



Minutes of the Seaforth BIA Meeting
Wednesday, January 14, 2015
Municipal Offices (Town Hall)

Present: Chair Carolanne Doig

Directors: Shelly McMillan, Maureen Agar, Herb McGowan, Brenda Campbell,
Melody Hodgson, Municipal Representative: Councillor Bob Fisher

Staff: EDO – Jan Hawley,

Guest: Barb Horne (Seaforth TD Canada Trust)

Regrets: Director Kim Blok

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. The Minutes of the November 2014 meeting were adopted as presented on a motion by Maureen Agar seconded by Herb McGowan – *Motion carried.*

2. Business Arising from Minutes:

- 2.1 **Christmas Campaign:** The general consensus was that the 2014 Christmas promotional event went very well. Over 180 entries were put into the mail box and this equates to almost 1,000 purchases at Seaforth businesses. First prize went to Mary Cardno, second prize to Barb Horne, and third prize to Regina Whyte. Director McMillan reported that we probably need to remind the merchants about the benefits of the program and encourage them to keep their customers involved by mentioning the contest and displaying the poster. Perhaps even providing a special envelope for receipts might be helpful. Putting some large posters in vacant windows similar to the poster at the booth might also boost the contest. Postcards or mini-postcards could also be printed and handed out well in advance of the Christmas season. The committee felt it might be beneficial to begin advertising the Christmas promotion when we have the second launch of \$mart Money at Thanksgiving. Councillor Fisher said he felt that the Christmas music was not on enough, not loud enough, and that the selection needs to be

improved. Other board members agreed with Councillor Fisher so the Chair said she would contact Dwain Forrest, who had offered to look after this part of the program to see what the issue was and how it could be improved for future years. The committee was advised to set aside enough Smart Money in 2015 to fulfill this promotion as that was a problem this season. It was agreed that the storefronts, tourist booth, and lighting on the Main Street all looked great, but that we would need to look into getting better bows for 2015 as the material that we currently use will not hold up for another season. It was suggested that someone from our board speak with Kendra at Blooms 'n Rooms as well as Mary at Flower Magic to find out what outdoor material might be used and if there is nothing acceptable we might consider going to Barmy Tech for bows. It was also agreed that the Alzheimer lights on the tree at the tourist booth were a nice addition, but that we might suggest the addition of a couple of more strings of blue lights. Director Maureen Agar felt that the lights and the 'camera' that Dwain Forrest placed at the booth area helped prevent any vandalism.

- 2.2. **Removal & Storage of Christmas Decorations:** Director Agar reported that Roads Superintendent James Atkins had agreed to find room behind the town hall to store the sleigh, cut out carollers, and other decorations that would fit in the sleigh. The Chair and Director Agar will take the decorations down and do an inventory for future use. Some of the greenery and 'winter' items will be left up a bit longer. Herb McGowan offered us a couple of plastic bins to store the decorations, cords, lights etc. so that they would not get damaged. The Chair suggested that perhaps next year we could add a cut-out "ELF" so children could take a Christmas 'SELFie'. Director Shelly McMillan said we might be able to fashion some kind of contest or promo around this idea, similar to what they do in Arizona. After some discussion, it was suggested that we send a reminder to the merchants asking them to take down Christmas decorations by the end of January since it seems like they just went up. (EDO Hawley sent reminder January 20, 2015)
- 2.3. **Wine and Cheese Event and Award Presentation:** Chair Doig reported that the event went very well with a good turnout of people, although there were fewer people than the year before. Some discussion was held about the reason for this – it was a lovely day and many people may have gone out of town – the Huron East

Christmas Party was also held in Seaforth this year – and who knows what other reasons. The award winners were all delighted and surprised by their award and all past mayors that were invited were in attendance, except Hazel Hildebrand and John Sinnamon.

- 2.4. **Summerfest 2015** – Barb Horne from the Seaforth TD Canada Trust attended the meeting to give us an update on the plans for the SummerFest. It is going to be bigger and better than ever and the grant that Chair Doig and Director Agar applied for was approved in the amount of \$2,500.00. This is a great example of businesses working together to promote the community. The TD Canada Trust cheque has already been received and the inflatable games have been ordered. Some additional paperwork will be done in the next few weeks and a photo op will be scheduled so that the bank organizers can begin promoting the event well in advance of the summer. Barb Horne will talk to the businesses on the Main Street and encourage them to host a game for children and or have a sidewalk sale or something. She is also getting food vendors organized, a band, street hockey, and a lagoon for the kids. It was suggested to move the climbing wall down near John Street so that people driving down the highway can look down Main Street and see what is going on. It was also suggested to get some photos from last year`s event and post them on Facebook and perhaps get the paper to do a pre-event feature. The Chair also suggested getting flyers out to the schools and nursery school before school is out for the summer and Director Brenda Campbell suggested getting some volunteers using the school`s community hour program.
- 2.5. **Main Street Lighting – LED Update:** Director Agar and EDO Hawley reported that some discussion has taken place with the Public Works Manager Barry Mills as well as the lighting supplier to get options and pricing for the aesthetic improvement of the lights for the heritage part of Main Street. The information was passed around and since there is a meeting with the supplier scheduled for January 20th it was suggested that we bring that information to the next meeting, keeping in mind that there are time and budget constraints that we will have to deal with if we hope to get this major project off the ground. However, as Chair Doig pointed out we should take advantage of this mandatory change of lighting and

keep in mind that we may end up saving in the long run as we are constantly discussing the future of our Christmas lights too and this project may solve two problems. Councillor Fisher advised that he may have some additional funding access for this project and will advise us as soon as he can.

- 2.6. **Win This Space – Business Recruitment Initiative:** EDO Hawley reported that the program had been approved at all levels and this will be a first for Huron County. The website and judges panel have been established and the launch has been scheduled for Thursday, April 9th at the Seaforth Golf Club, which has a good size meeting room, and allows for on-site catering, and licensing. Seaforth has eight empty storefronts and there are a couple of storefronts in Brussels too that are included in the contest. Councillor Fisher questioned the use of the selected venue for the launch and suggested that it be held in the Seaforth downtown. EDO Hawley reminded Councillor Fisher that this is a Huron East Initiative with funding from several sources including the county and that the contribution the Seaforth BIA is making to the event is for a portion of the rent for a Seaforth storefront, if selected. EDO Hawley explained that the budget for the event is independent of the BIA contribution.
- 2.7. **Website Maintenance:** Chair Doig reported that we have had some difficulties getting Artech to update the BIA website and upload minutes etc. in a timely fashion so she contacted Phil Duncan and was advised that staffing problems were the cause. However, Mr. Duncan assured Carolanne that this problem would not continue into the New Year. This will be monitored and dealt with by Chair Doig and EDO Hawley, if necessary. Melody Hodgson suggested that this might be a job that Chris Lee could do on our behalf so we can look into this if the problem persists.

3.0 Unfinished Business:

3.1 **Seaforth \$mart Money Video Changes** – Brenda Campbell reported that the changes had not been made because we had sold out of the money for 2014. Brenda will make sure the video is shortened and ready for the next launch on Mothers' Day 2015. A link will be embedded into the website to encourage people to view the video.

3.2 **Seaforth \$mart Money** - The summary of the \$mart Money usage had been circulated and was enclosed with all packages sent out so we did not go over it line by line. However, the

summary sheet did remind us that we should check into recruiting some additional associate members such as Fritzly, Rona and more who could benefit from being in the BIA and this spending program The \$mart Money program would be discussed further when the budget is reviewed.

3.3 Welcome Bags – Director Melody Hodgson had some welcome bags with her for us to see and Chair Doig asked how the bags would be filled and distributed in coming months. Melody advised that she felt the subcommittee of herself, and fellow directors Brenda Campbell, and Kim Blok would follow up on this project with the help of information received from Barb Dalrymple who has records of previous welcome bag programs. Brenda advised that she would visit the businesses personally to find out what they might contribute to the contents. The subcommittee will give an update at the next meeting.

3.4 Rain Barrel Funding Update: Herb McGowan reported that the grant has been awarded and the paperwork is all done. A cheque will be arriving to pay for the 5 or 6 barrels, which will be displayed at the Seaforth TD Canda Trust prior to the painting contest and Summer-fest. Director McGowan is arranging for the pickup of the barrels as well as the materials necessary for the raised garden project. Herb and Barb Horne both advised that the schools will be involved in this environmental initiative.

3.5 Goderich Street East Update: There was no additional information report at this time.

3.6 Strategic Plan Update: Chair Doig drew attention once again to our printed version of the Strategic Plan that is also posted on our website for review. She also drew attention to the report that was added to the info package for this meeting. On November 4, Chair Doig, EDO Jan Hawley, and board member Herb McGowan met for several hours to review our Strategic Plan as well as our current budget (with input and information from Huron East Treasurer Paula Michiels) in an effort to bring additional information to this meeting so that budgeting could be done in a timely and informed way. Chair Doig advised that several of the

original projects had been completed and that this information had been on view at the BIA Wine and Cheese event for members and guests to review. Now is the time to be thinking about our next projects and how they will fit into our budget.

3.7 Annual Responsibilities: Chair Doig reported that she had been looking at this for some time because there were certain recurring things that could be handled by either sub-committees or individuals on the board so that the Chair and the EDO could share the work load with the entire board. Director Melody Hodgson offered to manage the g-mail account, and Director Brenda Campbell offered to help with recruitment of associate members. Other areas that could be delegated included the \$mart Money campaign, the Christmas decorating and advertising campaign, website updating and a communication person to visit members on a regular basis.

4.0 Correspondence:

4.1 Chair Doig & EDO Hawley brought to the board's attention the note from Connie Trotter about a charging station for electric cars. Herb McGowan reported that from his research he felt that the municipality may be able to get a charging station installed at no charge and that EDO Hawley could advise the municipality of this. After feedback from the municipality, Director McGowan will gladly respond to Mrs. Trotter's note.

4.2 Chair Doig reported that OneCare had sent a letter of information about exercises available to prevent falling by senior citizens. Many OneCare services can be found on the Huron East Calendar at www.huroneast.com.

5.0 - New Business: Budget Deliberation – a preliminary budget proposal was reviewed line by line so that the board would have some information to consider prior to the Annual General Meeting and the presentation of the budget to council. Highlights reviewed:

5.1 Changing the amount of \$mart Money for 2015 to \$30,000.00 instead of \$60,000.00 and using the \$3,000.00 saving to finance a part time helper for the BIA as well as pay the annual \$1,000.00 audit fee. Councillor Fisher commented that changes to the \$mart Money program had not been successful in the past. We also have to decide on the guidelines for the \$mart Money sale (eg. Allow people to purchase additional money after the money has

been on sale for 8 weeks, the colour of the money, the launch dates, the purchase of a more professional looking launch poster, and the setting aside of \$500.00 of \$mart Money for the Christmas promo contest.)

5.2 Downtown garbage issues were considered, but at this time we have not budgeted for more garbage cans as we believe the current number on the Main Street is sufficient if they are emptied on a timely schedule. However, since garbage and recycling problems seem to be an ongoing complaint in alleyways behind the Main Street buildings consideration may be given to levying property owners on the Main Street so that garbage removal would be included and that would perhaps solve the garbage disposal problems faced by many tenants.

5.3 The Tourist Booth situation should be considered as stated earlier – the math should be done and some plan should be made so that if the relocation of the tourist booth is going to happen it can be done efficiently and economically. For instance if a buyer did come in and purchase the current property the booth would have to be moved so what is the contingency plan. EDO Hawley is going to look into a potential floor plan design for the main floor of the town hall as a possible back up plan. We also have to consider the location of the Farmer's Market, as this has been a successful and welcomed addition to the Main Street the past two summers.

5.4 Part-time assistance would be an asset to the BIA board and the EDO. Things like updating the website, communicating with the Main Street owners, various paperwork and housekeeping duties such as typing agendas, minutes etc. would allow board members to pursue other BIA related planning and facilitation. Since the board changes regularly a part-time helper would also add some continuity to these office related tasks.

5.5 **Lights and Streetscape Improvements:** Since it is a mandatory program for all of Huron East to change over the lighting to LED street lights and since we want to create a Victorian aesthetic look to our heritage downtown and since we are constantly postponing the selection and purchasing of new Christmas streetlights, it is

felt that this is good time to look into combining these tasks in an effort to save time and money. Conversations with Barry Mills and the lighting supplier sales rep have resulted in the scheduling of a meeting on January 20th to review various options. This would be considered a major project and would leave a lasting legacy for the town. Board member Maureen Agar and Councillor Fisher offered to look into possible financing arrangements and when the budget is presented this major project will be given full consideration. We have been informed by Barry Mills that there is a timeline to get the lights all done, but that he will leave Seaforth's Main Street until the end to give us time to make our final decision. Other items to consider are: Hosting a summer event such as a garden party or barbecue for members of the BIA, or beginning "Biz After 5" monthly meetings for BIA members

6.0 Other:

6.1 Chair Doig will notify Brayden Pryce that we will not need him to remove any more snow from the Tourist Booth area now that the Christmas season is over. She will ask Brayden to present any final billing so the account can be cleared. Brayden did a very good job, although the green Christmas and New Year certainly kept the need to a minimum.

6.2 Next Meeting will be the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, February 11 at 7 p.m. EDO Hawley and Chair Doig will find a suitable location and advise the board members and the public as soon as possible. Chair Doig advised the board members to consider standing for Chair in 2015. The By-law regarding the Term of Service was reviewed and board members were reminded that terms were two years.

7.0 Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm on a motion by Brenda Campbell.