



MINUTES OF THE WINGHAM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA GENERAL MEETING

Date: December 19, 2024

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: North Huron Westcast Community Centre – Hot Stove Lounge

Call to Order: 6:32pm

General Discussion:

Moved By: Joey Havers

Seconded By: Ryan Fergusson

We welcomed guest Colin Carmichael, Executive Director of Huron Chamber of Commerce. Colin had wanted to attend BIA meetings sooner however events conflicted with our BIA meeting dates. He intends to be more involved in 2025. Colin provided some background history, that the Goderich & District CC formed in 1990, in 2010-2011 they rebranded and expanded to include Central Huron and North Huron. In October 2024 they expanded again to represent all of Huron County that is not represented by a chamber (this includes Bluewater, ACW etc). Colin is looking forward to developing relationships and memberships into other municipalities. Focus is going to be on three main areas:

Economic Development: recognizing the economic value of cultural events, and providing the connections needed for funding initiatives/grants available via their website/newsletter weekly. The Chamber can also act as co-applicant or offer letters of support for grant applications.

Business Development: by providing resources to businesses to grow & thrive, locally with municipal partners, or through provincial/federal Chambers, referral service for questions/advocacy, and networking events)

Community Development: supporting their non-profit members, working with organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Community Living, United Way etc.

Colin recognizes that a thriving business community depends on a thriving community and feels the Chamber has the agility to fulfill needs or an ideas outside budget plans. The Chamber is a privately funded non-profit organization, which allows for more flexibility. An example, the BIA summit earlier this year, Colin noticed gaps/issues in almost every BIA whether that was filling the board roster, financial, governance, or what they should be/could be doing and was able to get funding for BIA 101 day.

An inquiry was made as to how the Chamber could assist with specific community initiatives (ie. Wingham Muskrat Festival). Colin noted that the focus of the Chamber is more business-oriented rather than event-specific however it is not necessarily something they wouldn't do. More information would be needed as to how they could possibly assist as they are not generally a funder but rather a connector. Upcoming events includes a January 30th "Post-Holiday Party" at Cowbell, information to be on the website soon.

CARRIED

Adjournment: 7:06pm

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MINUTES OF THE WINGHAM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA BOARD MEETING

Date: December 19, 2024

Time: 7:07pm

Location: North Huron Westcast Community Centre – Hot Stove Lounge

Members Present: Doug Kuyvenhoven, Treasurer
Joey Havers
Mitch Wright, Council Representative/Vice Chair
Ryan Fergusson
Amanda Martyn, Secretary

Regrets: Dave Tiffin, Jim Snyder, Mitchell Pyke

Others Present: Paul Heffer, Colin Carmichael

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1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:07pm

2. CONFIRMATION OF THE AGENDA

Moved By: Joey Havers

Seconded By: Ryan Fergusson

THAT the Wingham BIA Board hereby accept the Agenda as presented for the December 19, 2024 meeting.

CARRIED

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST - None Noted

4. MOTION TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

Moved By: Joey Havers

Seconded By: Doug Kuyvenhoven

That the Wingham BIA Board hereby adopts the minutes of the November 21st 2024 meeting, recorded by Amanda Martyn, noting a correction required to correct the spelling of a members name going forward.

CARRIED

5. PUBLIC MEETINGS/DELEGATIONS – None Noted

6. BUSINESS ARISING – None Noted

7. CHAIR REPORT

a. Communication Sent/Received

- the charging station downtown has been removed, and the clock at Cruickshank Park was being replaced on Wednesday (December 18th 2024).
- Chair Tiffin has contacted and is awaiting response from Carson Lamb regarding the timing of the crosswalk at Josephine and Victoria streets.
- Chair Tiffin has reached out to Blyth regarding their historical plaques. Awaiting response. Other towns to be contacted as well.

-Ashley Veander Velden has received a book of BIA Bucks along with a thank you letter from the BIA Board for maintaining the digital sign at the South end of town.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

Motion to Accept: Ryan Fergusson

Seconded By: Joey Havers

Full report sent out by email from Doug. Not a whole lot has changed since November. \$60,000.00 in the bank. HST owing. Income and Expenses nearing the end of the year \$28,000.00 in income, \$24,000.00 in expenses. We did not have to transfer out of reserves to cover anything and we shouldn't need to for the remainder of the year. Our retail promotions are running ahead of pace. Accounts receivable, there are a couple of slow pays (over 90 days) reminders have gone out for these. Responses are coming in and payments via eTransfer. No foreseen issues here.

Cheques that went out: Joe Carter for festival of lanterns, and Seaforth Marching Band for their parade (both planned and budgeted). Cheque to go out shortly is payment to Greyhaven Gardens for the greenery for budgeted curb appeal. Remaining cheques are for BIA Bucks... two big sales include the Wingham & District Hospital and McDonagh Insurance.

CARRIED

9. NORTH HURON COUNCIL REPORT

a. Councillor Wright provided an update from North Huron Council as follows:

- CAO replacement search has started, kickoff meeting tomorrow
- North Huron received \$350,000.00 grant from Huron County as they try to create new childcare spaces. Specifically in Blyth they have a location by the arena for a new build that they are working through that process. This location also has the potential for a library space as well due to the current expense of renting in Blyth. This may potentially be in the 2025 budget as a design phase.
- The Community Improvement Plan has been revised. It doesn't increase the North Huron budget but currently the plan this only included facades on main-street. Now it will be open to any business in North Huron and includes structural improvements, agro-tourism businesses, forgiveness of development and planning fees, tax relief, and start-up funding for new businesses.
- A preliminary fee schedule provided to council was adopted. The major item is they have kept recreational fees where they were (they did not go ahead with the planed 30% increase). They also reinstated student and senior packages/discounts.
- The Vance Fund has provided \$161,000.00 for projects and \$8,800.00 for trail improvements
- Water meters are up for renewal. Cost to replace around \$3.5 million. The township will be going with flat rate billing but unsure about what that rate looks like at the moment. There is no financial incentive to the town for doing this. Timing for initiation is January 1st 2025.
- Negotiations are ongoing with the 3rd party theatre operation and this is still progressing.
- No update on budget yet. There is a hike on OPP costs for all of North Huron. A suggestion was made to Councillor Wright to dedicate a portion of the 2025 budget towards repairing the pavement surrounding the town hall for accessibility reasons.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Retail

Joey Havers reported that he wasn't able to reach out to many of the retailers however Julie and Christine whom spearheaded the Winter Wonderland event had positive feedback. They did indicate lower foot traffic. With the Canada Post strike, there was expectations on higher traffic but they are chalking it down to low cash-flow among people leading to a tougher season for all retailers. It was noted that the advertisement on CKNX listed specific merchants instead of just "Shop Wingham". There are two different budgets for this, one is "Shop Wingham", and some are for specific sponsorships. There is a new business in town to note: The Candy Corner, located where Annettes Treasures used to be.

b. Curb Appeal

Nothing to report.

c. Projects Update

Security camera project is still ongoing, more to come in 2025. Reached out to Denise for funding for Cruickshank Park as there was supposed to be \$7000.00 go to parks. It is in the works but will not be through in 2024.

11. PROJECT IDEAS FOR 2025

a. Hydro Poles North of Train Station – This is included in the Draft Budget Report 2025 emailed out by Doug. Estimates cost for banners, receptacles, snowflake lights etc. \$1380.00 for retrofitting the poles, used snowflake lights are \$400.00 each, budgeted \$2400 total. Banners and brackets are around \$270.00. Subtotal for entire project around \$6000.00. We will need to talk to the Municipality around the flower pot brackets to make sure we have these covered. We will also need to order some music banners.

b. LED Sign – This is also included in the Draft Budget Report 2025. LED sign quote is \$54,000.00. This sign is identical to the one at the south end except double sided. The base/boring is estimated at \$3000.00. Additional estimates for electrical and repairing the pavement also included. Total estimate \$65,800.00 plus contingency is \$69,000.00. The location is donated for free by Doug. The plan is to run the same ads on both signs. BIA could possibly start charging for advertising at some point as we are continuing to receive requests for advertising. We would also still need to obtain a sign permit.

c. Historical Plaques– Possibly in 2026. This requires estimates on cost, information gathering and obtaining permission for installation.

d. EV Charging Station – It is on North Huron's strategic plan, not necessarily to install but to determine the best area for a station with regards to voltage/wattage concerns. The town needs to figure out this portion first. There is an economic development incentive here as it draws people in and requires them to spend at least 30 minutes in the town. Current "local" EV stations include Leslie Motors and the Old Mill in Blyth. There is the possibility to use the municipal lot beside Frosty Queen, or the lot behind Frosty Queen as well as the Town Hall. They are wanting to be prepared with a design complete so that an application for a grant can be submitted when it becomes available.

12. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

a. Date, Time and Location – Thursday February 20th 2025, 7:30pm at the Council Chambers (located within the Royal Oaks Health & Wellness Building)

b. Budget Discussion

We would have a shortfall if we were to do everything on the plan in 2025. We will not have enough funds until 2026 for the LED sign however in 2025 we could prepare everything for installation. The board will need to decide by the next meeting when we are going to publish draft whether we want to propose for planning for this sign. We have reduced the budget in the office supplies section as these are not needed. Unfortunately the Christmas light repairs budget portion to remain the same, due to re-occurring vandalism. Estimated high on the curb appeal for the addition of shrubs around the existing LED sign. More to come next meeting.

c. Awards Discussion – Awards are given out for Civic Improvement, Volunteer, Lifetime Achievement and New Business.

- Volunteer of the Year – Joe & Heidi Cater for their commitment to Wingham Homecoming, and community support (Festival of Lanterns)
- Civic Improvement – not giving
- Lifetime Achievement – no nominations as of yet
- New Business – Candy Corner?

13. OTHER BUSINESS

- Action items to consider for 2025 – promoting the BIA Bucks via radio advertisement with the surplus. This will allow the campaign to be more widely reached to the population.
- Take it back to the retail side regarding the use of BIA Bucks that are being donated by the BIA to their events, that they are to be used to support all community business and not exchanged for specific business gift cards.
- The old McTavish Esso gas station, the sign display right now is lit and showing \$1.22 for gasoline. The lot has not been plowed. There is lots of traffic attempting to pull in there for service. This is privately owned so it may be difficult to deal with but see if anything can be done. We will try to connect with the Owner.

14. CLOSED SESSION (IF REQUIRED)

15. ADJOURNMENT

Moved By: Joey Havers

Seconded By: Doug Kuyvenhoven

THAT the Wingham BIA Board agrees that there being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourn at 8:22pm.

CARRIED

Chair

Secretary