

Minutes of the Seaforth BIA Meeting

Wednesday, April 8th, 2015

Council Chambers Huron East Municipal Offices (Town Hall)

Present: Chair Melody Hodgson, Directors; Kim Blok, Brenda Campbell, Shannon Craig, Carolanne Doig, Betty Small, and Council Representative Bob Fisher

Municipal Staff: EDO Jan Hawley

Regrets: Directors Maureen Agar and Shelly McMillan

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. after a nice supper had been enjoyed with thanks to Brenda Campbell.

1. The Minutes of the March 11th, 2015 meeting were adopted as presented on a motion by Betty Small and seconded by Kim Blok – ***Motion carried.***

2. **Business Arising from the Minutes:**

- (A) **Review of ideas discussed at March meeting** took place in an effort to prioritize the many great suggestions that had been presented. It was also suggested that some ideas might be combined, some should be dealt with sooner, rather than later and that all ideas were worth considering further. (A) It was decided to combine i) and iv) to determine shopping habits – the use of Survey Monkey would help and this should be done in the near future. (B) The top priority seemed to be “Business of the Week”, although it was determined that weekly might be too often and that a bi-weekly focus on a BIA business might be easier to manage. A suggestion to call it a “BUY-Weekly” Business to Watch or similar was received positively. This project should be undertaken right away and interviews by the BIA with the business and perhaps a short video or similar would be created for each business highlighted. (C) The extension of the Christmas receipt collection and prize of \$mart Money was determined to be a good project to do in the near future, but perhaps not on a weekly but instead a monthly basis. Since Shelly McMillan organized the Christmas contest it was agreed to speak to Director McMillan about this project at our next meeting to see if she might take this on. (D) Pursuit of potential restauranteurs via the Stratford Chef’s School was discussed and EDO Hawley advised that she had already been in touch with

the school. However, because of some recent interest by potential restaurant owners it was decided to defer this to a later date. **(E)** The Victoria Park event is something all were in favour of, but it was decided to wait until we have more information from Director Maureen Agar about the timeline of the refurbishing of the park and bandstand, currently underway. It was also suggested that the BIA partner with another organization to pull this event together. **(F)** Creating a “prize” for the runners up in the “Win This Space” contest was discussed further and it was agreed that this is a good idea. The BIA budget will need to be reviewed and any prizes will be held back until the final five are chosen. EDO Hawley will keep the BIA up to date on how the contest is going and with consultation and review of the budget a final decision will be made. The Chair, Secretary and EDO will meet to review the budget and determine a reasonable proposal to present to the committee. **(G)** The social media audit was thought to be a great idea, but would be deferred until the website is reviewed and modified so that all social media/ website/marketing could be co-ordinated and integrated.

- (II) **Easter Egg Hunt Report:** Melody Hodgson and Brenda Campbell reported that the Easter Egg Hunt was a great success with over 400 for breakfast and over 250 children taking part. Over \$350.00 in candy was purchased in Seaforth and in addition all supplies for the breakfast and craft table were purchased in Seaforth. The event included the breakfast, the Easter Egg hunt, a petting zoo, balance bikes, and a craft table. Revenue generated was just over \$800.00 with expenses just under \$400.00 including the \$75.00 rent of the small hall at the Agriplex. A letter will be sent to the Seaforth Agricultural Society thanking them for the use of the other facility and also to McGavin’s for the maple syrup. It was suggested that half of the net revenue be set aside for next year’s event and that the other money be used to offer a donation to both the Seaforth Ag Society and McGavin’s. Chair Hodgson is going to contact Lyle Haney regarding the donation to the Ag Society.

A motion was made by Betty Small and seconded by Kim Blok that the BIA donate \$100.00 to the Seaforth Ag Society and \$100.00 to McGavin’s Freedom Syrup initiative from the Easter event revenue.
Motion carried.

- (III) **Role of the BIA:** EDO Hawley explained some of the highlights of the rules governing BIA organizations and a handbook was made available both on paper and via a computer link so that members can access information as required.

3. Unfinished and ongoing Business:

- (I) Director Brenda Campbell and EDO Jan Hawley will upload the modified \$mart Money video to the website. Jan has ordered the signage for the next launch and Secretary Doig has ordered the money from Pete's Paper Clip.
- (II) The Welcome Bag Committee has decided that the creation of a "coupon book" or similar might be better than trying to solicit items to fill the bags. They will work on this booklet and then make sure that the booklets along with an information sheet about Seaforth's services etc. be included in the bag and that the bags be distributed by real estate agents, the municipal office and others on a "Welcome to Seaforth" for FIRST time residents, whether they be home-owners or renters.
- (III) Chair Melody Hodgson reported that she and her husband, Brett, had cleaned up all the Christmas decoration remnants outside the info booth. Betty Small offered to go over and sweep the outside area. Chair Hodgson will go back and take any Christmas decorations out of the interior in the near future and EDO Hawley's summer assistant will tidy up the inside in preparation for summer use. EDO Hawley also reported that the owner of the property had agreed to the same arrangement as in the past and that the farmer's market will be returning for 2015. It was suggested that some nice colourful outdoor plants would be a nice addition as well as some more Victorian style outdoor furnishing than what is currently being used.
- (IV) The Chair reported that she was actively working on updating the Shop Seaforth website as it is not compatible with the expanding use of hand held devices that many people use now to access information. She was getting some quotes and these would include the creation of a site that interfaces with Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The map of the BIA businesses should be restructured and it is possible that the Shop Seaforth and Huron East websites could be interfaced. EDO Hawley will look into this possible connection. The Chair will contact Phil at Artech Sign & Graphics to get all info and will work with Chris Lee on the development of this project. Kim Blok offered to help on this project. If the fees are less than \$5,000.00 the BIA would not have to look for tenders.

A motion was made by Director Carolanne Doig and seconded by Director Brenda Campbell that Chair Melody Hodgson acquire a solid quote from Chris Lee to revamp our Shop Seaforth website. ***Motion carried.***

- (v) It was decided that a special meeting be held to review the Strategic Plan and give it the attention it deserves. The subcommittee of EDO Hawley, Chair Hodgson, and Director Carolanne Doig will meet and set a date and invite all and any to attend.

4. Correspondence:

- (I) A letter had been received from the Huron East Chamber of Commerce asking if the BIA would like to join. After discussion it was decided that membership would not be an advantage to our organization at this time. Councillor Fisher, who is on the board of the C of C, advised that individuals may join and could benefit from some savings on services.
- (II) Chair Hodgson had received an email from DD's Restaurant and had responded to the owner in person to their satisfaction.

5. Other:

EDO Hawley asked that as part of the mentoring program she be able to invite the entries for the "Win This Space" contest to a future BIA meeting and this was met with enthusiasm.

- 6. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday, May 13th, 2015 - 7 p.m. at Town Hall

Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm on a motion by Brenda Campbell and second by Kim Blok.

Chair Melody Hodgson

Secretary Carolanne Doig