



MINUTES

Annual General Meeting: Unionville BIA

Date: Wednesday, February 17th, 2021

Via Zoom

Attendees:

Board: Chair Niina Felushko, Vice-Chair Natasha Usher, Secretary-Treasurer Shibani Sahney, Roger Kanda, Sarah Iles, Tony Lamanna

Board Members (City): Councillor Reid McAlpine, Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

Members: Lindsay McClelland, Debbie Smrz, Kash Mahmood, George Ilioupoulos, Paul Vasilovsky, Harshal Dave, Nicole Fletcher, George LeDonne

Guests: Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Bryan Frois, Sylvia Morris, Lake Trevalyn, Eric LaRiviere, Christina Kakaflikas, Fernand Vartanian, Joe Cuntrera, Rob Kadlovski, Mike Gannon, Darrell Hein,

Staff: Sara Sterling, Executive Director

1. Call to order

Good evening everyone, my name is Niina Felushko I am the Chair of the Unionville Business Improvement Area, UBIA, and I would like to call this Annual General Meeting to order. It is 7:06pm.

2. Chair's Welcome

Mayor Scarpitti, Deputy Mayor Hamilton, Councillor McAlpine, UBIA Board and members, and guests, welcome to the 2021 UBIA Annual General Meeting. We are so pleased you could all join us tonight as we review what 2020 was, and what lies ahead in 2021.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the Directors of the UBIA Board, shown here. Two of our Directors have recently stepped down, Rob Kadlovski and Sylvia Morris, and we thank them profusely for their many years of service and dedication to Main Street Unionville. They will certainly be missed.

3. Approval of agenda

I would first like to ask for approval of our agenda. The agenda was sent out last Friday to members and guests, and is here on the screen for your viewing as well.

Motion by: Sarah Iles

Seconded by: Shibani Sahney

All were in favour



4. Approval of 2020 AGM Minutes

I would next like to ask for approval of the 2020 minutes, sent out by email as well.

Motion by: Don Hamilton

Seconded by: Roger Kanda

All were in favour

5. Year in review

(Chair Niina Felushko) I think we can all agree 2020 was the most challenging year Main Street Unionville has faced in a very long time. Starting with the usual slower retail and restaurant months of January and February, we headed into the COVID Pandemic in March, which brought many issues for all of us. A lockdown, similar to the one we have just been in, began, and we remained in that lockdown until the early days of Summer. Although we were able to open to a certain degree over the Summer and Fall months, late Fall and Winter again brought closures to the street and more suffering for our businesses.

Marketing-wise, we kept our social media very active, posting and sharing as much as possible as well as hosting social media contests. We advertised in local papers as well as with the Toronto media giant BlogTO. We were also fortunate to have City TV's Breakfast Television do a live broadcast, as well as reports from Global and CTV throughout the pandemic.

With Streetscape, we pushed the City to re-install previously cancelled flowers on the street, brought in new flags for our lamp posts, and Instagram Murals. We also purchased a popular new "Holiday Chair" that attracted thousands to the street to take photos, and hired a new contractor to ensure our lighting and holiday décor was top notch.

One large program we were allowed to operate this year was Digital Main Street, which we had in 2019 as well. We had 20 businesses that met with our DMS associates, and 10 businesses ended up applying for and getting the \$2,500 grant to assist with digital services. We also offered some webinars through this program, took some new photos of your businesses and upgraded our website to offer more information to visitors.

Above all, our main goal this year was to keep you informed and educated about the pandemic, which government programs were available and how to apply for them, and which regulations we needed to follow, when. We were responsive to your questions and reach-outs for assistance, and will continue to be as responsive in 2021.

6. Looking ahead:



(Executive Director Sara Sterling) While I think everyone is breathing a sigh of relief that 2020 is over, we still have a bit of a COVID fight ahead of us in 2021. As we come out of lockdown we need to remain vigilant and follow the City, Province and Federal regulations about events and gatherings, which will limit what we are able to host again this year.

Unfortunately large events like the Festival will not be able to take place, but we are hoping that the City will allow us to host smaller, socially distanced events and programs like a new Unionville Market at the Bandstand on Sunday mornings.

Events aside, this will be a busy year of planning as we look ahead to the redevelopment of the street. This includes both a Retail Action Plan that we will be issuing an RFP for soon, and the complete reconstruction of the street from pavement to sidewalks to lampposts. We are expecting the sewer and water work to begin early in 2022, but there is much work to be done with each business ahead of that.

As we move throughout this year, and into a recovery period, we will continue to support each and every business with marketing efforts and of course information sharing. We will also ensure the street looks amazing – we have already confirmed the City's commitment to flowers for the summer, and maintaining our Instagram murals with fresh paintings in Spring and Summer.

We hope that as we near the Fall and Winter we will be able to gather in much larger numbers and be able to hold more events and bring more focus to our street. Together, we truly think 2021 can be fantastic for Main Street Unionville.

7. Mayor Presentation and Q&A

(Chair Niina Felushko) We are honoured tonight to have Mayor Frank Scarpitti with us to talk about the future of Unionville, and answer a couple of your questions afterwards. The Mayor has always been a great advocate for Main Street Unionville and we appreciate his time and dedication. Over to you, Mr. Mayor.

Notes from Mayor Scarpitti's presentation:

- Pandemic has been incredibly tough for small businesses like yourselves
- The City of Markham has found several ways to help during these times, this includes:
 - Property tax relief
 - Eliminating increase in water fees
 - Temporarily removing Stormwater Management fees
 - Temporarily removing Hospitality Tax
- The new budget does include a tax increase



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- We have used our "Stabilization Fund" during COVID, and made investments in various parts of the City including the Markham Centre Trail
- We were the first Municipality to use the IBM Watson Technology
- We were the first Municipality to offer SHOP HERE to our businesses
- Established Destination Markham – our new Tourism Board that has been helping local businesses promote themselves during COVID
- More than 1200 businesses in Markham were visited and engaged by our Destination Markham Ambassadors
- Destination Markham helped to pay for your wonderful Holiday Chair
- We worked with AGCO to facilitate patio expansions
- York University is back on track and scheduled for Sept 2023 opening
- I'd like to thank Reid McAlpine, your Councillor has been a true advocate for you at Council
- Councillor McAlpine, Sara Sterling, Niina Felushko, invited Andy Taylor and myself to Main Street for a walk to show us the work that needs to be done to bring the street back to its full potential
- The Streetscape Master Plan will be coming to Council soon, with material costing etc. so decision can be made and we can move forward with design
- Sewer and water work will begin in 2022, then streetscape in 2023 likely
- We realize this will be painful for businesses, especially coming out of COVID, but it is something that has to get done
- We are committed to working with the BIA and each business to ensure minimal disruption, and discuss and consult on timing of work

(Executive Director Sara Sterling) Thank you Mr. Mayor for your presentation, we appreciate your time. We do have some questions that have been submitted by our members for you.

The first is from George Iliopoulos from Old Country Inn, he has a question for you about taxation.

- George and Mayor discussed various taxation issues and agreed that the system itself needs an overhaul – Tony Lamanna contributed his thoughts as well. Bottom line is relief will mostly have to come from Province as the City relies on property taxes to pay for all its services. The Mayor highlighted the various other programs available throughout COVID that might help small businesses – Ontario Small Business Support Grant, Ontario Main Street Relief Grant, and Property Tax & Energy Cost Rebates.

The second is from Shibani Sahney from Silver Tulip, she has a question about Toogood Pond.

- Shibani asked the Mayor if we could go back to managing skating on Toogood Pond as it is such a great draw for the street, and activity for the Community. The Mayor commented that the ice on the Pond does not freeze to an approved thickness, and



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that the City lost a Zamboni in the pond one year. The Mayor suggested a volunteer group in community build a rink near the pond, the City will contribute with assistance if asked.

The last question was from Tony Lamanna about Streetscape and the plans for Revitalization.

- Although the Mayor spoke about this in his presentation, Tony wanted to ensure the Mayor understood that the businesses must be involved in the process and consulted along the way as to the timing of construction, to reduce impacts on the street. The Mayor agreed conversations will be on-going, and decisions on timing will need to be made.

The Mayor was thanked by all for his attendance and presentation.

7. 2020 Financials

Chair Niina Felushko presented the 2020 Financials and highlighted the fact that we do have a surplus due to events being cancelled with COVID.

Motion to accept 2020 financials: Reid McAlpine

Seconded by: Natasha Usher

All were in favour

6. Proposed Annual Budget

Chair Niina Felushko presented the proposed 2021 annual budget.

Motion to approve proposed budget: Sarah Iles

Seconded by: Shibani Sahney

All were in favour

7. Election of Directors

(Chair Niina Felushko) We currently have 8 Directors and have 2 nominees who have completed their nomination forms seeking 2 of our 3 empty spots on the Board. They are Debbie Smrz and Kash Mahmood. I would also like to ask if there are any nominations from the floor at this time (asked 3 times)

Harshal Dave asked the Chair what is required to nominate someone. He asked to nominate Rob Kadlovski and Sylvia Morris. The Chair explained that, as had previously been explained to both Rob and Sylvia, and Harshal, proof of address and tenancy on the street must be provided



otherwise Rob and Sylvia are not considered members and are therefore not eligible to be Directors.

Chair proceeded with nominates for Debbie Smrz and Kash Mahmood, as there were no other eligible nominations presented.

Can I have a nominator and seconder for Debbie Smrz?

Nominator: Sarah Iles
Secunder: Shibani Sahney
All were in favour

And can I have a nominator and seconder for Kash Mahmood?

Nominator: Tony Lamanna
Secunder: Niina Felushko
All were in favour

8. Next meeting

A meeting will be called on Wednesday March 10th Sara Sterling will send out notice and calendar invite.

Prior to adjournment Tony Lamanna congratulated Niina Felushko for doing a great job as Chair, and Sara Sterling for doing a great job as ED as well. Niina thanked the entire Board for their support and looks forward to a great 2021.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53pm: Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Secunder: Natasha Usher
All were in favour