shores, but this version is very close to the Plan submitted by the BIA to Town Council last year. The issue of parking has been addressed with minimal reduction of parking spots on the core block, removal of the mid-block crossing between Grosvenor and Huron and additional spots in the Millard Boulevard block.

Should Council accept the Plan, it will then be put out for tender consideration for construction and we were assured that timelines and a communication plan will be part of that process, as well. The BIA's Streetscape Committee looks forward to working with the landscape architect, Burnside and the Town as this initiative progresses.

AGM Called to Order at 7:42pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2024, 7pm
Southampton Town Hall Auditorium

Board Members in Attendance:

Sara Porter, Chair, Re:Mind Wellness; John Divinski, SS Town Council; Kendall Johnston-Sawyer, Treasurer and Streetscape Chair, Sonas Hair and Esthetics; Amanda Deer, The Beach Motel and Gurwinder Singh, Southampton Mini Mart and Pizza
Also Attending: Lisa Mills, Coordinator

Regrets: Sara Fritzley, Promotion and Events co-chair, BJS Electric

Members in Attendance:

Dave Rudell, Southampton Olive Oil; Muirgen Coady-Mahoney, Muirgen Photo; Louise and Dave Logan, The Southampton Store; Rebecca and Jeff, The Licit Garden; David Small, Room 797; Joscelyne Atchison, Fordham's Ice & Bait; Linda Geddes, L & Co; Bruce Martin, Martin's Bicycle Shop; MaryLou Hills, 177 High Street; Jake Walton, Walker House; Melanie Myers; Delores Sullivan, 188 High Street; Lynda Quesnel, Allure Esthetics

Others in attendance:

Diane Huber, Deputy Mayor, Town of Saugeen Shores, Cheryl Grace, Councillor, TSS; Ruhul Amin, TSS; Mark Paoli, TSS; Amanda Monaghan, TSS; HT Lam, RJ Burnside; Jarvis Cloudfield, RJB; Vic Bohdanow, RJB; Lukas Heathers, TSS; Doug Longmire

1. Meeting called to Order, 7:42 pm, Land Acknowledgement and Welcome

Sara Porter, Chair

We want to acknowledge the Territory of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomie Nations. And further, to give thanks to the Chippewas of Saugeen and the Chippewas of Nawash, known collectively as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, as the traditional keepers of this land.

Welcome to the Deputy Mayor, Councillors, Town of Saugeen Shores Staff, Membership and others

2. What is a BIA?

Sara Porter, Chair

The Southampton Business Improvement Area (BIA) is an association of commercial property owners and tenants within Southampton, who work in partnership with the Town of Saugeen Shores to create a thriving and a safe business area that attracts shoppers, diners, tourists, and new businesses.

By working collectively as a BIA, local businesses have the resource capacity (funds and people), to actively enhance the quality of life in our neighbourhood and the Municipality as a whole.

The mission of a BIA is a "collective good" – The work is "not to make any *one* business better, but to make the area a better place to do business". BIAs do this through beautifying and maintaining the public realm and promoting the area as a good place to do business (with thanks to the Ontario Business Improvement

Area Association).

3. **Request for any Declaration of Pecuniary Interest**

Sara Porter, Chair

None Declared

4. **Request for Motion to Accept the Minutes from November 6, 2023 AGM**

Sara Porter, Chair

Moved by John, Divinski, Councillor, TSS and Board Member

Seconded by Melanie Myers

Carried unanimously

5. **Chair's Report**

Sara Porter, Chair

In 2024 the BIA Board undertook the task of creating a strategic plan to act as a mission and guideline as we move forward. This document was reviewed in detail and may be found on the BIA website as a PDF [here](#) (scroll down to Strategic Plan).

This document, along with the [2024 Annual Report](#) spell out in detail what we've done and what we'd like to do and in lieu of detailed minutes, we ask that you refer to these documents.

Additionally, the BIA and Amanda Monaghan will explore options to expand the boundary of the SBIA to possibly include Saugeen Township. We also wish to explore the possibility of having a bylaw or a direction for property owners on the core block of High Street that would encourage street level businesses to be retail or hospitality whenever possible, and encourage new service businesses to be either away from the core block or on upper levels of High Street buildings.

Diane Huber, Deputy Mayor asked if this was a "done deal" and Amanda responded that this is strictly at the "exploring options" stage. Deputy Mayor Huber indicated that a downtown should reflect all business sectors. Mary Lou Hills asked if it was an expectation that existing service businesses move and Sara Porter assured her that no, existing businesses, in particular those that are part of the fabric of High Street, would never be expected to change their existing business model (unless they really want to).

Gift Card Programme - a new initiative by the BIA with Hello Card where people may purchase a self-loading gift card for use at participating businesses - to date there are 20. The programme is seamless to use and has no additional fees to the business or consumer. Deputy Mayor Huber wondered if the physical card could be customised and Sara Porter

explained that the BIA chose Hello Card because they offered a no-fee programme. Companies offering card customisation had significant overhead fees. The BIA will offer gift card vouchers as prizes for draws and at events. It's a great way to "Give the Gift of Southampton" and is also a great perk for merchants to offer their staff as gifts.

A Holiday Promotion is being launched prior to Sparkles wherein the new card purchases will be topped up by 25% to a limit of \$1500 and the BIA is picking up that cost to encourage purchase of the Gift Cards

David Small had questions about running cross promotions with the Gift Card and we are going to set up a meeting with Hello Card to investigate how that can be rolled out.

Sara indicated that with the retirement of Paul Schendel from the Board, we do have an opening for a Board Member as well as opportunities for volunteers to sit on either the Streetscape or Promo & Events Committees.

6. Streetscape and Beautification Report, Sara Porter

Please refer to the Annual Report for specifics but Sara did indicate that as High Street Revitalisation happens, this portion of the annual budget may roll over and accumulate for future spending on planters, street furnishings, etc.

This year the BIA made an investment in purchasing the use of images by local artists Emily Kewageshig and Taylor Cameron for summer banners on the core block, and Truth and Reconciliation banners, as well as generic Pride and Canada Day Banners that were mounted at the intersection of High and Albert.

Additionally, monies have been spent on some new lit decorations for the Town Christmas Tree and these will be revealed at Sparkles on November 21st.

7. Promotion and Events, Sara Porter, co chair

Please refer to the Annual Report for details regarding 2024 initiatives and 2025 plans.

The Committee wants to capitalise on existing events and drill down on 'shoulder season' events and promotions. ***To that end, we encourage business owners to take advantage of our photography programme where Muirgen Photo, who will come to your business and take (fabulous) photos of you in your premises. Please call Sara to make an appointment!*** The BIA can use these as Member Highlights on our website and socials and Members have full access to the image library for their own use. Images may be found [here](#)

Possible events for 2025 might include Love at the Lake in February with a dinner and a movie promotion where folks can enjoy dinner out and a movie at the Town Hall on the Family Day Weekend. Possibly also have a kids matinee.

May - shop local month or would members rather have a promotion in March or April?

June - L+at the Lake

July - Flagquest with Marine Heritage - we are re-visiting Flagquest. While businesses love it, we've had dwindling engagement from the public in the last few years.

August - Music on High - We're bringing back Shindig! with a street party on High. We will make this an evening event so as to have the least amount of disruption to retail business hours.

October - Live at the Lake

The Committee appreciates that we cannot expect businesses to keep having discount shopping opportunities and while we did ask for businesses to create in-store events in 2024, very few made the effort. Dave Rudell indicated that the original concept was to create a womens shopping experience with in-store events, a fall colours tour, bike tours, and a culture walk. Sara indicated that there hasn't been a desire for the fall colours tour or bike tours with weather being "iffy". Dave also mentioned that having swag bags ahead of time encouraged women to gather however prior to switching up the swag bags for actual swag (gifts), they became bags filled with postcards, paper and inexpensive tchochkas that inevitably ended up in the bin. The committee then chose to up the swag in 2023 with a very full bag that included branded cap and T, engraved glass and a tree ornament. This came with a larger ticket price for the dance. 2024 saw us cut back on swag to include a \$25 Southampton Gift Card as feedback told us that people would rather have a lower dance ticket price. Yes, the event has changed from a discount shopping weekend to more of a social gathering and dance and our feedback has been positive about this change but the Committee will be revisiting the event and hopes that merchants will take up the opportunity to host in-store events.

Dave also suggested that a postcard available at all POS through the summer advertising the weekend might be helpful and the Committee totally agrees with the caveat that unless there are planned events to promote, this may not be the best use of funds.

To that end, there is now a [Google calendar](#) on the BIA website for both Members (dates of all meetings, promos, events, , etc), and the public (promotions and events), that can be subscribed to.

November - Savour Southampton encourages people to photograph, tag and share their meals at their favourite restaurants and there will be a weekly draw for a gift card plus a larger prize at the end of the month

Sparkles is November 21st with the tree lighting, followed the next day with the first Festive Friday and free horse drawn wagon rides. This has become a beloved tradition on High Street and this year the on-boarding spot will be in front of Larkspur Books. The BIA wants to give as many businesses as possible the opportunity to be featured in this way. John Divinski wonders if the horses shouldn't be at a different business each of the four weeks, but the Committee felt that would be confusing to people who know they have to sign up at the store in person on the day of the rides.

December - 3 more Festive Fridays ending with the 2nd Annual Santa Summit on the 20th. This pub crawl was a great success last year with festively attired folks walking from spot to spot to enjoy festive cheer. In fact, it was suggested that we do something similar in March, so please look forward to the Leprachaun Leap!

Again, Sara has asked for volunteers to either sit on a committee or even on a specific event.

8. Deputy Mayor Huber apprised the Membership of some Town initiatives:
- a) The 12 month ice pilot at the Plex
 - b) \$.5 million investment at Jubilee Park that will include an outdoor walking trail and a pavilion behind the Chantry Center
 - c) Halliwell Park is also looking to have facelift, pending funding application approvals
 - d) Hwy 21 from the 6th to the 10th Concessions (through Port Elgin), will be re surfaced in 2025 to be followed by resurfacing through Southampton at a later date
 - e) There will be a roundabout study for the intersection at Foodland
 - f) There will be more large events at the Coliseum and the BIA should take advantage of those crowds and find ways to direct participants downtown!
 - g) Finally, she's delighted to see that High Street Revitalisation may finally come to fruition and looks forward to the complete report on November 25th's Council meeting.

9. **Budget**

2024 spending was on target per attached and the 2025 budget will be held at the same amount. Thereafter we intend to tie levy increases to annual commercial property tax increases and revised programmes, as necessary.

For 2025 we are investigating opportunities to spend some money from the P&E Budget on a podcast/social media package that would provide us with digital assets for use on our socials, website and (yet to be activated), YouTube channel. Amanda Monaghan indicated that the Town is also planning to spend on videography for similar purposes.

10. **Additional items:** Is there a desire for BIA Socials?

Wellness Week: have an opportunity to bring in people to encourage discussion about taking care of ourselves (as business owners), and each other (as a business community)

Again this Winter and Spring, we will have BIA Open Office Days if anyone wants to come by and have a chat and get caught up!

Social Responsibility: this goes along with Wellness Week and we encourage everyone to review this section of the Annual Report

11. **Questions from the Floor**

Dave Rudell re: High Street Revitalisation Dave wants to know how the Town can enforce the parking limit on High Street during the busy season. He suggests that a revenue neutral plan could be put in place with summer student(s) tagging cars and that offenders get one "get out of jail free" ticket and pay a proper fine thereafter.

Jake Walton: thanked Sara specifically and the Board in general for all of their hard work

12. **Request for Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57pm**

Moved by MaryLou Hills

Seconded by Bruce Martin

Carried unanimously