



# River District

## Minutes

### River District Board of Management

January 10, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

#### MEMBERS

##### PRESENT:

Chair Dave Parsons  
Councillor Travis Dodd  
Member Tim Dwyer  
Member Denis Langlois  
Member Richard Thomas (via video)  
Member Winnifred Walcott

##### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Vice-Chair Matthew Quade  
Member Kathy Hannen  
Councillor Suneet Kukreja

##### STAFF PRESENT:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager  
Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services  
Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services  
Dave Bishop, Owen Sound Police Service Police Inspector  
Patrick Rawn, Owen Sound Police Service Detective Sergeant  
Viveca Gravel, Community Development Coordinator  
Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Parsons called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Parsons provided a land acknowledgement.

Chair Parsons welcomed new Board members, Tim Dwyer and Richard Thomas.

#### 2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- 4.a Minutes of the Closed Session of the River District Board of Management meeting held on November 8, 2023

RD-240110-001

Moved by Councillor Dodd

**"THAT the minutes of the Closed Session of the River District Board of Management meeting held on November 8, 2023 be approved as printed."**

Carried.

- 4.b Minutes of the River District Board of Management meeting held on November 8, 2023

RD-240110-002

Moved by Member Langlois

**"THAT the minutes of the River District Board of Management meeting held on November 8, 2023 be approved as printed."**

Carried.

### 5. PUBLIC MEETINGS

- 5.a 2024 Budget

Chair Parsons declared the Public Meeting open at 5:33 p.m.

The Deputy Clerk reported that notice of the public meeting was circulated to all River District members, posted on the River District website, and posted on the City's website on December 13, 2023. No comments were received from the public and no individuals registered to attend the meeting electronically. The Deputy Clerk encouraged those present for the public meeting to sign the sign-in sheet located on the table outside of Council Chambers.

The Deputy Clerk advised that personal information is collected under the authority of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and that the information collected will be used to complete the budget process. Questions about this collection should be addressed to the Deputy Clerk.

Member Walcott joined the meeting.

The Director of Corporate Services provided a presentation on the proposed 2024 River District budget. Ms. Allan highlighted the proposed levy increase of 2%, the projected budget surplus of \$1,724, the estimated reserve balance for

2023, and other costs for services that are not included in the River District budget, such as staff costs for administration and support, actual costs for street maintenance and beautification funded by the City tax levy, waste collection, and snow removal.

Maryann Thomas, Owen Sound resident and River District Business Improvement Area member, expressed concerns regarding business sponsored complimentary parking. From 2021 to 2023, the River District Business Improvement Area members contributed \$498,000 towards this business sponsored complimentary parking, with an additional \$96,000 budgeted for 2024. Ms. Thomas advised that she has received comments from customers who indicate the parking system is confusing and recommended that paid parking be brought back into the River District. Ms. Thomas also expressed concerns regarding safety in the River District and noted that the Board should be addressing these issues. The funds that are put towards complimentary parking could instead be redirected to different measures to increase safety in the River District. Finally, Ms. Thomas noted that the levy does not need to be increased for 2024, but rather work with the current funds to create a vibrant downtown with connected businesses and services that support and build the retail environment.

The Director of Community Services advised that in 2019, the Board worked with the City to retain BC Hughes to develop the River District Action Plan (RDAP). The development of this plan was based on best practices from other communities and undertaking meetings with the Board, River District membership, and community at that time. The RDAP was approved by both the Board and City Council. One of the recommendations in the RDAP was the continuation of the complimentary parking in the River District. In terms of safety, the Director of Community Services noted that the City Manager will be bringing a report forward to Council at its meeting on February 26, 2024 respecting safety and security in the River District.

In response to a question from the Board, the Director of Community Services noted that City staff met with the Board Chair and Board Treasurer earlier this week to review the existing operating agreement between the City and River District Board. A report will be brought forward to the next Board meeting, as well as a future Council meeting, respecting an updated operating agreement.

Katrina Huberman, Owen Sound resident, inquired if there is an amount included in the draft 2024 budget to address safety in the River District. The City Manager advised that his upcoming report to Council on February 26, 2024 will focus on video surveillance in the River District. The intent is to find funding through reserves or grant opportunities through the Owen Sound Police Service. If a cost is involved, then it will be covered under the City's budget, not the River District budget.

RD-240110-003  
Moved by Councillor Dodd

**"THAT in consideration of the proposed 2024 River District budget presented at the January 10, 2024 public meeting, the River District Board of Management:**

- 1. Receives the 2024 River District budget as presented; and**
- 2. Directs staff to send a memo to City Council requesting that the 2024 River District budget be approved."**

Carried.

There being no further questions or comments from the public, Chair Parsons declared the Public Meeting closed at 5:58 p.m.

**6. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

There were no deputations or presentations.

**7. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no questions from the public.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED**

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

**9. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF**

**9.a Verbal Report from the Police Inspector Re: Police Update**

Inspector Bishop introduced Detective Sergeant Patrick Rawn who oversees the Owen Sound Police Service (OSPS) criminal investigations branch, CORE team, mobile mental health unit, and drug unit. Detective Sergeant Rawn will be the representative for the River District going forward and will provide updates to the Board at every meeting.

Inspector Bishop advised that Constable Nathan Curry has joined the CORE unit and Constable Angela Reid will be joining the CORE unit on February 1, 2024. By mid-2024, the OSPS hopes to have a third constable join the CORE unit.

During the month of November, the OSPS conducted 77 hours of foot patrol in the River District. During the month of December, the OSPS conducted 128 hours of foot patrol in the River District.

Inspector Bishop noted that the OSPS was involved with the Santa Claus Parade and the opening of the Festival of Northern Lights. The auxiliary unit partnered with the Salvation Army in December for the Holiday Food Drive and collected \$5,831 in donations and over 1,800 pounds of food.

Inspector Bishop advised that the OSPS will be running another Citizen's Police Academy from January 17, 2024 until March 6, 2024 on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. This 8-week program provides an interactive opportunity to learn about all the different areas of the OSPS, including criminal investigations and forensic identification. The program is almost full, and applications are available on the OSPS website for those that are interested.

RD-240110-004

Moved by Councillor Dodd

**"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided January 10, 2024, from Inspector Bishop respecting a Police Update, the River District Board of Management receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."**

Carried.

- 9.b Report CS-24-001 from the Community Development Coordinator Re: 2023 Year-End Events, Activations and Promotions Wrap Up

The Community Development Coordinator provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from the Board, the Community Development Coordinator advised that the budget for the Trick-or-Treat Trail is fully allocated to promotion for the event. In 2024, staff will look for ways to offset the costs to the businesses for the treats that they provide to the participants.

RD-240110-005

Moved by Member Langlois

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-24-001 respecting 2023 Year-End Events, Activations and Promotions Wrap Up, the River District Board of Management receives the report for information purposes."**

Carried.

- 9.c Report CS-24-002 from the Community Development Coordinator Re: 2024 Events, Activations, and Promotions Plan

The Community Development Coordinator provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from the Board, the Community Development Coordinator advised that she records videos during the various events and shares these through stories, reels, and posts on social media since video content is becoming more popular these days. She will continue to have more video-based social media posts. In 2023, the River District partnered with Owen Sound Tourism, Cobble Beach, and the Township of Georgian Bluffs to bring two influencers to the area during the weekend of Moonlight Madness. These influencers went to stores in the River District and the Artisan Market to create

content that can be used for promotion for next year's Moonlight Madness event. The Director of Community Services noted that the City has submitted an application to Summer Canada for four (4) summer tourism students and if successful, these students can assist with River District events as well as City events. At the end of 2023, the City purchased a drone for the Events Division that can be used to capture videos during various events throughout the City.

Katrina Huberman, Owen Sound resident, inquired about the road closure for the Brightshores Ball Hockey event. Chris Doyle from Brightshores Health System Owen Sound Foundation advised that the road closure is required for the full tournament set up and tear down. There is a third-party company that will be setting up seven (7) half NHL-size rinks on 2nd Avenue East that requires set up on Friday afternoon and tear down on Sunday morning. The Director of Community Services added that staff will be promoting other parking locations within the River District during the street closure.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Doyle advised that Brightshores staff have already requested the third-party company begin set up on Friday afternoon as they would typically begin set up on Friday morning. Mr. Doyle will reach out to the company and inquire if the set-up time can be further reduced.

In response to a suggestion from the Board, the Community Development Coordinator noted that she can investigate ways for businesses to take advantage of the street closure on Friday, May 3, 2024 and encourage businesses to put tables out on the sidewalk.

Paul Evans of Escarpment Magazine applauded the River District Board and the Community Development Coordinator for their promotion of the area. Mr. Evans noted that he would love to work with the River District to promote the area and the events through the Escarpment Magazine.

Kim Keskinen, Owen Sound resident and staff at Happy Earth, inquired if events could be planned from January to May as these are the months that are the hardest for most businesses. Ms. Keskinen suggested that the Board consider bringing more of the events and activities to the street as opposed to the Farmers' Market so that people will stay and wander the streets. The Community Development Coordinator advised that during the Hottest Street Sale in 2023, an activation was put in the 700 block of 2nd Avenue East to bring people to this area. The Director of Community Services added that there are also events during the winter months that include the River District, organized by City Tourism staff, including Savour Owen Sound and Snowen Sound Frolics.

RD-240110-006

Moved by Member Langlois

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-24-002 respecting 2024 Events, Activations, and Promotions Plan, the River District Board of Management:**

- 1. Approves the 2024 Events, Activations, and Promotions as outlined in the report;**
- 2. Pre-approves the Just Say Yes budget in the amount of \$500.00 for 2025;**
- 3. Directs staff to initiate the process for the road closure of 8<sup>th</sup> Street East as outlined in the report for the Wheel & Ride Safety Festival Event;**
- 4. Indicates their support to City Council for the street closures for the Wheel & Ride Safety Festival Event and Brightshores Health System Owen Sound Foundation Street Hockey event as outlined in the report; and**
- 5. Appoints Chair Parsons, Member Dwyer, and Member Walcott to the Membership Event working group for 2024."**

Carried.

9.d Verbal Report from the Board Treasurer Re: Board Finances

In the Board Treasurer's absence, Chair Parsons advised that the total current banking balance is \$146,555.36 and the interest accrued every month is just over \$500 each month.

RD-240110-007

Moved by Member Walcott

**"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided January 10, 2024, from Chair Parsons respecting Board Finances, the River District Board of Management receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."**

Carried.

**10. MATTERS POSTPONED**

There were no matters postponed.

**11. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN**

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

## 12. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

12.a Final approvals issued for the following Business Licences:

- Shayela Nasrin is the new owner of The Curry House, a restaurant located at 994 2nd Avenue East
- The Rumpus Room, a community bar located at 237 9th Street East
- Grey County Ranch, a country themed event centre nightclub located at 937 2nd Avenue East
- VIP Vape, a retail vape store located at 1025 2nd Avenue East
- AM 2 PM Cabs, a taxi and delivery service located at 1051 2nd Avenue East
- Precision Cuts, a hair salon located at 281 9th Street East
- Body Edit - by Heather & Kristy, a non-invasive body contouring service located at 925 2nd Avenue East
- Kash Cares, a home occupation located at 157 8th Street East

RD-240110-008

Moved by Councillor Dodd

**"THAT in consideration of correspondence provided for information purposes listed on the January 10, 2024 River District Board of Management (RDBM) agenda, the RDBM receives item 12.a for information purposes."**

Carried.

## 13. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

## 14. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

## 15. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Parsons adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.