



MEETING MINUTES

Annual General Meeting: Unionville BIA

Date: Wednesday, February 9th, 2022 at 7pm
Via Zoom

Attendees:

Board: Chair Niina Felushko, Vice Chair Natasha Usher, Treasurer/Secretary Shibani Sahney, Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton, Councillor Reid McAlpine, Kash Mahmood, Debbie Smrz, Sylvia Morris, Sarah Iles

Members: Lindsay McLelland, Ray Smylie, Kimberly Wake, Susannah Huang, Natasza Tyler, Kevin Lee, Marc Agnew, Jeff Day, George LeDonne, Alison Zou

Guests: Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Wes Rowe, Mike Gannon, Rob Kadlovski

Staff: Sara Sterling, Executive Director; Michael Butler, My Main Street Business Advisor

1. **Call to order**

Good evening everyone, my name is Niina Felushko I am the Chair of the Unionville Business Improvement Area, and I would like to call this Annual General Meeting to order. It is 7:04pm.

2. **Chair's Welcome**

Mayor Scarpitti, Deputy Mayor Hamilton, Councillor McAlpine, UBIA Board and members, and guests, welcome to the 2022 UBIA Annual General Meeting. We are so pleased you could all join us tonight as we review our past year and look ahead to 2022.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the Directors of the UBIA Board, shown here on the slide. Two of our Directors have recently stepped down, Roger Kanda and Natasha Usher, we thank them 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 has been sent out to members and guests, and is here on the screen for your viewing as well.

Motion by: Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

Seconded by: Debbie Smrz

All were in favour



4. **Approval of 2021 AGM Minutes**

I would next like to ask for approval of the 2021 minutes, sent out by email as well.

Motion by: Sylvia Morris

Seconded by: Sarah Iles

All were in favour

5. **Chair's Remarks: Year in Review**

(Chair Niina Felushko) What a year of ups and downs! We thought 2021 would be better than 2020, but sadly we encountered more COVID lockdowns and restrictions than the year before.

We were once again unable to hold traditional events such as Thursday Night at the Bandstand and the Unionville Festival, although we did manage to launch a new Unionville Market. Having the Market at the Stiver Mill instead of the Bandstand where we wanted it proved a bit of a challenge with getting the number of visitors we wanted, but it was a good experience to give it a try.

I am sure many of you noticed our abundance of beautiful flowers and the return of live music on the street this Summer. Paired with the extended restaurant patios and warm summer nights, our summer did provide a bit of a respite from COVID and its restrictions. However, once numbers continued to rise back up again in the Fall and Winter, we had to cancel our Christmas parade but were able to highlight the street with our many light displays, which drew much attention on social media and in other media outlets.

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 2022.

We want to thank those who responded to our recent survey, many of you asked for more marketing spend on the street in general, which we will be doing, as well as content creation help with your social media marketing. We will be announcing a program soon to help everyone with that as well.

We are truly looking ahead to a positive 2022 as we work on the design and plans with the City for our Street Revitalization, and ensure all of our members get the support they need to really get ahead and into a recovery period.



6. Executive Director Report

(Executive Director Sara Sterling) As Niina stated, we had a challenging year for sure. Fortunately all signs lead to lifting of further COVID restrictions and we are planning for an eventful year on Main Street ahead.

Niina talked about some of the accomplishments for the street this year. One of our most significant gains was a recent one that will stretch into 2022 – the “My Main Street” grant we were awarded from the Economic Development Council of Ontario to go towards the salary of a new Main Street Business Advisor.

This new program and Advisor will accomplish a set-out curriculum built by the EDCO to help “bring back Main Streets” across Ontario. Fortunately it also aligns very well with the previous RFP we issued, meaning we are now spending government money to come to the same results.

The first step will be for the Advisor to conduct market research, supported by the government, to help us understand who is coming to the street and why, and what they are looking for in the future. The second step is to provide business advice such as marketing, accounting and business development. The third piece, that you may be most interested in, is awarding 10 x \$10,000 government grants for both existing businesses and entrepreneurs. More on these grants will be forthcoming mid-year and the Advisor will be assisting businesses in applying for them.

We are thrilled to announce we have hired our Main Street Advisor and he is on the call with us tonight, Michael Butler. Michael has lived in Unionville for almost 20 years and frequents many of our businesses on a regular basis. He has numerous years of experience in Business Development and brings a friendly positive attitude to the role.

Michael, please say hello to everyone. Michael Butler: Thank you Sara, and I am happy to be here with everyone tonight and look forward to working with you all over the next year.

Also, as many of you are aware, the City will soon be making a decision on the future design of Main Street and its Streetscape Revitalization. I expect the Mayor will speak about this shortly, but we did want to ensure everyone knows that we will be working hard to keep you informed and educated about when construction will commence – which we do not think will be until late this year – and how we can all get through it together. It will be great to have an awesome new street with so many new functions and amenities!

Lastly, we are hoping to host the Unionville Festival again this year, assuming we stay in a recovery mode. This will be the first year the UBIA has taken over the hosting of the event from



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the previous volunteer committee, who did an amazing job for 50 years. We are working with the City and YRP to ensure a safe, COVID friendly event.

With the Festival we also hope to bring more music, concerts and other events back to the street. Here's looking ahead to a great 2022!

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:

Mayor Scarpitti thanked Niina for the invitation and everyone on the Board for their contributions, as well as Sara Sterling for her work, and Wes Rowe for his help with Remembrance Day last year.

They Mayor spoke about Streetscape Revitalization, and shared with everyone the Options that were on the table, in the staff recommendation going to DSC on February 22nd. He showed many slides with images and options, and talked about lighting, traffic calming and better traffic flow as well as more pedestrian uses. The Mayor publicly stated he would support Option #4 at a cost of \$10.2 million as Main Street Unionville was a tourist hub and needed the upgrade desperately in order to maintain tourism.

The Mayor also mentioned a new Public Art initiative that will be on Main Street Unionville, but that it is just in the development stages so no details are available just yet.

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.

1. The businesses on the street are very much looking forward to having the street revitalized and getting the update it needs so desperately. The decision on spending funds is coming up on February 22nd, can you give us an update on where you think the decision might go, and do you recognize the importance of ensuring Markham's number one tourism destination receives the attention it deserves?
 - This question was essentially answered during the Mayor's speech when he committed to supporting the \$10.2 million Option.
2. The past two years have obviously been a struggle for everyone, especially small businesses. One of the things that hurt us the most is the inability to host events during the Summer when others nearby like Aurora and Newmarket had more flexible



rules. Can the City commit to being more flexible this Summer if the Provincial restrictions allow?

- The Mayor said if Covid Recovery continues on the path it is now, that the City will be permitting larger events going forward. The City is starting to look at how it will plan Canada Day, which likely means the Unionville Festival would be allowed.

Other questions for the Mayor:

1. Sylvia Morris asked what the timing and stages would be for construction? The Mayor responded that it will be most of 2023 and into 2024, but depends heavily on what the construction and design teams find when they start digging. There will be consultations with stakeholders to help decided if the road needs to be closed and if so when, and for how long.
2. Rob Kadlovski asked the Mayor if Watford Group had made an application to the City yet for their development? They Mayor responded that no they had not received an application. Sylvia commented she had spoken with Harshal Dave who committed to sending in the application soon.

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

7. 2021 Financials

Chair Niina Felushko presented the 2021 financials. We are again in a surplus situation due to lack of spending during Covid.

Motion to accept 2021 financials: Sarah Iles

Seconded by: Sylvia Morris

All were in favour

6. Proposed Annual Budget

Chair Niina Felushko presented the 2022 Budget. She highlighted the additional revenue including the My Main Street Program grant for \$57,500, as well as City and CCT grants. We are hoping to be able to spend more funds on events this year, as well as a push on Marketing and a new Business Support Program that will help our businesses with various projects.

Motion to approve proposed budget: Debbie Smrz

Seconded by: Shibani Sahney

All were in favour



7. Election of Directors

Chair Niina Felushko: The Unionville BIA Board is comprised of 7 to 11 Board members, including two from City Council. At this time we have 9 Board members. These leaves space for the addition of 2 new Board members should there be interest among members to join. A member is defined as someone who owns property or a business on Main Street Unionville.

We have received one notice of interest from Kimberly Wake, a business owner of Chez Co., a new real estate and design firm located at 161 Main Street. She has submitted her intention and a biography to the Board and the Board supports her nomination.

Are there any other nominations from the floor? No there were not.

If not, we need a nominator and seconder for Kimberly.

Nominator: Niina Felushko
Seconder: Shibani Sahney
All in favour

8. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Unionville BIA Board will be Wednesday February 16th at 930am on Zoom. If you are not on the Board but interested in attending please contact Sara for the Zoom link.

9. Adjournment

If there are no other items I will make a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn: Niina Felushko
Seconded: Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
All were in favour