

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS – Chair Fred Godbolt, Vice Chair Rose Glavin

DIRECTORS – Directors Allen Plant, Tira Wootton, James Eddington, Adrian Bakelaar and BIA Manager Brittany Wise

ABSENT – Secretary / Treasurer Janice Brock, Promotions Chair Lauryn Marion, Beautification Chair Mary Hulley and Councillor Craig Hebert

NON-DIRECTORS – Kristin Crane (County of Huron)

RECORDING SECRETARY – Brittany Wise, BIA Manager

MINUTES

1. **Welcome and Call to Order**

Mr. Fred Godbolt welcomed everyone present at the BIA Annual General Meeting at 7:49pm.

2. **Changes & Approval of the Agenda**

MOVED BY: James Eddington & SECONDED BY: Allen Plant

“THAT the Agenda for the Exeter BIA Annual General Meeting be approved.”

MOTION: CARRIED

3. **Approval of the AGM Minutes of April 10, 2017**

MOVED BY: James Eddington & SECONDED BY: Allen Plant

“THAT the minutes of Exeter BIA Annual General Meeting of April 10, 2017 be adopted.”

MOTION: CARRIED

4. **Chair's Message**

Mr. Godbolt welcomed everyone to the AGM and stated that since this is his last official meeting as the Chair of the BIA, that like to say thank-you for everyone's support and commitment to the cause over his term. He noted that all the board members have been a great group of folks to work with. Everyone provides an important voice and an opinion and it's great to see a board willing to speak up and challenge each other, and yet drive toward a resolution. It makes this board unique compared to many boards. Clearly better decisions are made through the effectiveness of this approach. He noted they are all to be commended.

He also highlighted how far the BIA has come in his tenure as an executive and board member in since 2008. The BIA has matured into an organization that our peers envy. Hiring a full-time manager was a huge leap, an incredibly big step at the time. It was by far the best decision we've made, and made even better by hiring Brittany Wise to fill this role. Ms. Wise has been a strong and dedicated person and an invaluable asset to our organization. He recognized Ms. Wise for all that she has done.

He said that the BIA has made huge changes in all facets of our mandate:

- We have built out a strong marketing program with many different campaigns.
- We've embraced the future of technology and social media platforms, and positioned Exeter to take advantage of the opportunities they present.
- We have continued to focus on beautification efforts, by completing a beautification plan and working with other organizations like the Municipality and Communities in Bloom to better aligning shared responsibilities.
- We've had the strength to stand firm on our positions, when other organizations challenged the scope of our beautification role.

- We now have a strong working relationship with other organizations, like the South Huron Chamber of Commerce and the Municipality of South Huron, and we've set the course to continually strengthen it.
- We saw the long-term advantages of leveraging the combined strength of working with these organizations. This is not an easy task, especially considering the state of these relationships starting out.
- We've pushed for better alignment with broader County-wide initiatives, and tirelessly worked to put and keep Exeter on the map in their eyes.

All of these efforts have made us a stronger BIA.

He stated that looking forward though there will continue to be challenges this organization faces living in a small rural setting. Changing demographics, and shifts in retail trends are just a few. However, we are well positioned to meet these challenges. We have a strong board and strong executive team in place, and we have a strategic plan looking into the future that will help guide us.

Mr. Godbolt noted that he is excited about what lies ahead and once again thanked everyone for all their efforts toward improving business in Exeter and making Exeter a better place to work, live and play.

5. Review of 2017 / Upcoming in 2018

Ms. Wise explained that in 2017, the BIA continued work on the BIA website to increase search engine optimization, website load times and enhance content. We added a business directory – both Google driven & a listing on the website. She stated that the BIA hosted the same consumer events as in 2016, but added the Moonlight Madness event that had 25 participating businesses.

In terms of printed promotional material, the BIA released the fourth edition of the Coupon Book, the South Huron Map and Guide, plus supported the Exeter content in the "It Starts at the Beach" vacation guide. The BIA did print advertising in the Grand Bend Visitor Guide, Bach Festival Program and the Drayton Theatre Guide.

In 2017, the BIA began our focus to put Exeter on the digital map. It was apparent that when you Google or searched Exeter on TripAdvisor, it didn't look like we have anything to offer. The BIA worked to encourage our business and community assets to be listed so that Exeter is better represented online. In an effort to getting businesses and assets listed on Google, we did an Exeter 360 project that saw interior 360-degree videos of 7 businesses participating businesses. Not only is this an excellent way for visitors to experience Exeter before arriving, it's also a great way to increase the search engine optimization of assets – which again, will strengthen Exeter's online story.

In partnership with the Municipality of South Huron, the BIA developed a series of short promotional videos that included general business promotion & community assets to showcase Exeter and South Huron as a good place to live, visit and do business. We've released some of those videos in 2017, but more will be released in 2018. The BIA also did a shop local holiday campaign to round out the marketing initiatives in 2017. Throughout the year, we continued to execute social media accounts promoting Exeter focused on business promotion, community news & events.

In 2017, the BIA continued our partnership with the Municipality of South Huron for flower-related items. The Municipality put out a tender, hired and managed the flower water contractor. The BIA paid the Municipality for 50% of the flower-related costs. Thanks to the Municipal Community Grant program, the BIA purchased new self-watering bridge flower planters in 2017. Unfortunately, the bridge flowers were vandalized less than a month after being placed, so we don't have a clear understanding on if the self-watering units are successful or not. They will go back on the bridge in 2018.

The BIA also continued to co-manage the Welcome Centre under a shared model, with the support of the Municipality of Huron. This venture has been crucial in our ever-growing partnership with the Chamber of Commerce. The BIA, in partnership with the Chamber, also welcomed 2 volunteer placements and 2 JCP placements, based out of the Welcome Centre in 2017.

The BIA hosted member events in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce including: Breakfast with the Mayor, a SOLD OUT Business & Community Excellence Awards Gala, the annual Summer Social & Christmas Social events. The BIA and Chamber also worked together to leverage our partnership through government programs including: the JCP program, the RED grant application and volunteer placements. Our organizations continued to share an office space at the Welcome Centre, with the Chamber becoming cost-share partners in office expenses.

In 2017, the BIA continued strengthening our relationship with the Municipality, we:

- Developed a draft framework for working together – draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);
- Initiated monthly meetings to provide to support collaboration between partners – Municipality, Chamber and BIA;
- Received ongoing financial support for the Welcome Centre.

Ms. Wise noted that the BIA is still exploring how the County, Municipality and BIA / Chamber work together (this has never been defined previously).

Finally, Ms. Wise stated that in 2017, the Board of Directors worked to develop a Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 that outlines priorities and goals for the BIA. The planning sessions were facilitated by OMAFRA and the document was developed by BIA Manager, Brittany Wise. Work plans have been developed alongside the strategic plan to ensure goals and objectives are met. The Strategic Plan was approved April 10, 2018.

Ms. Wise stated that in terms of events and promotions for 2018, we plan to keep things consistent from 2017. We'll be continuing our work to put Exeter on the digital map and will continue to feed content to the BIA website. The BIA will again be subsidizing the development of 360 virtual tours of the interiors of participating businesses.

She noted that if the BIA and Chamber were successful in our Rural Economic Development (RED) funding application, we'd be doing the following: promotional Videos – focused on sectors; additional 360 Virtual Tours with community assets and businesses; and still photography. The grant will also incorporate items geared more towards the Chamber and Municipality.

In 2018, the BIA will continue to work with the Municipality on flowers, but the BIA has agreed that we will pay up to \$8,000.00, but after that, the Municipality is responsible for the costs. Ms. Wise also noted that the BIA is doing a Banner Sponsorship program that will allow us to unify the town, but also promote local businesses and organizations. The program aims to see all street poles from Waterloo to Walper Streets and is going very well so far – we hope to have banners on the poles by June 2018. If we receive positive feedback about the program, we'll look into a second phase that could extend south until the town limit and along Hwy 83.

Mr. Godbolt noted that over the years, the BIA has initiated so many new projects and events and that 2018 will be a year for us to continue rolling out those great programs within our capacity.

6. Delegations Nil

7. Business To Be Carried Out:

7.1 Approval of BIA Board of Management

Mr. Fred Godbolt stated that the Nominations for the 2018 Exeter BIA Board of Management were as follows:

Rose Glavin	-	Chair
Tira Wootton	-	Vice – Chair
Janice Brock	-	Secretary / Treasurer
Mary Hulley	-	Director and Beautification Committee Chair
Lauryn Marion	-	Director and Promotion Committee Chair
Fred Godbolt	-	Director
James Eddington	-	Director
Adrian Bakelaar	-	Director
Allen Plant	-	Director
Craig Hebert	-	Council Representative with alternate Wayne DeLuca
Brittany Wise	-	Recording Secretary, BIA Manager

MOVED BY: Adrian Bakelaar & SECONDED BY: Allen Plant

“THAT the 2018 Exeter BIA Board of Management be adopted, as presented.”

MOTION: CARRIED

7.2 Approval of 2018 BIA Budget

MOVED BY: James Eddington & SECONDED BY: Rose Glavin

“THAT the 2018 Exeter BIA Budget be adopted as attached to these minutes.”

MOTION: CARRIED

7.3 New Business for 2018
N/A

8. Confirming Actions

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Tira Wootton

“THAT the Exeter BIA ratify and confirm all resolutions, contracts, acts and proceedings of the Board of Management of the Exeter BIA enacted, made, done or taken since the last Annual General Meeting of April 10, 2017; and,

THAT the Exeter BIA consider and if thought fit, to confirm with or without such variation and amendments as may be made at the meeting, any amendment to By-Laws, to be passed by the Directors and membership.”

MOTION: CARRIED

9. Adjournment

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Adrian Bakelaar

“To adjourn meeting at 8:31 pm.”

MOTION: CARRIED

All in attendance were invited to Crabby Joe’s after the meeting for a social hour.

Fred Godbolt, Chair (outgoing)

Rose Glavin, Chair (incoming)

Brittany Wise, Recording Secretary