



Minutes

Thornbury Business Improvement Area

Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025
Meeting Time: 8:00 a.m.
Location: Town Hall, Council Chambers
Prepared by: Niki Hilton, General Manager

A. Call to Order

A.1 Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

We would like to begin our meeting by recognizing the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples of Canada as traditional stewards of the land. The municipality is located within the boundary of Treaty 18 region of 1818 which is the traditional land of the Anishnaabek, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples.

A.2 Board of Directors Attendance

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. In attendance were Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Marco Santaguida, Joe Halos, Councillor Shawn McKinlay and Chair Smith.

Town staff present were Allan Gibbons, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator and Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives, who joined via Microsoft Teams.

A.3 Approval of Agenda

Moved: Councillor McKinlay

Seconded: Lesley Fisher

THAT the Agenda of Wednesday, March 5, 2025, be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda.

Yay (7): Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Councillor Shawn McKinlay, Joe Halos, Marco Santaguida, and Chair Smith

Absent (0):

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 0 absent)

A.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and general nature thereof

NOTE: In accordance with the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* Business Improvement Area Directors must file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the Clerk for inclusion on the Registry.

None

A.5 Previous Minutes (Monday, February 5, 2025)

Moved: Lesley Fisher

Seconded: Marco Santaguida

THAT the Minutes of Monday, January 6, 2025, be approved as circulated, including any revisions to be made.

Yay (7): Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Councillor Shawn McKinlay, Joe Halos, Marco Santaguida, and Chair Smith

Absent (0):

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 0 absent)

B. Deputations and Public Comment Period

B.1 Deputations, if any

None

B.2 Public Comment Period (each speaker is allotted three minutes)

Jaime Sirna from Thornbury Craft Co. introduced herself saying they would like to have more of a presence at the meetings to learn what is going on as they'd like to get more involved with the community.

C. Matters for Discussion

C.1 Council Update – Councillor, Shawn McKinlay

Councillor McKinlay spoke about the Volunteer Service Awards and encouraged applications. He asked Allan Gibbons to comment about the CIP. He said it is being reviewed. He brought the gateway and wayfinding project to Council and they are going to look at designs to approve next month.

Tim Hendry provided an update about the Town's tourism strategy. In early April, there will be an open information session to learn about the strategy and engage with the Town's consultant. This strategy supports the industry and guides the Town's use of the funds generated through the Municipal Accommodation Tax.

Tim Hendry also spoke about the response to the US tariffs. He recapped the Team Blue meeting, which Niki participated in, to discuss how businesses are being impacted by tariffs.

C.2 Sub-Committee Updates

1. Budget & Administration Sub-Committee: Doug, Renee, Joe

Chair Smith provided an update about the first budget meeting.

Councillor McKinlay provided a recap of the second budget meeting that included Town staff. Once they have the audited statements, the committee can present the budget to the board.

Councillor McKinlay also mentioned the plans to have a vision session in the summer to decide on immediate goals and form 3-year and 5-year plans for the BIA.

Niki provided the budget timeline.

2. Marketing Sub-Committee: Kelly, Shawn, Andrea

Niki provided an update about phase one of the website changes. She explained the design element has not changed at this time. New pages, copy, images, and icons were added. The SEO was updated on all website pages with the help of Andrea from Soma Leaf.

Board members provided feedback, and a discussion about affiliate membership occurred.

Niki provided an update about the Google listing. This is still being investigated.

Niki provided an update about the member survey. The response was low and Chair Smith spoke about keeping the survey going with some printed copies at the AGM and Meet & Greet.

Niki provided an update about the sponsorship document she has been working on. She has not circulated it yet as there is no final decision on the Winter Lights project.

Niki is still working on a welcome package to go to all existing businesses about communication with the BIA and a recap of what we are doing for members.

3. Beautification Sub-Committee: Lesley, Renee

Renee provided an update that they met by email about flower baskets.

Niki commented that the flower baskets were ordered by the end of February.

Niki relayed that she has contacted Flags Unlimited about any new banners required. She explained that Nathan has taken inventory of all the banners and her and Councillor McKinlay, along with anyone who is interested, are going to look at the banners after the board meeting.

Renee asked about the lights on the lamp posts as she noticed some are not working downtown. Niki asked Lighthouse Group to look at this issue. Behn from Lighthouse Group reported that the majority of the issues are with Town plugs.

4. Events & Cultural Tourism Sub-Committee: Renee, Kelly, Shawn

Niki spoke about the committee's recent meeting about the overview of 2025 events.

Niki reached out to musicians, the Town of The Blue Mountains Library, and the Georgian Triangle Humane Society about programming the parkette.

Niki also suggested they could offer the space to BIA members for live painting, food sampling, or other promotional opportunities.

Niki detailed the idea of hosting a flower market once a month on a Saturday from May to September. A flower market could grow into something bigger in the future. The BIA would start with 3-5 flower vendors this year.

Niki presented an idea for once a month in good weather of mini block parties in less trafficked areas. A discussion by the board followed.

Niki summarized the programming the parkette is green lit, the flower market is green lit, and the block parties are yellow lit since the board is uncertain right now.

Niki spoke about the planning for Canada Day.

Niki said the sub-committee voted to continue with Wag-o-ween on Saturday, October 25.

Niki relayed some details about Olde Fashioned Christmas, which will take place on Saturday, December 13 this year, including expanding the Block Party, booking musicians and introducing more old fashioned elements like maple taffy.

Additional items were discussed, including the time Town staff puts into the event. More discussion is required.

Niki mentioned the sub-committee expressed interest in organizing something for Easter. Niki detailed a shop hop idea. Kelly suggested getting a bunny in a suit for photo opportunities and to create engagement. The board continued with a discussion about Easter.

Niki talked about the upcoming OBIAA conference and planning the mobile session the BIA is hosting in Thornbury.

Niki asked for the date to be changed for the spring meet and greet to May 1. There was an overlap with the Volunteer Fair, which the BIA is participating in on April 30.

Niki provided an update about the challenges with the Winter Lights and her recommendations for 2025. Councillor McKinlay provided additional information about the process of lighting and GFIs. The board discussed what should be invested in for 2025.

C.3 Arts & Crafts Walk Update – Niki Hilton

Niki provided an update that an initial meeting is scheduled for March 6.

C.4 Signage – Niki Hilton

Niki provided an update on the requests from the last meeting. The flower baskets for Louisa St E have been ordered.

Niki provided a quote for 4 banners – 2 for Louisa St E and 2 for Bruce St N.

Niki provided a quote for window decals with a QR code.

The board discussed the options.

Chair Smith proposed a recommended motion about the banners.

Moved: Kelly Gale

Seconded: Renee Desrochers

THAT the Thornbury Business Improvement Area (BIA) dedicates 4 banners indicating retail shops on Louisa Street East and Bruce Street North.

Yay (7): Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Councillor Shawn McKinlay, Joe Halos, Marco Santaguida, and Chair Smith

Absent (0):

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 0 absent)

Chair Smith proposed a recommended motion about the QR code decals.

Moved: Marco Santaguida

Seconded: Renee Desrochers

THAT the Thornbury Business Improvement Area (BIA) produces a QR code sticker pointing to the BIA business directory on the website and respective websites.

Yay (7): Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Councillor Shawn McKinlay, Joe Halos, Marco Santaguida, and Chair Smith

Absent (0):

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 0 absent)

D. Correspondence

D.1 (none)

E. New and Unfinished Business

E.1 Additions to the Agenda

Joe Halos, Reserve Funds

Joe detailed a conversation from the budget sub-committee meeting about reserve funds attracting interest. Joe proposed a recommended motion about taking this action to Council.

Moved: Joe Halos

Seconded: Councillor McKinlay

THAT the Thornbury Business Improvement Area (BIA) requests Finance staff place our reserve funds in an interest-bearing account, the proceeds of which to be credited to our yearly revenue account for Council consideration.

Yay (7): Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Councillor Shawn McKinlay, Joe Halos, Marco Santaguida, and Chair Smith

Absent (0):

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 0 absent)

E.2 Items Identified for Discussion at the Next Meeting

1. Arts & Crafts Walk Update

2. Signage Update

F. Notice of Meeting Dates

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 – BIA Board Meeting
Town Hall, Council Chambers (in-person)

G. Adjournment

Moved: Marco Santaguida

Seconded: Lesley Fisher

THAT this meeting does now adjourn at 9:59 a.m. to meet again on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. at Council Chambers, Town Hall or at the call of the Chair.

Yay (7): Renee Desrochers, Kelly Gale, Lesley Fisher, Councillor Shawn McKinlay, Joe Halos, Marco Santaguida, and Chair Smith

Absent (0):

The motion is Carried (7 to 0, 0 absent)