



**LESLIEVILLE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Monday, November 7, 2019  
7:00 P.M.  
Barrio Cervceria  
884 Queen St. E.**

**LESLIEVILLE BIA BOARD MEMBERS:**

**PRESENT**

Christiane Tetreault	Chair
Jennifer Orenstein	Treasurer
Donald Peckover	Director
Rebecca Montiel	Director
Conner Marvin	Director

**Coordinator:**

Dominic Cobran

**REGRETS**

Councillor Paula Fletcher	Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth
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**GUESTS:**

Michael Saunders	BIA Office, Economic Development Officer, City of Toronto, Economic Development & Culture
Riley Lee	TABIA
Rafiq Dosani	Auditor, Chartered Accountant
Howard Tam	Strategic Planner (Think Fresh)
Maggie Greyson	Strategic Planner (Futures Present)
Nate Gerber	Strategic Planner (Think Fresh)
Eszter Czibok	Social Media Coordinator
Laura Anonen	Staff (Councillor Fletcher's office)

**Total # of attendees: 22**

**1) CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

With no objections noted and quorum established, Christiane Tetreault presided as Chair and opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

**Introductions**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, including special guests: The representative from Councillor Fletcher's office (Councillor Fletcher was attending a special meeting on the



Danforth), our new community members from the Artist Network, Michael Saunders from the City and Riley Lee from TABIA. She also gave a run-down of what would be the focus on the meeting. She then invited Dominic Cobran, Coordinator of the BIA, to read the land acknowledgment.

The Chair then introduced the board members starting with herself. She assumed the Chair in June of 2019. She also introduced Jennifer Orenstein, Treasurer; Donald Peckover, Development Committee Chair; Rebecca Montiel, HR Committee Chair and Conner Marvin, Strategic Planning Chair. She also officially welcomed Dominic Cobran, the new Coordinator for the BIA, as well as Eszter Czibok, new Social Media Coordinator. She also welcomed and introduced the team from Think Fresh and Futures Present, who commenced work on the BIA's first strategic plan.

## **2. PRESENTATION BY THINK FRESH**

Howard Tam and Nate Gerber opened up the presentation by introducing themselves and Maggie Greyson from Futures Present, noting that the project for them was a partnership between two entities to support the BIA Board in etching out a roadmap for where the BIA will go. They gave a quick update on the process thus far.

The common theme arising from its base work was 'change'. The BIA and wider community is changing and so too the board. To date, there has been a lot of research as well as engagement sessions, including surveys and focus groups. The feedback has been that people do want to be involved in change. The unique character of the neighbourhood has also come up a lot in discussions. They asked the meeting to consider the expected outcomes from this strategic planning process for the community.

The team outlined some next steps, including defining what the BIA can action, influence and advocate for. They asked the membership to consider what members can do to work strategically with the BIA to make things happen.

The Chair thanked the team for their presentation.

**Andrew Sherbin:** When can we expect a preliminary report-back to the board/committee?

**Howard Tam:** We expect to complete the exercise by the end of the year

There was a recommittal of item 2 on the agenda and it was established that there was no conflict of interest.

## **3. APPROVAL OF THE 2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

The BIA Membership reviewed the minutes of the January 14, 2019 Annual General Meeting and found there to be no objections or additions.



**On a motion made by Jeff Marsh, seconded by Conner Marvin, it was resolved to approve as presented, the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the BIA held January 14, 2019. Motion carried.**

#### **4. UPDATE FROM THE COUNCILLOR'S OFFICE**

Laura Anonen apologized for Councillor Fletcher's office. She highlighted the office's support at the upcoming Wanderlust event, including the Councillor's tree lighting.

Three issues in the Leslieville area might impact us. The work of Sidewalk Labs and our proximity to that focus area was highlighted. The Ontario Line is coming and the proposal is to have the line run through the area of Jimmy Simpson Park. The BIA should have a say in this issue.

Housing Issues: The Councillor is on the board of the Housing Corp and has been engaged in advocacy to stem evictions. There is a meet-up/rally on November 9, 2019 at 245 Logan Avenue, concerning the eviction issues there.

#### **5. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Development**

Lots of changes have happened on the strip this year. New condos have opened up and new residents and retail stores are in our neighbourhood. We will have more parking spaces in the neighbourhood as the Harhay development is completed. The George condos is still being completed.

There will be a move to get the streetscape master plan going. There will be a strong focus on accessibility and appeal.

- **Marketing**

A lot has happened over the year, including a Movie Night in collaboration with Councillor Fletcher. The aim is to bring that back for 2021. Other partnerships include:

- Beaches Jazz Festival
- Leslieville Tree Festival
- Police BBQ

The Wanderlust event will take place on November 22 and 23. The first night will see the Tree Lighting Ceremony. There will be a Winter Village, tours and entertainment. The BIA is working with an outside agency to bring the event to life. The Chair encouraged businesses to sign up to participate.

How do we bring people to the neighbourhood? There is a look at doing pop-up parklets in the neighbourhood. There is also a hope that the BIA can work with the film industry to build up our assets.

Newsletters were introduced throughout the year.



There was a partnership with Digital Main Street to get businesses onboard and incorporate more digital marketing initiatives in their operations.

There was an appeal for more businesses to join committees.

The gift certificate pilot was also introduced.

- **Human Resource**

A summer student was hired through a grant from Canada Summer Jobs. We will re-apply for the grant next year.

Dominic Cobran was hired on October 28, 2019 as Coordinator. With separated roles, a Social Media Coordinator was hired.

More volunteers are needed for sub-committees to help the BIA grow.

There was an acknowledgement of the work of the former BIA Coordinator, Cathay Quinton, who demitted office. She had been with the BIA since inception. She will be missed.

**On a motion made by Conner Marvin, seconded by Donald Peckover, it was resolved to accept the reports of the sub-committee. Motion carried.**

## **6. AUDITOR'S REPORT FOR 2018**

The Leslieville BIA Auditor, Rafiq Dosani, presented the annual audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018. The Auditor reviewed the audited financial statements, briefly explaining each section. Highlights included:

- The BIA opted to collect \$125,000 from its members.
- The BIA budgeted \$12,500 for other revenue and received \$13,000
- The board was asked to spend \$138,000 and spent \$112,000 because the capital budget is being built up.
- There is a surplus of \$220,000.

It was the opinion of the Auditor that the audited financial statements presented fairly in all material aspects, the financial position of the Leslieville BIA, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for Local governments as prescribed by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB).

**Question, Tony Pena:** What is the BIA doing with all that money saved. There is no difference in the look of the area.

**The Chair:** There are many things happening, including plans towards streetscape. There can be a further discussion.

**The Treasurer:** We are investing in streetscape. We need money.



**On a motion made by Andrew Sherbin, seconded by Jennifer Orenstein, it was resolved to receive the audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018 as presented. Motion carried.**

#### **7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR FOR 2019**

**On a motion made by Andrew Sherbin, seconded by Donald Peckover, it was resolved to appoint Rafiq Dosani as Auditor of the Leslieville Business Improvement Area for 2019 fiscal year, to hold office until the close of the next Annual General Meeting of the BIA. Motion carried.**

#### **8. FINANCIAL REPORT**

The major shift is the moving of money from reserves to investments at a percentage return, so that there will be more funds available for capital projects.

#### **9. PROPOSED PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR 2019**

A draft of the 2020 budget summary for the Leslieville Business Improvement Area was circulated to all attending members of the BIA prior to the meeting. Jennifer Orenstein reviewed and explained all areas, highlighting the following:

- The proposed 2020 BIA budget is \$139,000, reflecting an ask of a 10% increase in the levy.
- We are the only BIA that is seeing levy going down in comparison to property taxes against the proposed budget.
- We will be actively going after sponsorship and other festival revenue.
- There is a hope that we will receive some funding from the City for streetscape
- A storage unit has been procured. Ownership of benches also means the maintenance budget has increased.
- The proposed budget for festivals/events is to go down to \$35,000, reflecting the biggest change in the budget.
- A large portion of our budget will go towards focusing on streetscape.

Questions were invited from the floor.

**Question, Jeff Marsh, Tango Palace:** Is the levy scaled towards inflation and property tax increases?

**Response, Christiane Tetreault:** No

**Response, Rafiq Dosani:** The BIA decides what its budget should be. Assessment goes up, taking into account new businesses.

**Response, Andrew Sherbin:** Our first four years, we did not touch the levy, according to cost of living and inflation. Raised in the 5th year.

**Question, Jeff Marsh, Tango Palace:** So, are we looking at a 20% increase over the 7 year period?

**Response, Andrew Sherbin:** Yes



The Chair explained that we needed the increase as the BIA was looking to make some major changes in the area to help with the brand, to distinguish who we are and to embark on the projects that will have impact.

Andrew Sherbin expressed that we are one of longer BIAs at just over 2 km, so when that is factored in, the BIA is paying much less than others.

Jeff Marsh expressed that he understood the challenges the BIA faces, as a founder member. The BIA should revisit its strategy re increases and instead do inflationary injections year on year, as opposed to big leaps.

Jennifer Orenstein disclosed that it was a difficult decision to ask for the increase. It was even more difficult as a property owner who would have to bear that cost, while already dealing with property tax increases. There is a hope that there will be more increases over the next 4-5 years to get levy in line with the property tax realities.

Jeff Marsh reiterated that from an optics standpoint, a large percentage increase will cause bigger issues, over a longer-term gradual increase/smaller rate.

Andrew Sherbin agreed and expressed dissatisfaction that the membership did not turn out to the meeting. How can the BIA know what direction to go if the membership is not engaged? Under the circumstances, the BIA is doing a good job increasing the engagement and it is hoped that we will see an increased presence at future AGM sessions.

**Question, Tony Pena: Why are people not here? It is dissatisfaction with taxes. People are fed up.**

**Response, The Chair: That issue is bigger than the BIA. It rests with government.**

The Chair opined that in the grand scheme of things, the increase is by a small fraction. There is a streetscape plan to be done and there is not enough money to do everything. This poses a big challenge for the BIA.

Copies of the full 2020 Budget are available to all BIA members upon request.

**On a motion made by Rebecca Montiel, seconded by Conner Marvin, it was resolved to approve the proposed program and budget for 2020 as presented. Motion carried.**

## **10. NEW BUSINESS**

Riley Lee of TABIA echoed the sentiments expressed by the Treasurer around property taxes. He reminded the meeting that TABIA has been having continued discussions around tax and it is a work in progress. They are meeting with MPAC and are also moving to hire consultants to work with MPAC to see how they can deal with the tax issue.

Before the motion to adjourn, Dominic Cobran stood to record congratulations to the Board Chair on a successful first meeting and asked the meeting to show its appreciation.



## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**On a motion made by Donald Peckover, seconded by Jeff Marsh, and with no further business to discuss, it was resolved to close the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Motion carried.**

## **DISCLAIMER**

The above minutes of the Annual General Meeting should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting of the Members of the Leslieville Business Improvement Area. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.