

Board of Directors Meeting - Sparks Street BIA
Thursday, October 20, 2022
1:30pm – 2:30pm
ZOOM Call/ In Person

Attendees:

- Kevin McHale
- Marissa Lord
- Ian Wright
- Stefania Capovilla
- Chris Hetherington

Declaration of conflicts

1. **Adoption of the Agenda** *Chris, Ian*
2. **Adoption of the Minutes of the Last Meeting – SSBIA** *Chris, Stefania*
3. **Declarations of pecuniary interest including those arising from prior meetings** *None*
4. **Opening Remarks – Chair** *Ian - No remarks*
5. **AGM and Election of Board – Course of Action**
 - *Kevin noted with our AGM and election coming up that the last date this Board is fully authorized to conduct business is November 15th so will move scheduled Nov. 17th meeting to November 14 – 15 so the Board can be presented the budget for approval so the approved budget can be taken to the AGM to present to the members where questions can be asked by members if they have any, to which after the AGM (a presentation of budget and financials), we then have our election for the new Board.*
 - *Kevin informed the Board that the [2023] budget intention is to be somewhat similar in programming and such as this year and may leave it a little broader with opportunities and leeway for the new Board's direction or changes – no large commitments have been made at this time (such as CREOS exhibits, etc.). Kevin reiterated the last 3 years a budget has been presented to the Board which are also operational instructions with everything laid out so as not to return to the Board for approvals every 2 weeks*
 - *Kevin then opened the floor to questions regarding the above to which there were none*
 - *Kevin outlined the steps of the electoral process:*

- *The City of Ottawa approved to go down to 6 elected Board members + Councilor – no formal vote from membership needed*
- *As a governance item, the above will be presented at the AGM. Looking to getting back to hosting a Christmas dinner (Election + AGM + food)*
- *Need a 2-month period from announcing the election to the vote. We'll announce the election this week or next which will give us our 2-month window*
- *3-week nomination period (most of the month of Nov.) with the election in December*
- *We will create a Microsoft form (Name, phone number, business, address, and a quick bio)*
- *We will then have an election committee review (to ensure the people who submitted nominations are valid candidates (either operate/represent a business or operate/own a building in our catchment area))*
- *No term limits. Everyone on Board currently is free to run and are encouraged to do so*
- *If 6 candidates at end of nomination, it will be announced and submitted to city council for approval with no election required*
- *We do not take nominations from the floor at the AGM for purpose of more thoughtful nominations*
- *We will create a form for nomination + standalone e-mail to the mailing list*
- *Will identify people we think should run and encourage them to do so*
- *More than 6 candidates, fantastic, we prepare a ballot which is sent to everyone; must be present to vote (bring ballot with you or fill it out there)*
- *We would then compare that to the tax roll rather than just the business numbers (i.e.: legitimate businesses voting only). One vote per operation (i.e.: NCC multiple property owner in area but only allowed one vote in the election. Same for business owner even if they own more than one business in the BIA).*

Ian: *If we don't have 6 people?*

Kevin: *If 6 aren't there, then at the end of nomination, that group (say it's of 5) would then form a board of 5 and the board can then choose to recruit to fill that 6th position (a member at large option)*

Ian: *Say it's down to 4 though rather than 5-6?*

Kevin: *It's happened to BIAs in the past with 6 spots open and only 3 apply – that's your board of 3. Then number 1 job of the staff and the board is to find additional recruits with city's knowledge and members at large are then accepted. Just can't have multiple people from same organization sitting on a board. Must be open and clear with membership about process. Will create form, hold election after our AGM if required, and after AGM, a board meeting must happen quickly to decide amongst themselves who the executives will be (Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, etc.).*

Kevin: Looking for advice on when to hold the session (mid-Dec. on a Monday or Tuesday? – looking for room we can 100% control (especially with an AGM and election tied to it: don't want to be sharing a space) and somewhere with food – more people attend with a meal + better atmosphere

Ian: Christmas get togethers are important even if they don't draw a lot of people

Kevin: Christmases of the past we used to get 40-50 people. Open to have a performer as well as food

Ian: That does hinder being able to chat amongst each another and that's the whole reason for it is to be able to visit among the members

Kevin: All I'm saying is I'm open to whatever we can do to encourage people to come

Ian: And that's in December?

Kevin: Traditionally we've done it in Dec. because it has been our 'Christmas party'

Stefania: The earlier the better – super busy time

Chris: Agreed

Kevin: Looking at 16 – 17 of January as a possibility – must have everything into the City by Jan. 23rd. Just means a laying duck Board a little longer. Or December 5-6. Suggesting a Tuesday as a number of our members are closed on Mondays right now

Stefania: Would it be in the evening?

Kevin: Yes.

Stefania: Fine with Dec. 6; feels January would be better but... [deadlines]

Ian: Agreed

Chris: Open to either

Kevin: Aim for Dec. 6

Stefania: Can we rent out Riviera?

Ian: Hey, there's a good idea

Kevin: [Wishes to but price point prohibitive] The advantage to a Monday/Tuesday is the restaurants aren't as busy; had last Christmas party at Rabbit Hole's downstairs, it was well attended

Kevin: Aim for Dec. 6 and will talk with them about making that work and have everything drafted for Monday or Tuesday of next week to get everything running with a standalone announcement and will confirm with Michelle from OCOBIA that a 3-week nomination window is sufficient

- **ACTION:** SSBIA staff to create nomination forms + member e-mail to inform on upcoming process
- **ACTION:** Kevin to verify nomination window minimum with Michelle Groulx, Executive Director of Ottawa Coalition of Business Improvement Areas (OCOBIA)

Stefania: Raised question having just joined the board; I've never had to go through this process before and want to know how to go about getting people to nominate me for the board – if it requires speaking with members

Kevin: You can go around and talk to people if you wish, but as a Board member currently, have to watch not to use BIA resources for your campaign. We end up following a lot of the rules that they draft for councilors. Few people go door to door and

ask for people's votes; people tend to vote based on what they know of you already and what your business is. You can't have a campaign until the nomination window is closed mid-November (tighter). Enough time to walk around and make a flyer etc.

Ian: *You don't have to do anything really, you just put your nomination in and chances are people on the street will be thrilled you've put your name in and they'll be happy to vote for you*

Kevin: *Any other questions on AGM or nominations for the Board?*

None

6. Executive Director Report – Kevin

- **Play and Grow:** *No update, aiming for next year – it's gone through city commentary on initial design, meeting with them next week to hopefully finalize so we can generate an RFQ for construction of the project. Spoke with funders as we're falling definitely into 2023; their goal is to have as much work paid for by the end of this year. The design lends itself well with these cubes we presented will hopefully be made of a wood or granite material vs a plastic. So to have an artist or company making them in the winter time ready to deploy in spring and funding (more MA side) should be able to get most of it done under the funding model and bets that funding will probably be extended (hearing many projects are having difficulty getting out the door – too many construction going on)*
- **One Canada project:** *wraps up next week – it didn't meet Kevin's expectations of the project, conceptually it's really cool, think the guys are 70% there and it (the proj.) should have been spread out over 18 months to a year and was rushed for funding and want to do right by Ottawa Tourism who funded the project and will ship it back to EXAR studios and work with them to refresh, update and build and robust and bring it back for 2 – 3 months again next summer. Will put some money into it like a 2-week exhibit would have done with CREOS – build out the app and it will be a whole new audience to experience it. Over 100,000 button hits (only 80K projected)*

Ian: *Did any of the buttons work?*

Kevin: *They would work at times; discovered part of the issue was the internet connection was spotty (trouble with that with Bell as well), and some of the stuff would glitch and such – One thing noted: instead of relying on an outside wifi connection, putting 3-G antenna hot-spot connection so changes can be made on the fly. Biggest struggle with the unit on the street were the TVs (shutting off/down) 2 of the TVs refused to stay connected to the server so looking to put in a projector/tweak. Like the long-term idea for these kinds of projects that are bit more than just a 3-week set up (place for these exhibits to live on the street for a season) and we've been fortunate the financial cost has been taken on by Ottawa Tourism – it was integrated into Ottawa Asian Night Market and Poutinefest (typically in the past would not have booked anything during those windows or tucked/packed it away for the weekend) forced us as event producers*

to see this piece as important as the festival – to integrate these type of exhibits into our temporary programming wheel – is a good lesson learned

- Patios: Kevin talked about Block 1 delay after Ribfest, other thing going to work on is majority of patios closed during Poutinefest, especially on the weekend, need to work with operators to have staffed or out of the way
- Christmas Lights: Décor install starts November 1, pause for Remembrance Day and nothing lit until the 12th. Big ornaments coming back, trees, other lighting up and down the street – very well received last year. Incorporating planter boxes from Green Zones into the spaces as well and decorating the Shed (will use for Toy Mountain campaign again; 12 days of Christmas will be at the same time)
- Marketing: 1st Google Ads word campaign for Poutinefest – will get the data from the campaign to see how that worked for us. Growth for organization/staff, learning on these tools, paid for all these elements (photos, videos) and out there using them – Had video crew for Poutinefest and Buskerfest for lots of great content for next few years to help promote those events
- Office Space: Narrowing down on space inside the courtyard in Ashcroft building

Kevin: Asked to send Chris the offer not as a board member but as a professional to get his take on it, suggestions on what we can be asking for or pushing back on perhaps

Chris: Sure

Kevin: It's a great big open box of a space – almost 2,000 sq ft (bigger than what we have now, space for staff and running festivals and for 3rd parties to use as a space and looking to expand footprint of the BIA and will likely need more HR resources going forward with that – try to quintuple our space that we manage and keep an eye on

Chris: Sure, flip it over and we can take a look – I have an appraisal also on Sparks Street, so I know roughly the terms also

Kevin: Thank you, I'll get that over to you

- Sandwich Board Policy: This is Mall Authority, but we will come after people who have too many on the street starting next year – one per business/storefront and agree upon certain locations so they are visible but not in the way and standardized design for consistency – long-term having a set standard for patio fencing, planter/flower boxes, etc. regulated; individual design but SSBIA can manage look of it and purchase/repairs

Ian: And that will all be tied in with the fee – does the fee go to us?

Kevin: It goes to Mall Authority, it doesn't go to the City of Ottawa, this way we can dictate terms of size and space as well. There's no multi-year patio leases, but we would like to. Could be a fun project maybe on the Mall Authority to do a design review competition (landscape architects/design students) to create a standard for patio fencing, etc. then have it built hopefully 2023 project

7. Environics Analytics Update

- *Kevin informed the Board the Environics is up and running, that he has a training session for data reading for Environics next week, and will pull a footfall report to share with the Board – This example reaches as far back as 2019 (Ribfest 2019 was 229K people on the street, last week of the convoy showed 33K people on the street, and the week after when we were still locked down and everything else was back to normal: 33K people on the street which are our 2 biggest weeks of the year). He shared that spring and early summer numbers were great, then slowed by August as everyone left on vacations. Transit part of the issue. Hearing that Ottawa is not top of the charts for bus tours coming through. Good to have those base numbers to provide weekly count, especially during our events. Request for data of profiles of our audiences during big events, our visitors, and where they're coming from: Environics working on formulating those questions for us now and putting it together so we will hopefully have reports in the near future. Once he does his training, he will generate some reports and flip them to the Board next week.*
- **ACTION:** *Kevin to provide BIA Board with Environics report next week*

Ian: *Any word on Winterlude?*

Kevin: *Winterlude is a go, started weekly meetings, similar commitment (Mall Authority responsible for snow clearing during event, BIA to help cover food for carvers, performers, and staff as well as find some spaces for Green Room (with bathroom for carvers, performers) and First Aid/Security/Lost Children on Sparks Street itself during the event)*

Chris: *What space did you use in the past?*

Kevin: *Last time we used the old CS Co-Op Alternative Savings location for first aid/lost kids. This time they're going to be putting about 40 performers in The Shed on Block 3 in front of CBC; looking for a space down there (did some Green Room space with The Office [Resto Pub] last time and with the number of performers, easiest with a space down there), also used office space next door to us – will put in request for that space with Rocque Gameiro early since Inside Edge couldn't get the answer soon enough for Buskerfest. [Winterlude] has to drop internet in the office and start using the space beginning of January next door.*

- **ACTION:** *Kevin to speak to Rocque and Max directly requesting space next door to 100 Sparks office for Winterlude office space use*

Chris: *Inside Edge did not respond?*

Kevin: *Inside Edge responded right away, saying they forwarded our request on to the property owners and would let us know and we never heard back until after the event that they still had not had a response*

Kevin: *Asked Chris to please respond electronically to the audit results*

Chris: *Yes, I'll do that right away*

- **ACTION:** *Chris to respond to audit results*

8. Other Business

Chris: Offered update on Sparks Street: Been working with PSPC and has some traffic coming through on leasing possibilities in some of the spaces which is great and hopeful for a deal in one space by January or so and will keep us updated as it proceeds. Seems positive for the North side with 5 - 6 real groups looking (mostly Food & Beverage) which is fine and part of the consultant's report anyway

Kevin: That's great news, I know that a couple people commented about Bill [Leonard]'s comments at the real estate symposium last week saying it was pretty bold and that it was just waiting for covid to get out of the way so he could say those things out loud.

Chris: Bill doesn't hold back, he was full on about everything

Kevin: There was an Ottawa Real Estate event with 700 people – biggest attendance they'd ever had – and Bill on stage declared that the bays that the NCC was assisting with would be full sooner than later and a couple people reached out to say it was really impressive to hear

Chris: Now we just have to deliver

Ian: Yeah, that's it

Kevin: Anything Chris needs from BIA, questions about exterior use, etc. please let us know; we're here to help.

Chris: Wonderful, thank you

Kevin: Did successfully get 10 grants approved through the My Main Street program (first BIA in Ottawa to do so) thanks to Sue-Ellen's work – not easy – more than 10 applied; great news

Adjournment Ian, Chris