



April 28, 2021
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, Kathy Crossley, Michael Rederer, Councillor Sarah Marsh, Cst. Amanda Gruber, Mayor Berry Vrbanovic, Cory Bluhm, and Darren Becks.
Regrets: Benjamin Mathew
Recorder: Stefanie Golling

The meeting began at 8:31 a.m., with Darryl Moore as Chair.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS

Moved by Erika Holenski, seconded by Cara Watson

“That the Board approve the agenda.”

Carried Unanimously

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Erika Holenski, seconded by Phong Tran

“That the Board approve the March 24, 2021 meeting minutes, with adjustments.”

Carried Unanimously

WRPS UPDATE

Cst. Amanda Gruber provided the following updates:

- Property damage calls.
- Identified increase for theft of motor vehicles, and unwanted persons. WRPS is aware and responding accordingly.
- As of May, the YW Shelter will be closing daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. which may increase people downtown.
 - Correction: Mayor Berry Vrbanovic shared that there was a miscommunication and has since had follow up conversations with Regional Staff, the YW will continue to operate until end of year.

Director feedback and questions:

- Has a possible temporary situation for the Waterloo Inn been established? No updates.

- Suggestion to create a guideline for staff on how to handle individuals and sensitive situations. Many of these experiences happen fast. There is a heightened anxiety when dealing with people downtown.
 - Cst. Gruber encouraged businesses to reach out in these situations.
 - Look to others for de-escalation training.
 - Bring topic to Safety & Security Committee for additional suggestions.

Action item: Cst. Gruber to reach out to Supervisors in the downtown area and bring back to the fore front zero tolerance for using space.

Action item: Cst. Gruber and Linda Jutzi to connect further regarding de-escalation guidelines.

DISCOVERY TEAM

When the Discovery Team launched, Cst. James Mitchell let us know calls to service were down for the core. The team focused on establishing relationships with the businesses, people on the street, and better understand the needs. This spend was very costly, ranging from \$60,000 to \$90,000 annually.

This Spring and Summer, Cst. Lee Elliott, and Cst. Brad Hickey are expected to be downtown weekdays during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The current intention is to have the Discovery Team staffed Thursday to Saturday from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Ms. Jutzi opened the meeting to discussion, and Director feedback.

- There was a noticeable difference when the lead of the Discovery Team was no longer heading the program, the new team has a different approach. A business owner needs to be able to speak with the team as well.
- The Pilot Ambassador Program would serve as silent inhibitors, and a touch point for clients and patrons to feel safe.
- Will there be committed police resources during the dinner hours?
 - Two officers are currently dedicated to the core during these hours; however, they are also responsible for responding to calls for service when needed.
- Canadian Mental Health Association has 3 nurses trained and working specifically with mental health. This is not a service that would walk the beat, but would be on call for service when needed, and for connection to services/follow up.
- Are Sundays being considered? It might coincide with a reduced number of other services not operating on that day.
- It is not the year to cut back the Discovery Team.

- In the future connect with Raj Saini's office regarding summer student opportunities to fill the Downtown Ambassador program.
- Last year we did not receive a good return for the Discovery Team. Would be more inclined to the Pilot Ambassador Program route. If this is the direction we choose to take, ensure that when doing it in house, we have the staff available to manage.
- With the \$25,000, cover 2-3 nights until the end of October (patio season), and use the remaining funds towards the Pilot Ambassador Program.

Action item: Linda Jutzi to provide the Board with an update at the June Board Meeting.

Moved by Julie Phillips, seconded by Cara Watson

"Adjust Discovery Team budget to \$25,000 and create a second line item to pilot an Ambassador Program."

Carried Unanimously

Q1 FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer, Phong Tran, provided an update of the first quarter financials (balance sheet and expense report). Mr. Tran noted that overall, not much has hit for invoices and expenses, and there has been very little movement.

Action item: add miscellaneous spend under categories moving forward.

Moved by Councillor Sarah Marsh, seconded by Erika Holenski

"Approve financials as presented by Phong Tran for the first quarter."

Carried Unanimously

Linda Jutzi shared that we did not have a formal budget motion in the fall due to all the unknowns we have been faced with. Ms. Jutzi re-presented the budget, for approval, and Director feedback.

Director feedback and questions:

- Would like to see budget actuals from 2020.
- Adjust the 2021 *Winter Programming* budget to reflect actuals.
- Revisit *Organic Waste Program* for 2022.
- Is the Downtown Clean Team pick up sharps? Yes.
 - Working with WINS to ensure they are not duplicating service.
- Propose using \$60,000 of the \$81,000 remaining towards advertising.

Ms. Jutzi will include a report for the City of Kitchener Finance Committee to provide further details and context.

Moved by Phong Tran, seconded by Kath Crossley

“Motion to approve the budget as presented by Linda Jutzi for 2021.”

Carried Unanimously

COK RECOVERY PLAN

Council for the City of Kitchener approved the Economic Recovery Framework last week. Cory Bluhm noted that the framework is meant to be an agile report. Staff reviewed a fairly long list on how to support downtown members, and a majority of the requests can be managed at a staff level.

- Council agreed on several advocacy motions. In general, the issues identified and listed in motions that Council approved, are all things they have advocated for throughout the pandemic with local MP and MPP’s. Additionally, advocacy is done through Big City Mayors, and raised with Ministers.
- Erika Holenski shared that when there is media coverage, things seem to get done. These are huge issues for small businesses, is there some way businesses can help?
- Mayor Berry Vrbanovic encouraged businesses to write their MPP and copy opposition and the City of Kitchener so they are aware. There is value in hearing directly from businesses; BIA’s doing direct advocacy is also helpful.
- Councillor Sarah Marsh indicated that perhaps there is an opportunity with the BIAs, Feds and politicians to get together with businesses (who are still here to contribute to our community) and looking for ways to thrive.
- Linda Jutzi shared that member feedback sent to us continues to be shared with the MPP’s and that she continues to advocate for DTK including her work and contribution through OBIAA.

PATIO PROGRAM

Linda Jutzi shared that the patio program is on track and going well. It has been a great collaborative effort; Darren Becks helped to secure storage space and the Operations team has been excellent at making things happen.

Darren Becks shared that the group has been a collaborative and agile, focusing on where we are going.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The approach this year is to rely on our community partners in the music industry to bring live music and entertainment to the streets. These partners would run a series Thursday-Saturday night, and would include family friendly entertainment.

Cory Bluhm congratulated the group and noted that a music program is needed.

NEW BUSINESS

Staff collaborated with Uptown Waterloo BIA, and the Cambridge BIA to create and install a light activation in our cores. The activation will be installed by the Fall and will potentially be placed in the Gaukel Street placemaking area. Together the three BIAs applied for funding and were awarded dollars towards this initiative by RTO4.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Kathy Crossley, seconded by Councillor Debbie Chapman
"That the meeting adjourn."

Carried Unanimously