



River District

Minutes

River District Board of Management

May 8, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Chair Dave Parsons
Member Tim Dwyer
Member Kathy Hannen
Councillor Suneet Kukreja
Member Denis Langlois
Member Richard Thomas
Member Winnifred Walcott

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vice-Chair Matthew Quade
Councillor Travis Dodd

STAFF PRESENT: Tim Simmonds, City Manager
Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services
Patrick Rawn, Owen Sound Police Service Detective Sergeant
Viveca Gravel, River District Coordinator
Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk
Allison Penner, Deputy Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

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 River District Board of Management meeting held on March 13, 2024

RD-240508-001

Moved by Member Thomas

"THAT the minutes of the River District Board of Management meeting held on March 13, 2024 be approved as printed."

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

There were no depositions or presentations.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

- 6.a Paul MacDonald, South Bruce Peninsula resident and River District Business Improvement Area member, cited concerns with the Ball Hockey Cellybration event and safety in the River District.

Paul MacDonald requested that the Board either refrain from shutting down 2nd Avenue East in future or have street-based events take place outside of business hours. Mr. MacDonald expressed further concern about substance use and disorderly behaviour in the River District and inquired as to what steps the business community can take to improve safety.

The Director of Community Services advised that Item 8.c on the agenda will address the Ball Hockey Cellybration event. With regard to safety, Ms. Coulter advised that one impetus for the River District Action Plan was to increase the perception of safety in the River District. Events that bring people to the River District are part of the effort to make the space feel lively and safe. The upcoming installation of video surveillance will also help with perceptions of safety. Ms. Coulter encouraged anyone to bring forward ideas to staff for increasing safety in the River District.

Detective Sergeant Rawn noted that police should be called if there is a safety concern and advised that conduct can sometimes be intimidating without reaching the level of a Criminal Code offence. Other communities are experiencing the same safety concerns as the City. The Owen Sound Police Service are continually taking preventative action to help the community feel safe. Detective Sergeant Rawn will communicate this feedback to the Community Oriented Response (CORE) Unit and other frontline officers.

Mr. MacDonald reiterated that his concern is not just for perceived safety, but actual safety too.

The Board advised that more pedestrian traffic helps people feel safer, and that bringing people to the River District is something the Board can influence. The Board encouraged Mr. MacDonald to share any concerns or ideas for improvement with a Board member.

- 6.b Ron Cole, Owen Sound resident and River District Business Improvement Area member, cited concerns with the Ball Hockey Cellybration event.

Ron Cole noted that he did not receive any communications from staff about the event or street closures and detailed the negative impact the event had on sales at his store. Mr. Cole requested that the Board consider how these types of events and street closures will impact the River District businesses when they are planning for and approving events.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Cole advised that his sales were lower than normal on both days of the street closures, and that summer weather brings his best sales.

- 6.c Margit Berne, South Bruce Peninsula resident and River District Business Improvement Area member, cited concerns with the Ball Hockey Cellybration event and safety in the River District.

Margit Berne detailed concerns with the Ball Hockey Cellybration event and street closures, including reduced sales at her store on Friday, customers frustrated with the inability to park on 2nd Avenue East near her store, and limited information received ahead of the event. Ms. Berne expressed further concern with safety in the River District.

The Board shared measures that some businesses have taken to enhance safety within and around their locations, including meeting with the Owen Sound Police Service CORE officers to understand prevention and enforcement options, as well as installing locks and security cameras. The Board discussed some root causes of social disorder that lead to safety concerns, including the catch-and-release of repeat offenders and the perception of an unsafe environment reducing pedestrian activity. The Board further advised that individuals could write to their elected representatives at higher levels of government to express their concerns with provincial and federal legislation.

The Director of Community Services noted the other locations considered for the Ball Hockey Cellybration event and explained why each location was either unsuitable or unavailable. Staff will meet with the event organizers to debrief and consider improvements to the event for future years. Ms. Coulter added that this was a new event and the City will continue to try implementing new events and ideas to achieve its goal of a vibrant River District.

In response to a question from the Board, Ms. Berne suggested that future street closures begin after business hours on Fridays.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

8.a Verbal Report from the Owen Sound Police Service Re: Police Update

Detective Sergeant Rawn advised that during the month of March, the Owen Sound Police Service conducted 145.25 hours of foot patrol in the River District, and two (2) hours of bike patrol.

RD-240508-002

Moved by Member Hannen

"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided May 8, 2024, from Detective Sergeant Rawn respecting a Police Update, the River District Board of Management receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."

Carried.

8.b Report CS-24-043 from the River District Coordinator Re: River District Blooms - Proposed Modifications and Budget Reallocation

The River District Coordinator provided an overview of the report.

RD-240508-003

Moved by Member Dwyer

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-24-043 respecting River District Blooms Modification and Reallocations, the River District Board of Management approves the:

- 1. Modifications of the River District Blooms event;**
- 2. Remainder of the River District Blooms budget being reallocated to the Locals Love it Here program to support the River District & Tourism Ambassador program as outlined in this report; and**
- 3. Allocation of any unused Blooms budget towards the Locals Love It Here initiatives."**

Carried.

8.c Verbal Report from the River District Coordinator Re: Brightshores Ball Hockey Cellybration

The River District Coordinator advised that Brightshores Health System Owen Sound Foundation approached the City in late 2023 with a request to host a ball hockey fundraising event outside the Bayshore Community Centre. The

Bayshore Community Centre parking lot was unavailable on the requested date due to previously scheduled events.

Ms. Gravel noted that 2nd Avenue East was selected as an alternative location as it both met the logistical requirements of the event organizers and fulfilled the strategic objective of attracting people to the River District. The event was promoted through the River District Review newsletter in March and April, City Tourism newsletter, Grey County newsletter, posters in various locations, a media release, radio mentions, social media, and rack cards distributed throughout the River District.

Ms. Gravel advised that the Ball Hockey Cellybration was an opportunity to try something new, with several positive takeaways including that hundreds of people spent time in the River District, people felt safe and happy, and people enjoyed the event. Some businesses anecdotally relayed to staff that it was a great business day for them. Some minor damage occurred but the event organizers ensured it was repaired quickly.

Ms. Gravel noted that all feedback will be incorporated into an evaluation of the event, with a full wrap-up report to be presented to the Board at its meeting in July.

RD-240508-004

Moved by Member Thomas

"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided May 8, 2024, from the River District Coordinator respecting the Brightshores Ball Hockey Cellybration, the River District Board of Management receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."

Carried.

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

The Board Treasurer advised that the total current banking balance is \$158,119.11 and the account earned \$1,087 in interest over the past two months.

RD-240508-005

Moved by Member Hannen

"THAT in consideration of the Verbal Report provided May 8, 2024, from the Board Treasurer respecting Board Finances, the River District Board of Management receives the Verbal Report for information purposes."

Carried.

9. MATTERS POSTPONED

There were no matters postponed.

10. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

11. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

11.a Report CM-24-001 from the City Manager Re: River District Three-Year Video Camera Pilot Project

The City Manager noted that 17 cameras will be installed in two phases throughout the River District, with the first phase of installation anticipated to begin in late August or early September 2024. The camera feeds will not be monitored live, and the video surveillance footage will only be stored for 14 days as per the City's Video Surveillance Policy.

11.b Final approval issued for the following Business Licence:

- CURIO Vintage, a vintage, secondhand clothing, and home goods retail store located at 851 2nd Avenue East

RD-240508-006

Moved by Member Walcott

"THAT in consideration of correspondence provided for information purposes listed on the May 8, 2024, River District Board of Management (RDBM) agenda, the RDBM receives Items 11.a and 11.b for information purposes."

Carried.

12. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Parsons adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.