



May 25, 2022
8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Zoom Meeting

BOARD OF DIRECTORS • MEETING MINUTES

Present: Linda Jutzi, Darryl Moore, Erika Holenski, Phong Tran, Cara Watson, Councillor Debbie Chapman, Julie Phillips, Martha Wallace, Rebecca Coker, Darren Becks, Sgt. Kelly Prebble, Councillor Sarah Marsh, Michael Rederer, and Mayor Berry Vrbanovic.
Regrets: Benjamin Mathew
Recorder: Stefanie Golling

The meeting began at 8:32 a.m., with Darryl Moore as Chair.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS

Moved by Cara Watson, seconded by Erika Holenski

“That the Board approves the agenda.”

Carried Unanimously

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Julie Phillips, seconded by Rebecca Coker

“That the Board approves the April 27, 2022 meeting minutes.”

Carried Unanimously

WRPS UPDATE

Sgt. Kelly Prebble provided the following updates:

- Officers have had some successes downtown recently: Cst. Elliott was successful in identifying the individual who broke into Matter of Taste. They are charging this individual; quick resolution for the assault that occurred downtown; and regular check-ins at 305 King.
- Sgt. Prebble inquired if Directors are seeing bike patrol.
 - Linda Jutzi shared that she has seen bike patrol, however, is still advocating for consistency of foot patrol. Presence of police will make a significant difference this year. Ms. Jutzi shared that she is currently fielding 2-3 complaints from businesses per day. Businesses are hearing and seeing strange behaviour, feeling discouraged by the rise of mental health related issues and the numbers of people. The overall feedback is that whatever we experienced last year, this year is ten times worse.

- Sgt. Prebble encouraged the BIA to continue to communicate with WRPS, especially if noticing an increase at the end of June when St. Andrews closes.

Director questions and comments:

- Regular police presence made a difference and was a huge help.
- Would like to see police presence during the day for peace of mind. Our business has seen a huge unfortunate influx and have had to lock the doors and atm gate.
 - Cst. Elliott tries to get downtown twice a week.
- Our office overlooks Goudies Lane and has been seeing trafficking, open drug use, and staff vehicles being broken in to.
- People are stretched for resources; we have heard more feedback than normal. Regular consistent policing is going to be important this summer. The progress we made and want to see needs to move forward in a positive way.
- Last week on Francis Green someone setup a tent and spread-out garbage. We called the Corporate Contact Centre; however, the person was hesitant to send someone out, and wanted to ensure it was vacant. What do we do in scenarios like this?
 - If a tent is put up again, that is a Bylaw issue, call WRPS if the individual becomes aggressive. There is an encampment plan, and it is lead by the municipality.
- Seeing more car patrol. Typically, between 7:30am-8:30am there is an increase of challenges as people begin departing Tent City and St. Andrews. The behaviour is throwing garbage, illegal/unsafe roadway crossing, yelling, etc. Maybe this is something we can keep an eye on.
 - St. Johns Kitchen is trying to extend hours to accommodate those times.
- Tent City:
 - We need to look at the bigger picture of this, it is not a small issue.
 - The City and Region are in conversation on how to better respond to these issues. Note, the large encampment is on regional property.
 - There are levels of risk to evict an encampment. What would kick-start the police to be engaged? What is the court order threshold? What we are hearing today is a level of frustration that it needs to be better. Sgt. Prebble, bring this back - advocate for us. If it is not a system that is easy to report, we are not going to. There was a system with good back and forth communication daily. We need to improve this situation. If you are not our main contact - give us a person. We need better attention from the police. Can't rely on your data, if your data sources are too convoluted - use this meeting as your data.

Action item: Sgt. Prebble to send BIA Board a list of who to send communications to.

Moved by Phong Tran, seconded by Cara Watson

“To approve the order of agenda.”

Carried Unanimously

FINANCIAL AUDIT 2021

Matthew Betik from KPMG joined the meeting.

Mr. Betik presented the draft financial audit report highlighting a significant account receivable due to grant funding, and an identified vendor payment correction from 2020. Mr. Betik highlighted that the audit went fairly smoothly given the remote fashion, and that KPMG received excellent cooperation from BIA Bookkeeper Diane Pinkerton and the BIA staff.

Moved by Councillor Sarah Marsh, seconded by Phong Tran

“To approve the 2021 Downtown Kitchener Business Improvement Area Financial Audit as presented by KPMG.”

Carried Unanimously

Action Item: Linda Jutzi and Darryl Moore to sign the financial audit for KPMG.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESPONSE

Linda Jutzi shared that she felt it was important that Directors saw the raw data provided by the membership. After speaking directly with many businesses, there is a feeling of fear that customers will not come back downtown.

A letter with data and comments will be sent to Waterloo Regional Police Service, Police Board, the Mayor, City of Kitchener Council, Kitchener Regional Councillors as well as any other necessary parties. This letter is being sent out of concern for the success of the people that have come out of covid.

The survey was completed by many members, including two of our largest developers.

Director's questions and comments:

- When sending the letter include CAO Dan Chapman, Council, Police Chief and acting-Chief Goodman (as of July 4th), Deputy, Inspector Bonn, and the Police Service Board. It is important that they hear alternative views in the community, and the need for policing resources.
- We need to make sure it is sent to all the police leadership. Hoping that maybe someone could do a data analysis before sending.
- Its about the safety of our population. Last thing we want to be is a bad news story.
- I've been downtown for 20 years; this is the worst I've seen. Mental health is getting worse. How do staff deal with this at nighttime? Our nightly walks have become strategic – it is becoming a very unsafe area, and we feel unwelcome in own neighbourhood. We need action, rather than collecting data.
- Funding mental health, and the professionals to help make changes in lives.

MY MAIN STREET AMBASSADORS

Thea Mistry and Aura Hertzog joined the meeting to share information on the My Main Street Local Business Accelerator program.

The program began at the end of February and focuses on creating and maintaining vibrant and inclusive main streets, while providing residents, new entrepreneurs and existing businesses with economic opportunities in their community. As a My Main Street community we will be supported with:

- My Main Street Ambassador(s) dedicated to providing wrap around business support for both new and existing businesses. Kitchener was successful in receiving support for 4 communities/ambassadors:
 - Downtown Kitchener – Thea Mistry
 - Market District and King East – Aura Hertzog
 - Victoria Street North and Lancaster Street West – Ahmed Mirza
 - Belmont Village – Jay Brown
- A community market research profile to identify opportunities for new local businesses that entrepreneurs can explore and initiate with support of business model and operating model templates.
- Customized research reports for local businesses, at no cost to assist business in understanding their customers and growing their business.
- Local businesses may apply to receive funding of up to \$10,000 as a non-repayable contribution to support starting of growing their business base on the customized market research report. Funding is allocated to 5 existing businesses, and 5 new businesses.
 - Funding applications must be fulfilled by December.
- Live and pre-recorded training videos for local businesses covering a range of topics from business planning to marketing, operational planning, raising funds and more.
- Supporting independent brick-and-mortar, customer-facing businesses and prioritizing equity-deserving groups.

Aura Hertzog shared their first funding recipient – The Yeti.

The Yeti wanted to expand their current community music nights with better sound, a stage and new pizza oven to go with their new liquor license. They are receiving \$10,000 for the following: new PA system, pizza oven, prep fridge, stage and new customers. The My Main Street review committee appreciated the connection with live music through funding support from the BIA, and that the request would go well along side.

Director questions and comments:

- How do Ambassadors identify businesses that have yet to have visibility?
 - Connecting with groups like Vive Developments, Small Business Centre, realtors, and Licensing (once business license has been signed). One example is TenC Dance Studio that moved in across from the Kitchener Market.
- Who is responsible for filling out the rubric?
 - Businesses are responsible. Applications are reviewed by a scoring committee; the community ambassador is unable to select recipients. The funding is

intended for something specific the business wants to do, and things that help to improve the community as a whole.

- Aura and Thea are trying to be in the know about things happening. If Directors have further questions about the program feel free to reach out (thea.mistry@kitchener.ca; aura.hertzog@kitchener.ca). Additional links to general information were also provided:
 - <https://mymainstreet.ca/accelerator-program>
 - <https://mymainstreet.ca/communities/kitchener-downtown-kitchener-city-centre-innovation-districts>
 - <https://mymainstreet.ca/communities/kitchener-market-district-king-street-east>

DOWNTOWN CLEANLINESS

Downtown Operations have been spending a collection of time on cleanliness in the core and have reignited enforcement with Kitchener Bylaw. There is a new individual leading the Regions Bylaw team, and Darren Becks is happy to report so far, they are getting traction. The group is taking a different approach downtown - some businesses are not working with staff, so they are now going to the building owners for improvements. The group is struggling to keep up with volume and quantity being dumped.

Linda Jutzi shared that unfortunately we cannot execute on the Compost Program this year, due to staffing, and it is a difficult time with recovery and businesses being able to make it happen.

BOARD REPORTS

Summer Kick Off Party

Director comments and questions:

- Is there any update on the patio sails? Will we have them for the event?
 - They are being installed this week and are currently ahead of schedule.
- A different date was presented at Council, can we please update that with the city.
- How are the events being communicated to the community?
 - There will be a heavy social media presence, as this is how most people find our programming. It will also go on the website.
- Social media is one avenue, however there are all sorts of people not on it. Maybe an ad drop, coop ad buys, or promote the calendar in the Kitchener Citizen.
- Have members received information? We need to push this out.
 - Yes, members have received the summer events calendar and event information.

KITCHENER-WATERLOO OKTOBERFEST

Linda Jutzi shared that the huts will be reactivated on King Street again this year. Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest has applied for Federal Funding with the intention of building 12 additional huts. Details are still being worked out; however, it is the intention to run programming over two weekends.

Ms. Jutzi is making the recommendation to increase funding for Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest back up to \$25,000, given their intentions for this year.

Director questions and comments:

- Will members be able to participate? Yes.
- The program used to run over two weekends, now it's only one. What is the reasoning for the same amount of funding?
 - The festival will be running intense activity for one weekend to drive people to the core, rather than over a long period of time.
- Do it shorter and do it well. This is exciting for locals and will add to the things to do in Ontario this year.
- Given our tight budget this year, we will need to determine where the additional funding will come from. Possibly pull from the Marketing or Community Engagement budgets.
 - We have allocated \$10,000 in the budget for this year and would be moving it up to \$25,000. Given we are not executing on the compost program we could look at this budget, or potentially the DTK Art Walk budget.

Moved by Erika Holenski, seconded by Julie Phillips

“To increase the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest budget by \$15,000 for a total of \$25,000. The Finance Committee will review and assess where funding will come from.”

Carried Unanimously

OTHER BUSINESS

- Traditionally in July and August we have low attendance, and often cannot meet quorum. Linda Jutzi will be sending out an email to understand attendance for the summer.
- Planning for the Town Hall to take place on October 4th or 5th this year. The evening will include the 2023 Operating Budget, presentations, awards, and goodbyes. Once the date is confirmed, a calendar reminder will be sent to the Board.
- Linda Jutzi thanked Phong Tran for his efforts, as well as the efforts of Erika Holenski and Julie Phillips when it came to the temporary office move. The BIA office will remain at 89 Ontario Street South until February 2023.

- Councillor Sarah Marsh shared that the businesses near the Pino's Plaza have been extremely impacted by the Victoria/Weber Street encampment. As a Board its good to recognize the businesses that have been severely impacted, and that we should do what we can to support them.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Phong Tran, seconded by Julie Phillips
"That the meeting adjourn."

Carried Unanimously