



**BURLINGTON DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 6, 2023**

Present: S. Bell, L. Bouchard-Bain, N. Gardner, B. Glazier, D. Gray, D. Kuchma, S. Peachey
P. Skoretz, A. Ucar E. Vine, and B. Wodhams
Via Zoom: E. Vine
Staff: L. Birmingham, B. Dean, and A. Policicchio
Absent: A. Ucar and Councillor Kearns
Guests: J. Jones – Contract Membership Services

1. Call to Order 8:00 am by L. Bouchard-Bain

No conflicts of interest were declared for this meeting.
B. Dean referenced the new Wi-Fi for Board and staff use.

2. Approval of Board Minutes:

Wednesday November 1, 2023
Motion by: S. Bell Second by: P. Skoretz
"To approve the minutes of Wednesday November 1, 2023, as presented."
Motion Carried / 0 Opposed

3. Treasurer`s Remarks: S. Bell

- Chair L. Bouchard-Bain and staff met with the City Finance Department.
- The BDBA has a budget of \$30,000 for 2023 write-offs and will be slightly under budget by approximately \$5,000.
- The budget for supplementals in the Revenue budget was \$15,000. Unfortunately, we learned there are no supplementals in 2023.
- The Executive Committee met to determine staff salary and compensation for 2024. This figure is in the draft operating budget; should you have any questions please direct them to Treasurer, S. Bell.
- B. Glazier, Craig Kowalchuk, B. Dean and S. Bell met as a delegation to Committee of Council to discuss the Outdoor Patio Report 2024. The delegation was successful in asking the Committee to waive fees previously requested for cost-recovery measures. The committee directed them to investigate new cost-share programs like 'grants' to come into effect in 2025. Unfortunately, there are no cost-share options available with the City of Burlington.
- There will be no additional expenses for the Pedestrian By-pass in 2024. The budget remains at \$90,000.

- In 2023, the Board elected to withdraw \$100,000 from the Reserve Fund to cover costs for the Pedestrian By-pass. For 2024, the expense for this program has been integrated into the Operating Budget. This will result in a membership levy increase. The Executive agrees that the membership will have to absorb an increase in the levy rather than push to cost to another year.
- Note this will be the last time the Board can rely on the Reserve Fund to offset expenses of the budget.
- S. Bell asked the Board how much of an increase to the membership levy they will be comfortable with for the 2024 Budget.

4. **2024 Budget Overview:** B. Dean

Reserve Fund as of December 1, 2023 \$342,000 Of that amount we have a capital savings of \$135,000 for new holiday displays. As directed by the Board, there is 10% (\$116,000) of the operating budget in reserve for shortfalls. Unspoken for amount remaining is \$90,500.00.

Special Case Study – Capital Budget

The current twinkling starburst holiday displays are over 14 years old and are on their last days. In 2018 the BDBA began saving for new holiday displays, putting away \$22,500 per year; we now have saved \$135,000. With price increases, new displays average \$1100 each. In addition to new displays costs, there will be expenses for new hardware. Discussion ensued as to whether we purchase in 2024 or 2025. We still need an additional \$52,500 for new displays alone. We are hoping to partner with the city to help offset capital costs. S. Peachey stated her sister works at Blachere Illumination Canada and will have her contact the office.

Draft 2024 Operating Budget

B. Dean stated there were only a few changes to the budget since last presented in November 2023. After meeting with the City Finance Department, we have expenses \$40,000 in write-offs or uncollectable taxes. With no supplementals in 2023, it was recommended we budget \$12,000 in 2024.

In the Infrastructure budget, the new proposed budget lines for a Seasonal Beautification person was \$15,000, a budget line we hoped to share with the City of Burlington. Unfortunately that was declined by Council as well the cost-share program for Goodbye Graffiti, a proposed expense of \$6,700. Both programs have been removed from the proposed budget.

A lengthy discussion regarding the sponsorship of the Sound of Music Festival ended with the sponsorship decreased from \$18,000 - \$15,000.

BDBA Levy Case Studies

B. Dean submitted 4 case studies of levy increases. The 4 businesses were of all different business factors; a hotel, retail fashion, retail book and a mortgage company. The examples showed an 18% increase to the membership levy and how small the increase is to each business. A detailed report is available in Trello.

