



**BURLINGTON DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING ~ IN PERSON & ZOOM
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2024**

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

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

No conflicts of interest announced.

- 2. Approval of Board Minutes:** Wednesday December 6, 2023
Motion by: B. Glazier Second by: S. Bell
"To approve the minutes of Wednesday December 6, 2023, as presented."
Motion Carried

- 3. Review Q1 Marketing Packet:** A. Policicchio
Alison Policicchio presented Q1 Marketing Packet. The report included:
Year Two of the ADS Media Plan.
Introduction of the new Social Media Coordinator, Leah Janicijevic.
Puzzle Me Burlington - A new program to generate activity downtown by placing monthly puzzles in Look Local. Ads will run from March to October will have a different puzzle piece for people to gather. This will create a map of downtown with places to discover. The winner will receive a \$250 gift card. Alison has been working with Pattison Outdoor and Transit to promote a new initiative which places thermal vinyl material in bus shelters. This will run from July – October 2024. The 2024 BDBA Master Event Sponsorship and corresponding benefits for each downtown event was presented.

Recap of the 2023 Candlelit Stroll.

Calendar of 2024 events calendar.

Rep of the 2023 Gift Card Program and program highlights for 2024.

Please refer to the power-point in Trello for details or contact Alison Policicchio at marketing@burlingtondowntown.ca for more information.

4. Recent Committee and Council Reports:

- Revised 2024 Operating Budget

Recently two members of the BDBA Executive Committee and senior staff met with the City Finance Department for important budget changes they did not anticipate in our former meetings. They explained they are calculating \$65,000 in write-offs for 2024. The original budget was \$30,000. As well they determined we should budget only \$10,000 in supplementals instead of \$12,000. The developments prompted an Executive budget review and amendments in an effort to address \$47,000 of new expenses. Finance staff also strongly suggested the levy be decreased from the proposed 21% increase.

Directors and staff worked quickly to adjust the budget as Finance needed it returned within a few days. This did not give time for the Board to meet.

To increase the budget by \$32,000 and decrease the levy percentage, the Executive needed to decrease several budget items and make a few other changes.

Decreases:

Candlelit Stroll decreased to \$15,000 instead of the proposed \$17,500.

Summer in the City – Funds removed to \$0 from \$2,500.

Movies by the Lake – Decrease from \$25,000 to \$20,000

Holiday Displays – the yearly contribution of \$22,500 was paused for 2024.

Changes:

Originally the contribution from the Reserve Fund was \$75,000. This has now increased to \$90,000.

Supplementary Taxes from \$12,000 to \$10,000

Sponsorship Revenue has increased to \$25,000 from \$20,000.

With all these changes, the levy increase was reduced to 17.7%

L. Bouchard-Bain sent the revised budget and report to the Board.

Discussion:

D. Kuchma was disappointed and questioned why funds were not taken from The Sound of Music and Comedy Fest budgets instead of the Candlelit Stroll and Movies by the Lake. Both Sound of Music and Comedy Fest are sponsored events, not BDBA events.

One reason is that the Candlelit Stroll's budget is still increased from 2023.

Alison Policicchio stated that she prepares a lengthy analytical report for BDBA run events for the Board and sponsors to review. She suggested requesting such reports from events that the BDBA sponsors to determine if the event is worth the current sponsorship fees.

IE: Sound of Music, and Comedy Fest

Regarding the Gift Card Program, B. Glazier stated we do not get 'return on investment' this is an expense with no profit. He also said this is a huge investment and questioned if that budget will be that high in perpetuity or if the budget will decrease.

There was also discussion about creating a different incentive on top-up giveaways. For example, having an expiry date on the top-ups to encourage people to redeem quicker. Staff will review this recommendation and report back at a future Board meeting.

- **Downtown Parking Operational Changes**

Hourly Parking Rate Increase 2024: B. Dean announced parking rates will increase .25 to \$2.00 per hour on April 2, 2024. There will also be an increase in monthly parking rates. On April 2, 2024, the city will return to paid parking on Saturdays in Lot #1, #4 and #5 on all on-street parking assets. This is to deter employees and condominium residents from filling the lots.

- **City of Burlington Outdoor Patio Program**

B. Dean gave a giant thank you to Stephen Bell and Barry Glazier (aka Bill) for their time and expertise to Council regarding the Patio Program. The group was successful in having application fees reduced and having insurance policies remain at \$2M instead of the proposed \$5M. They were also successful in having the city pick up the cost of the barriers.

5. New Business:

D. Kuchma expressed her disappointment with the fact that there was no January meeting to start the year.

Ali Ucar announced he is selling his business and relocating to Niagara-on-the-Lake. He will remain on the Board until the sale is final.

**6. Next Meeting: Wednesday March 6, 2024, 8:00 am
Boardroom 414 Locust Street and Zoom**

7. Adjournment 9:20 am