

**TORONTO DOWNTOWN WEST BIA
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021, 4:00 P.M. – 4:30 PM
TELECONFERENCE - ZOOM**

Opening of Meeting:

Land Acknowledgement We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit

Welcome

Janice Solomon welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. She acknowledged and thanked outgoing MP Adam Vaughan who has been very supportive and instrumental in creating Summits with Mayor John Tory; incoming MP Kevin Vuong, MPP Chris Glover and City Councillor Joe Cressy all of whom support the BIA. She thanked the Board of Directors who are all volunteers, many of whom also sit on the various committees of the DW BIA

Boundary expansion

Work continues on the Boundary Expansion to include businesses between Spadina and Bathurst. The BIA is waiting on polling results from the City and will advise

2021 Summary of BIA Activities:

- Downtown West BIA follows the principles of our strategic plan, promoting, advocating and collaborating with member businesses and enhancing the area through beautification programs
- Working with partners locally provincially, nationally and internationally to benefit from collective collaboration

Partnerships include:

- Canadian Urban Institute working on Restore the Core and Bring Back Main Street, second annual Mayor summit in June including voices from performing arts, hotels hospitality etc. on the need for continued support
- Toronto Region Board of Trade consults on a number of advocacy issues, including provincial vaccination passport, a recovery tracker comparing before the pandemic and after
- Downtown BIA's and Strategic Regional Research Alliance working with our commercial property owners on occupancy and a successful return to the office
- The BIA is an important resource, providing daily information on COVID-19 government updates, relief programs and safe reopening resources
- Email newsletters include member promotional and marketing opportunities
- Active on Social media including: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn to promote and connect
- Working with the City on the Café TO program expanding outdoor dining areas which could become permanent
- Ongoing discussions with hospitality businesses in the current and proposed expansion area to maximize CafeTO and other programs
- Public art installations have proliferated with development in the area. ArtWalk is a consolidation of art with self guided tours for exploring art and architecture

- The BIA has created a gift card and adds \$25 to any \$100 card purchased to be used in the area and there is no cost for businesses to take part
- Worked closely with businesses in the expansion area including notifications including Café TO, COVID, Government relief programs, road closure and construction notices. Also work with property managers, mail drops, email, social media. The expanded area will contribute to the BIA having a strong voice on city policy decisions, development and infrastructure changes: maintenance enhancements and beautification strategies
- The master plan is being updated to a new Planning and Development document including a retail strategy, identifying destination streets with a goal to maintain vibrant streets with storefront tenancy as integral as well as parks and open spaces, and an urban tree canopy
- The Urban Growth and Development document tracks all stages of development including square footage, number of stories, etc.
- John Street has an important role in the network of downtown streets connecting many key cultural institutions. It will be redesigned from Stephanie to Front Street West with hydro work scheduled to be completed by 2022
- When completed, John Street will have wider sidewalks, new hydro poles, new paving treatment with flexible curb, new tree canopy, special lighting, and Wi-Fi
- The Ontario Line is a priority transit plan from Exhibition Place to the Ontario Science Center. The BIA is part of the Community Consultation Committee to ensure timely messages about public meetings and construction are communicated to members
- A spring de-escalation seminar was hosted by the BIA providing valuable training and tools for frontline and security workers
- We work closely with 52 Division and heads of security in our commercial buildings providing timely and consistent communication relevant to safety and security in the BIA
- The BIA advocates for immediate supportive housing and mental health and addiction programs
- The BIA reports on crisis and criminal incidents to the police and City Shelter Support and Housing Administration
- Our cleaning program has escalated to include removal of items from public places (sometimes requiring hazmat equipment) along with power washing and sanitization
- A series of fires being set in parks and public realm spaces resulted in the city changing policies to provide more immediate responses to critical issues around homelessness and encampments
- Our contractors work on litter removal, graffiti and poster removal, snow removal, power washing and sidewalk cleaning. They also report all deficiencies to the city on an ongoing basis
- Our anti-adhesive pole wraps, and pole paint deter graffiti and posters, this year we replaced pole wraps on Simcoe Street and Front Street West
- Adelaide Street planters are in poor condition and need to be removed. The BIA is cost-sharing with the City to replace planters with proper tree trench system which will coincide with scheduled city road infrastructure work
- Flowers are important to our members, but the incidents of theft and vandalism are on the rise

Janice Solomon provided an updated note regarding the individual shown in the 52 Division Police "Wanted" poster, Lenin Costillo, a recidivist, has been arrested. He had been targeting multiple restaurants in the area (theft, robbery, B&E)

Janice Solomon introduced the BIA Chair, Michael Emory to open the Formal Business portion of the meeting

Formal Business

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Michael Emory thanked everyone for attending. He advised that the meeting is being recorded.

Michael Emory acknowledged the exceptional presentation and advised that what we just watched provides a good description of what BIA does on ongoing basis. It was especially impressive that this contribution was made during a pandemic. He commended Janice Solomon and her team for having risen to the challenge posed by the pandemic and associated disruptions. She is the heart and soul of the BIA and an exceptional Executive Director doing extraordinary work over the last two years

Michael Emory also acknowledged Canadian citizens at large who embraced the vaccination program, as we're better for it and this should be appreciated and acknowledged

Also, the growing consensus about vaccine mandates and passports will help the remaining members get vaccinated and all return to the social activities we missed during pandemic. The risk can't be eliminated but it can be reduced by making intelligent choices

Our governments by and large have served us well and while it's easy to criticize decision makers after the fact, they've done their best to make intelligent decisions based on science and deal with competing interests in society. The federal government has been particularly supportive of small business, and it should be acknowledged

Remaining restrictions will be lifted or removed next week which will be good for small businesses and other interests and we should celebrate. We are beginning to return to rich social environment we were accustomed to

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

3. Approval of 2020 Annual General Meeting Minutes

MOTION: A motion was made by Sarah Turney (Fasken), seconded by Peter Doyle (Ripley's Aquarium of Canada) Carried

4. 2020 Auditors Report

Jim Aldridge, Treasurer, reported that the 2020 Audited Financial Statements were in the package and had been prepared by Rosenswig McRae Thorpe, the BIA Auditor. It was a clean audit and has been sent to the City as required by our by-laws

MOTION: A motion to accept the 2020 Audited Financial Statements was made by Deborah Scott (Scott Architects), seconded by Sarah Turney. Carried

5. Appointment of Auditor

MOTION: A motion was made by David Kelley (SOHO Hotel), seconded by Deborah Scott to appoint Rosenswig McRae Thorp as the BIA Auditor. Carried

6. 2022 Budget

Jim Aldridge advised that the budget was sent out in AGM package. It reflects the current BIA boundaries because the BIA has not heard from city about expansion. It was a highly unusual year, with

extraordinary pressures on members and as such the Board has decided not to increase the levy for 2022. The budget has been vetted by the Finance and Steering Committees and approved by Board
MOTION: A motion was made to approve the 2022 Budget as presented by Steven Sorensen (CF), seconded Maya Kane, (CBC). Carried

Jim Aldridge turned the meeting back over to Michael Emory for closing remarks and adjournment

7. Adjournment

Michael Emory thanked everyone for participating in AGM and stated that he looks forward to the future in our neighbourhood and country

MOTION: A motion to adjourn was made at 4:36 pm by Sarah Turney, seconded by Oliver Geddes, (The Fifth), Carried

Thank you on behalf of Board, ED and team, members

A brief video was shown: Individuals in the neighbourhood interviewed, conveying their message of excitement and interest in returning to work, patios and other activities in the area.