



**Ford City Business Improvement Association  
Annual General Meeting (AGM) Minutes**

**When: Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6pm**

**Location: Cookie Bar – 1093 Drouillard Rd. Windsor, ON**

*Called to Attendance:*

**Kaitlyn Karns, Executive Director of the Ford City BIA**

*Appointed Board of Directors as of July 2024:*

**Shane Potvin, Nicole Baillargeon, Dana Horwitz, Lauren Potvin, Anna Eschuk, Thad Renaud**

*Ex Officio Members:* **Kate Gibb (Drouillard Place)**

*Delegates/ Guests:* **Ford City BIA Membership**

**Rino Bortolin (Petrella's), Mike Pajak (owner of 1033 Drouillard), Rick Wright (Hard tale Tattoos), Lori, Paul & Jenny Kimmerly (Standard Printing), Erin Fyfe & Steven Muller (Artcite), Sinisa Simic (owner of 1012 Drouillard), Lisa. G & Giselle (Ford City Potters), Georgina Boots (RC Studios), Beth & Arleigh (Sawyers BBQ), Alex Mitchel (Coachworx), Brent Phillips (Cookie Bar), Nicole Bizare (Bell & Brace)**

*Topics of Discussion*

**Shane Potvin, Chair, called the meeting to begin at: 6:01 PM**

- **Everyone introduce themselves around the table**

**Executive Director, Kaitlyn Karns, welcomed all members in attendance to the meeting. Thank you to Cookie Bar for hosting and for the catering from Petrella's. Reminder: 1 Vote per business.**

1. **Approval of the November, 2024 Annual General Meeting Agenda**
  - a. **Shane Motions to Approve the November 2024 AGM Agenda**
  - b. First: Lauren Potvin
  - c. Second: Alex Mitchelle
  - d. All in Favour: Yes
    - i. Motion Carries
  
2. **Approval of the October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes**
  - a. **Shane Motions to Approve the October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes**
  - b. First: Thad Renaud
  - c. Second: Dana Horwitz
  - d. All in Favour: Yes
    - i. Motion Carries

3. **Approval of the November 2023, AGM Minutes**
  - a. **Shane Motions to Approve the November 2023 AGM minutes**
  - b. First: Lauren Potvin
  - c. Second: Anna Eschuk
  - d. All in Favour: Yes
    - i. Motion Carries
  
4. **Approval of the 2023 Auditor's Financial Report**
  - a. **Shane Motions to approve the 2023 Auditor's Financial Report**
  - b. First: Lauren Potvin
  - c. Second: Thad Renaud
  - d. All in Favour: Yes
    - i. Motion Carries
  
5. **2024 Ford City Recap**
  - a. **2024 Events Recap – KK**
    - i. **Ford City Flea (Spring & Fall)**
      1. This is an easy event for the BIA. Limited expenses and drives patrons to the neighbourhood. Both events were very successful, but we did notice more spending happening at the May 2024 Flea vs. the October 2024 Flea. Could be for various reasons, but it is in the 2025 plan to host these two FC FLEA events again and include more activations such as additional musicians and entertainers throughout the day. In 2025, we would like to include the neighbourhood/ residents in the event and welcome them to set up yard sales etc.
      2. 2025 Ford City Flea Dates are: April 27 & October 19, 2025
    - ii. **Dropped on Drouillard**
      1. Saturday, August 16, 2025
        - a. This event just keeps getting bigger and better every year. Dropped on Drouillard is at the point now where we have found the perfect “recipe” and we need to maintain this. This event takes an extreme amount of work. Shane and Kaitlyn to make an operations plan for Dropped this winter to make planning and organizing seamless for years to come. More to come on the financial details of Dropped for agenda item # 6.
    - iii. **Open Streets**
      1. This year, the BIA was in the middle of the route, versus the end with the change from the West route to the East. With the route change, not as many patrons stayed in the BIA, but next year the route will go back to the original path, and rotate every

year. We are the only BIA included in both routes and that we are thankful for.

iv. Ford City Flicker decorating contest will begin on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

**b. 2024 Ups & Downs—SP**

- i. We have welcomed new businesses in 2024, but we have also sadly seen some go.
  - 1. 2024 New Business: Cookie Bar, Petrella’s, Artcite (2025)
  - 2. 2024 Closed Business: Lunansky’s, Ernie and Rusty’s, Pressure Drop
  - 3. Issues with landlords sitting on vacant properties (will expand on this later in the agenda)
    - a. The BIA is doing their best to get moving on these buildings to get the sales moving.
- ii. Support from the City on event prep has been very positive. Thank you to Stephanie and Will for their support on the events.
  - 1. Neighbourhood clean-up, garbage, replacing lights etc. It is has been instrumental.
- iii. Lot Shops
  - 1. Just Vintage & Milks and Honey were the two tenants this year. We will be searching for two new tenants for the 2025 season, with the goal that the shops open in April. A call will go out to the public in the new year.
    - a. Members are asking if it would be viable to do pop-ups, but it is just too much for the BIA to rotate businesses. The leases will go from April until November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**6. Approval of the 2025 Budget & 2025 Levy Increase**

**a. Fixed levy versus variable:-- SP**

- i. 80+ properties, at least half are extremely undervalued, if they paid levy more many it would be under \$100. If we moved to a percentage now, 75 of the levy funds would come from 25% of the properties. A fixed levy makes it so all properties pay the same amount regardless of value. Only 20 buildings have MPAC value over 100k.
- ii. This is about as high as we can go with the fixed levy. It is not in our best interest to move to a varying budget for the next 5-10 yrs. Until many of the properties get renovated and MPAC reassesses it makes more sense as a fixed.

**b. KK to Review document sent out to membership with the reasonings for increasing the levy:**

- i. As the BIA continues to grow, day to day operations and responsibilities have increased. As a result of this, the Executive Director's weekly hours required have increased accordingly.
- ii. Events: Over the past two years, we have learned that our flagship events, Dropped on Drouillard and now, Ford City Flea, have positively benefited our businesses, neighbourhood and community. It is the BIA's goal to continue to host these events each year, with the ability and flexibility to possibly add a fourth event to the calendar.
- iii. Ford City Flea happens twice a year (Spring and Fall), bringing vendors and the community to the neighbourhood for a vintage shopping experience.
- iv. Dropped on Drouillard – The third Saturday in August, annually. The costs of Dropped on Drouillard have increased as the festival continues to grow. In 2024, we saw over 5,000 patrons who enjoyed the festival. In 2018 the festival cost \$6,000. In 2024 the festival cost \$30,000. The BIA contributes approximately 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total (this year, \$10,000). The remaining is covered by vendor fees and sponsorships, but those are not always guaranteed. The festival cost includes everything from organizational costs, permits, safety and security, entertainment and more. The BIA is proud of the number of musicians, artists and creatives we employ at the festival each year.  
Dropped on Drouillard continues to be **the** festival of the year. Majority of FCBIA businesses expressed that they had their best day in sales to date after Dropped on Drouillard 2024.
- v. General Inflation: We are seeing a raise in expenses especially when it comes to items that are mandatory spends (Annual Audit, accounting, insurance etc).
- vi. Capital expenses: The BIA is committed to continue to beautify the neighbourhood and street scaping. The proposed 2025 budget, highlights the use of reserve funds to purchase new bike racks & potential bike corral to promote active transportation.
- vii. Marketing expenses, social media & Chair Duties – VOLUNTEER Items: As mentioned for the past 6 years Shane has taken on all design, advertising and marketing for the BIA at no cost (to reduce the financial burden on the BIA). These services in the past has come at a fairly large cost. The Calling All campaign created in 2018 cost the BIA roughly \$7000.

Currently our social media is managed by Lauren, Kaitlyn and Shane. Typical costs to run social media can run anywhere from \$500 - \$1500 per month depending on the frequency. This is not sustainable moving forward as all board members involved take on other responsibilities with their own businesses.

Across all three items here (marketing, social media and volunteer chair duties) there is about \$10,000+ in expenses that are not being accounted for, but is not sustainable to keep doing so to avoid burn out etc. By raising the levy, we will be able to put actual funds towards marketing and social media costs. This links to one of our 2025 goals as well.

**Questions/ Comments:**

- Can we take out parking spaces for bike parking?
  - o Yes, the BIA is conversation with the City about this and adding bike racks in.
- Will the City sponsor or financially support Dropped?
  - o We have just started the conversation with the City about asking for Ward funds to put towards Dropped.
- Alex Mitchel: Accessibility plan? – Curbs and corners, accessible parking etc.
  - o Shelve this to post- levy consideration

**Shane: Motion to Increase the annual levy from \$400 to \$600 annually**

**First: Rino Bortolin**

**Second: Sinisa Simic**

**All in Favour: Yes**

**Motion Carries**

**\*No one voted against the levy change.**

**Process for Raising the Levy:** If it passes (with the increase) a letter will be sent out to the membership notifying them of the change. Members will have 60 days to respond and “vote against” the change by writing to the City. One Third of paying members must send in letters to not have the change passed.

**7. Neighbourhood growth & Vacant Property Updates/ Concerns—SP**

- a. Brought forward by Lori K.
- b. 30 Vacant Lots and Property
- c. 12 Owned by Kyle McDonald, which has been a large concern for many in the neighbourhood.
- d. Reported all residential properties to the City Vacancy Tax system and follow up every few months
- e. Commercial properties are mostly in good shape structurally (there is no commercial vacancy tax)
- f. Do not want to resort to deeming properties condemned
- g. Buildings may not unlock as they are tied up in legal.

**Comments: Passion. Let’s focus on who is here. Help the landlords that are here.**

**8. 2025 Goals – KK**

- a. At the last Board of Directors meeting, we came up with a few goals for the BIA for 2025. They are as follows:
  - i. Encourage more active transportation (i.e bike racks)
  - ii. **Sustain** our key events and activations
  - iii. Continue to drive patrons to our businesses through marketing/ social media etc.
  - iv. More cross promotion and collaborations between BIA businesses and events
    - 1. Monthly event emails to the membership with a call for submissions for monthly events, activities sales etc.
  - v. Continue to attract new businesses to the BIA.
  
- b. We are open to additional goals from the membership as membership feedback is important to us. Please let us know via email if there are any additional items / doings you would like to see in the coming year.

9. **Other Business – KK**

- a. **Community Garden:** What is the BIA involvement? Can we activate it in the event setting?
  - i. Yes, absolutely. Lauren has been focusing on rehabilitating the soil and working on bringing the garden.
  - ii. Harvest Festival – encourage more people to partake in the garden.
- b. Shift Change Mural & Welcome to Ford City Mural
  - i. Both have been taken down and are in storage to protect them. Shane has been working with the City for about a year to find new locations for both murals.
  - ii. It looks like there will be a new home for both murals.
  - iii. Condition of the alleyway at Richmond all down Drouillard.
    - 1. Shane has emailed the City a lot of times, but is willing to continue to work with businesses/ building owners about revitalizing the alley

Shane: Meeting Adjourned 7:10PM