



Downtown Association

Sault Ste Marie, ON

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Monday, February 1, 2016 @ 5:30pm

Attendance: Ross Romano, Chair; Dominic Ruscio, Director;
Paul Scornaienchi, Vice-Chair; Grace Tridico, Director
(5:34pm); Duane Moleni, Manager; Harlee Kimsal,
Recording Secretary; David Helwig, Sootoday

Regrets: Steve Alexander, Director; Carrie Suriano, Director, Joseph
Bisceglia, Director

Absent: Frank Gaccione, Director

1. Call Meeting to Order: Ross Romano called the meeting to order at 5:33pm.

2. Approval of Agenda: Moved by Paul Scornaienchi, seconded by Dominic Ruscio. Carried.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest: None

4. Strategic Planning Development – via Town Hall Meetings / Membership Feedback

- Duane Moleni reviewed the summary of feedback provided at the Town Hall Meetings (over a 3 week period) from the membership – see attached summary.
- Feedback from membership reflected 50/50 of paying and non-paying members (property owners/tenants).
- Themes from the feedback focused on; Communications, Public Relations, Security, and Streetscaping/Beautification (e.g year-round lighting, seating, cleanliness of the street), and Events.
 - **Streetscaping / Beautification:** Members expressed Sault Ste. Marie is a winter city, but the Municipality removes garbage bins, flowers, and seating sending the message that we are “closed for winter”. Working with the Municipality (Planning, Public Works and

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Transportation) and PUC around logistics of keeping garbage bins, adding seating, and cigarette butt receptacles, adding lighting etc out all-year round. Ross Romano expressed he would be a part of those conversations and meetings with Municipality and PUC.

- Lighting was identified as a priority for the street to add ambiance, and enhance perception of the street being safe and inviting. Clean up the street first, and then start bringing people down.
 - **Business Attraction and Retention:** Duane Moleni advised that he has a meeting scheduled this coming Thursday with Chief Sparling, City SSM Police to discuss security downtown. Noting that the Board's decision to approve the \$1,500 for Crimestoppers patrol/QR Program is a major positive for the BIA, as it was one of the main themes expressed from members via the Town Hall Meetings (security). Duane is waiting to hear back from Carmen Biascucci, Crimestoppers Board of Directors for an update on the QR Patrol program (e.g. start dates).
 - **Communications:** members expressed that updates to the website are necessary, as well as more advertising, specifically reaching the American tourists with the Canadian dollar being low.
 - **Website:** Duane Moleni advised that some recent upgrades to the "backend" of the website have been completed, which will now allow for enhancements to be done internally. (eg. Member requested/suggested moving the "Service" tab so it appears as the first tab visible followed by Shopping, Dining, Entertainment as the Service sector makes up aprox 75% of the membership). Cost for upgrades was \$300.00 down payment with remainder to be approved at the next Board meeting.
 - Paul Scornaienchi advised that there is money (\$5,000 BEAM Program) available for website upgrades through the SSM Innovation Centre.
- **Motion: For staff to contact the SSM Innovation Centre regarding the BEAM Program to ensure the BIA can move forward assisting with upgrades to the website based off member feedback.**

Moved by Paul Scornaienchi, seconded by Dominic Ruscio. All in favour.
Carried.

- **Street Cleaning:** Very positive feedback from members regarding the street cleaning efforts by BIA staff.
 - **Reserve Fund:** No feedback in regards to the reserve fund, other than from member Kristi Cistaro who suggested it is good to have a reserve for projects and needs to be used, but leave for the new/elected Board to decide.
 - **Events:** Not too many comments, but was expressed that events are needed for the street.
- Feedback received was needed in order to move forward with Strategic Plan and Budget.
 - Finance Committee is confident has enough information to move forward with a finalized budget based off the membership feedback. Finance Committee

meets this Thursday and will present their proposed/draft budget at the next Board meeting. Three options will be presented. Should a final budget not be approved, that the Board is to meet immediately after to finalize budget. Suggested keeping Tuesday, February 9, Wednesday, February 10, and Thursday, February 11 open for budget meetings.

- Ross Romano noted that this Board is still an interim board with a timeline of 4-5 months before a new board is elected; that this board not tackle a full strategic plan, rather give the elected board the information and tools necessary to make a plan.
- Board requested staff to compile emails, notes, all feedback from the membership along with a breakdown of the draft budget, and proposed levy changes (minimum and maximum) be sent to the membership from the Board via; email, post info on website, hand out information ASAP.
- Board discussed possible mail out in addition to the above notices.
- Ross Romano requested staff make phone calls to thank those who came out to the Town Hall Meetings.
- Ross Romano noted that the only agenda item for the next Board meeting be Budget, with a few other motions. Duane Moleni and Ross will meet to draft the abovementioned letter to the membership.

5. Adjourn: 6:30pm

Motion to adjourn the Special Board Meeting at 6:30pm.

Moved by Paul Scornaienchi, seconded by Dominic Ruscio.