



## **The Corporation of the City of Stratford Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee MINUTES**

Date: January 19, 2021

Time: 3:30 P.M.

Location: Electronic Meeting

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Gaffney - Vice Chair Presiding, Councillor Clifford - Chair, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Bunting, Councillor Ritsma

Staff Present: Janice Beirness - Director of Corporate Services, Jodi Akins - Council Clerk Secretary, Tatiana Dafoe – City Clerk

Also present: Rob Russell and Rebecca Scott, Stratford City Centre BIA

### **1. Call to Order**

The Vice Chair called the meeting to Order.

### **2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof**

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

#### Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made by a member at the January 19, 2021 Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting.

**3. Delegations**

None scheduled.

**4. Report of the Director of Corporate Services**

**4.1 Consideration of the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area (SCC BIA) 2021 Budget (FIN21-001)**

**Staff Recommendation:** THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated January 19, 2021, regarding the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area 2021 budget (FIN21-001) be received for information;

THAT the 2021 budget of the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area be approved as submitted in the amount of \$319,750;

AND THAT the sum of \$290,750 shall be levied on properties located within the boundaries of the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area for the year 2021.

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

**Sub-committee Decision: THAT the delegation by Rob Russell, Chair of Stratford City Centre BIA and Rebecca Scott, General Manager be heard.**

**Carried**

**Sub-committee Discussion:** Rob Russell, Chair of Stratford City Centre BIA and Rebecca Scott, General Manager, referred to a presentation and provided Sub-committee with an update on the BIA's 2020 activities.

Ms. Scott highlighted the communications and programs that were launched at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, including updating their website service lists and resources, marketing for their members and creation of window posters for use during the first lockdown.

The BIA also assisted with the purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) to businesses city-wide with a PPE Subsidy fund in the amount of \$40,000.

With respect to recovery efforts, Ms. Scott highlighted some of the initiatives that were brought forward through the Economic Response and Recovery Task Force led by investStratford which included the "En Plein Air" painted circles, extended boardwalks with an art project component, location of 50 CRP picnic tables and an extended liquor licence within

Market Square and Tom Patterson Island to help support local restaurants.

Mr. Russell referenced a number of partnerships the BIA had throughout the year, including Lights On Stratford and the All Together Hospitality Workers Fund headed by the United Way.

Completion of two steel box wraps and a mural, the Christmas scavenger hunt, Ten Bucks Back promotion and Downtown Dollars were some projects from the year's regular programming that went ahead. Downtown dollars were particularly successful, with a 692% increase over 2019.

With respect to their 2021 budget, Mr. Russell advised that they are requesting a 0% increase from last year.

Some changes from the previous year include a line item for anti-racism and diversity training, a bit more in support fees as they have hired a part time social media coordinator and \$5,000 that is usually earmarked for Stratford Summer Music was diverted to the Destination Animation fund.

In response to what is included in the \$40,000 for beautification, Mr. Russell advised that the funds are used for snowflake repairs, contributions to the City gardens and ongoing projects such as bench restoration, purchase of bike racks and signage. It was noted that this fund could also be diverted to the al fresco project if needed. They would also love to do another mural.

It was questioned whether there was a reserve fund from 2020. Mr. Russell responded there was a small reserve but it was used for the Lights On Stratford initiative. He noted that the project can be built on for years to come to create a winter season for both tourists and locals to enjoy.

As to how downtown retail merchants are doing, Mr. Russell stated that as a storeowner personally, it has been challenging but there has been huge public support. Ms. Scott advised that with the supports that have been provided from upper levels of government, businesses are down but surviving. She noted that they are in constant communication with business owners and the feedback is filtered to Ontario BIA.

In response to whether they are allowed to have a contingency fund, Mr. Russell advised that his understanding from previous years was that they were not allowed to have a carry-over, however, it may be time to revisit.

Motion by Councillor Beatty

**Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the report of the Director of Corporate Services dated January 19, 2021, regarding the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area 2021 budget (FIN21-001) be received for information;**

**THAT the 2021 budget of the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area be approved as submitted in the amount of \$319,750;**

**AND THAT the sum of \$290,750 shall be levied on properties located within the boundaries of the Stratford City Centre Business Improvement Area for the year 2021.**

**Carried**

**5. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes**

There were no Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes to be provided to Sub-committee.

**6. Next Sub-committee Meeting**

The next Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting is Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

**7. Adjournment**

Motion by Councillor Bunting

**Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Sub-committee meeting adjourn.**

**Carried**

Meeting Start Time: 3:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 3:49 P.M.