

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT AREA BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
SPECIAL MEETING
NOBEMBER 21, 2018 – 7:00 P.M. –
HARRY LUMLEY BAYSHORE COMMUNITY CENTRE

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dave Parsons, Chair; Jacquie Furtner, Vice-Chair; Kathy Hannen, Treasurer; Lois Taylor; Jeff Fluney; Dianne Mattice; Councillor Marion Koepke; Councillor Brian O’Leary, Francesca Dobbyn, Ron Cole

STAFF PRESENT: Deb Blackshaw, OSDIA Co-ordinator; Heather Anderson, OSDIA Communications Co-ordinator; Wayne Ritchie, City Manager, City of Owen Sound

DIA MEMBERSHIP: A list of DIA members who have signed in and registered to vote will be attached to these minutes. There were approximately 60 people in attendance with 41 voting members.

MODERATOR: Trent Gow, Former Federal Government Employee specializing in Government Services

A special meeting of the Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area (OSDIA) was called to conduct a discussion and vote on the 2019 proposed budget. The following proposal is included in the budget:

Reorganization of the Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area Office

The Owen Sound Downtown Improvement Area (OSDIA) Board of Management has thoroughly reviewed ideas presented and discussed by Board members to reorganize the OSDIA given the imminent retirement of the current DIA Management staff and the following is being presented to the membership.

- City of Owen Sound to provide staffing for administration, street maintenance, events, and beautification.
- Staffing changes of the current OSDIA will result in the accommodation of the immediate retirement of the current OSDIA Manager, an opportunity for employment of the maintenance staff with the City, and completion of employment for the Communications Co-Ordinator in the OSDIA office.
- City of Owen Sound to provide a point of contact for issues related to OSDIA by its membership and the public
- OSDIA Board of Management to remain in control of their own budget, make decisions on the mandate of the OSDIA and provide direction to the City on events and other initiatives which will take place in the downtown as well as be responsible for the direction of Marketing and Promotion of Downtown Owen Sound

Changes to Parking

The OSDIA Board of Management is presenting an initiative of “business sponsored parking” as follows:

- Current parking on 2nd Avenue East between 7th Street East and 11th Street East will remain as 2 hours complimentary parking
- Parking on all other streets where meters are currently installed will be complimentary 2 hour parking and meters will be removed
- Parking in all Municipal Lots (including Lot 9 on 1st Avenue West between 9th Street West and 10th Street West) will be complimentary 9 hour parking

Members were given notice of the special meeting well in advance of the required number of days and were also provided with an excerpt from the Municipal Act (Sections 204 4, 5 and 6) respecting membership, determining tenancy and voting.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trent Gow, moderator for the meeting, introduced himself and called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Mr. Gow asked those eligible to show their voting cards and asked those who were voting members who did not get a card to register to do so.

2. CALL FOR NEW BUSINESS

There were no other new business items.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest noted.

4. BOARD REPORT: 2019 PLANS FOR BUDGET AND PARKING

4.1 Presentations:

Dave Parsons, DIA Board Chair

Dave Parsons, DIA Chair, introduced the topic of the OSDIA and changes proposed to parking as well as the operation and restructuring of the DIA office. He provided a history of complimentary parking in the downtown area and statistics from a recent survey taken regarding complimentary parking sponsored by the DIA levy. He read comments from patrons who discussed paid parking, available parking spaces, and the inconsistency of parking times and cost of parking. Some comments were read regarding events that take place on 2nd Avenue East along with the operation of the DIA office by City staff. Mr. Parsons commented on the City's function of snow removal on the 2nd Avenue East sidewalk. He further talked about co-ordination of the DIA functions by City staff and noted the DIA Board would remain in place to conduct their business and mandate as it is currently being conducted. Focus on marketing, promotions and beautification strategies were noted. Mr. Parsons commented on the strategic direction of the OSDIA.

Wayne Ritchie, City Manager

Wayne Ritchie, Owen Sound City Manager, commented on a draft Memorandum of Understanding between the OSDIA and the City of Owen Sound, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, with respect to the following topics:

- Events
- Operations and Beautification
- Parking

He noted co-ordination of all activities will be driven by the DIA Board of Management.

4.2 Discussion

William McKenzie, Building Owner at 1020 2nd Avenue East – commented on the large portion of the budget that is being dedicated to parking and asked why the City of Owen Sound is not putting more into promotion of the downtown and asked why the DIA should be kept.

Vicki Tichbourne, tenant at the Harmony Centre at 880 4th Avenue East – is surprised about snow clearing on 2nd Avenue East and why this is not covered through municipal taxes like residential areas. Asked if work is being done by City staff the budget figure seems to be not relative to costs of work. Administration - What is the benefit of having this figure in the budget? Reply: Deb Blackshaw explained \$5,000 in the budget is one-year expense and not related to administration only to pay the salary until she retires. Dave Parsons noted maintenance crew staff will have an opportunity to apply for vacant positions at the City. The City Manager commented on the snow removal of arterial roads, hospital routes and school routes and the level of plowing service. Mr. Ritchie noted at this time no additional staff will be hired to take on work related to the DIA.

Gary Johnston of 805 9th Street West – commented on his small business operation and wanted to share his advertising experience. Mr. Gow noted at this time that members only would be allowed to speak to the topics at hand.

Morag Budgeon, Manager of the Owen Sound Artists Co-Op at 942 2nd Avenue East – commented on operation of the Artists Co-Op and noted that they work closely with the DIA and feel there should be an individual dedicated to the operation of the DIA as a paid employee to oversee downtown issues and operations and deal with concerns of businesses whether this employee is located at City Hall or not.

Peter Reid, Owner of the Chicago building at 283 10th Street East, Unit 2 – commented on the budget and noted there is no costing of what the City will charge for administration. He noted the comment on a revenue neutral operation of the DIA and asked if the City will be charging for administration and event planning. He commented on parking and businesses that do not have on-street parking will not have available parking because staff will park in the lots where their customers now park. Reply: Wayne Ritchie – the City has no intention of charging the DIA for administration or event planning. He noted that management of parking in the lots is not finally determined. Dave Parsons – commented on tenant parking and if this becomes an issue that the DIA should then go to Council and ask for changes or signage where tenants and customers can park in the lots. This issue will be visited if a problem arises. The proposal is for two years

but the matter will be addressed sooner if necessary. Mr. Reid has a concern that there will not be an individual available to speak to DIA issues when they call the City.

Ron DeBoer, Owner of Gallery DeBoer at 969 2nd Avenue East, Upper Level – his business is located on the 2nd floor of a storefront which helps to create more business and atmosphere in the downtown area. He noted the costs related to bringing the 2nd floors where his business has been located. He commented on the rear entrance he had in his first building but does not have a rear entrance in his current building which is very difficult. The City explained to him that a rear entrance on the building he is located in would not be possible. He commented on loading and unloading on 2nd Avenue East for his business and he constantly receives tickets for parking. He is looking for a solution to allow him to park in the same location to load and unload several times a day for his business.

Leigh Greaves, Owner of the Harmony Centre at 880 4th Avenue East – is looking for a parking solution and feels the proposal allows too many negative incidents to happen. She feels we need to do a full study and find out all of the parking requirements and parking to meet the needs of all businesses to operate. They need parking for volunteers to be longer than two hours. More meaningful input should be taken from all those involved before a decision is made on the proposal presented. Harmony Centre is in a metered area on a side street. There is too much inconsistency that takes place. If individuals park in one area within a two hour timeframe and then moves to another area that is a two hour timeframe they will receive a ticket. She feels the timing is correct to spend some money on a better plan that works for all.

Response: The City Manager explained the Deputy Clerk overseeing By-law Enforcement and Parking is the individual that deals with issues and is very lenient with reasonable complaints to adjust tickets. Mr. Parsons feels that some areas where on-street parking need to be extended there could be signage and adjustments to the plan could be made. He feels the timing is

Carol Frook, Owner of The Framery at 868 3rd Avenue East – commented on customers who constantly get tickets and note they will not shop in Owen Sound again. She feels this is a first step toward something good.

Deb Haswell, Co-owner of The Rocking Horse at 843 2nd Avenue East – feels in general the idea of free parking is fantastic but feels the plan proposed is not the best plan for the area. Commented on City budget and parking passes revenue. Feels people who want to park all day should still be paying for their monthly parking passes and this should be kept in place. Feels she cannot support the proposal as presented but there needs to be more conversation and understanding on how it will work for everyone.

Brian Frook, spouse of the owner of The Framery at 868 3rd Avenue East – his wife's business is not on 2nd Avenue East and she is paying for parking for everyone. He feels there should be an even playing field all with free parking. He suggested that this be tried for a year.

Peter Lemon, Councillor for the City of Owen Sound – feels what we need in parking today is not the same as in years gone past. Commented on a visit to Brockville and how they operate their complimentary parking. Feels there is an inequity where the side street people have to pay for parking to attend businesses on these streets and 2nd Avenue East is free. Feels with proper signage better inequity could be accomplished.

Michael McFadyen, Owner of Mike's Marijuana Supplies at 992 2nd Avenue East – what is the mandate of DIA and what is the mandate of the City? What is the mission statement of the DIA and what is the mission statement of the City of Owen Sound? He commented on snow removal and costs related to this over the years. He noted that equal levy takes place. What is the long-term plan if there is not enough parking – do we have a parking garage in the plan? Reply: The City Manager noted there is currently lots of parking in the downtown and provided statistics to support this. Dave Parsons commented on empty spaces in various lots downtown.

Paul MacDonald, Owner of Lawsons at 917 2nd Avenue East – thanked DIA and staff for the work they do. Feels there should be no differentiation between parking in the downtown and in the lots.

Stephanie Termeer, Owner of All Things T at 1069 10th Street East – wants to know why 2nd Avenue East gets all the focus and feels other businesses should get the same attention when they are also in the downtown area.

William McKenzie, Building Owner at 1020 2nd Avenue East – commented on the meeting and felt notice was not given far enough in advance. Commented on loss of long-term business. He felt that budget information should have been presented prior to the meeting tonight. Feels the City should be putting more into the DIA budget and the DIA levy should not be used to pay for parking.

Jeff Robins, Owner of Aveda Mane Street at 181 8th Street East – commented on the parking initiative and is in favour of the proposal presented. His business is located on 8th Street and educates his clients on parking because they are usually longer than 2 hours. He feels this is a positive imitative toward benefitting the retail operators in the area. He feels if complimentary parking does not go through that the meters should be reinstalled on 2nd Avenue East.

5. PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED 2019 DRAFT BUDGET

Deb Blackshaw presented the 2019 Draft Budget. A copy of the budget is attached to these minutes. She noted a total of 17 events took place in the downtown this year.

Questions:

Deb Haswell, Co-Owner of The Rocking Horse at 843 2nd Avenue East – what happens here tonight? – voting in favour of the budget would let the complimentary parking proceed and \$180,000 DIA levy would be transferred to the City – what happens if the vote on the budget is defeated?

Mary Smith, Representative from The Women's House Grey Bruce at 229 10th Street East – can the vote be split on complimentary parking and the budget?

Jackie Furtner, Vice-Chair of the OSDIA and Owner of bare birch at 975 2nd Avenue East explained that the Board felt the membership should have input into these issues and that is why it is being brought forward to a special meeting.

Leigh Graves, Owner of Harmony Centre at 880 4th Avenue East– feels that if a special meeting is called for the membership to vote on the budget, this meeting and vote must count.

Mary Ann Thomas, Owner of The Ginger Press at 848 2nd Avenue East – commented on history of improvements on 2nd Avenue East. Compliment DIA Board and City staff for allowing this topic to come forward. What is the \$180,000 invoice for complimentary parking is based on. Feels there should definitely be a vote on the budget by the membership at this special meeting. Response: City Manager noted the funds are based on the City of Owen Sound budget and elimination of hard costs related to parking and overall costs related to providing parking services. Mary Ann read an email from the City Manager that identified items related to what taxes and DIA levy covers. Mr. Ritchie noted the costs are related to the level of service requested in the downtown. He explained other mall retail shops are required to pay for their own parking lots.

Peter Reid, Building Owner of the Chicago Building at 283 10th Street East, Unit 2 – commented on 1st Avenue West parking meter area and will DIA be paying for parking outside DIA area? Response: City Manager – meters on 1st Ave West will be removed and DIA Board has determined parking areas. Peter Reid – commented on Harrison Park parking lot

Deb Haswell, Co-Owner of The Rocking Horse at 843 2nd Avenue East – agrees with free parking on all streets. Feels the process is a problem and voting on the budget would remove \$180,000 from the budget to support parking by the DIA for the City. Feels this is not a good deal for both the DIA and the City. A better plan needs to be put in place.

Toula Stavros, spouse of the Owner of Europa Restaurant at 282 8th Street East – owns a restaurant business on 8th Street East and have customers who are not happy with paid parking. Feels everyone wants their business to succeed and either have modern meters or remove them and keep it consistent. Suggest patrons be allowed to use their credit cards to pay for parking if meters are to remain.

Jeff Armstrong, Representing McArthur Tire at 1066 3rd Avenue East – asked if the voting results will be disclosed tonight – Response: Yes

Trent Gow – suggested DIA take back the comments received tonight regarding the issue.

6. CALL FOR VOTE

A vote was taken on approval of the 2019 OSDIA budget and the following are the results of the vote.

In Favour of the 2019 Budget – 21
Opposed to the 2019 Budget – 15

The majority of the membership approved the budget as presented so it is therefore approved.

Dave Parsons – read from the Municipal Act regarding discussion and approval of the budget. He explained that he DIA will take into consideration the comments presented at their next OSDIA Board of Management meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting of the OSDIA adjourned at 9:03 p.m.