



2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

5:30 to 7:00 pm

ZOOM WEBINAR MEETING

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS

Kristopher Armitage, Chair
Anastasia Arabia, Treasurer
Matt Chapman, Past Chair
Al Gothjelpsen
Nella Sabo
Ben Sir

HONOURARY BOARD MEMBERS

Adam Mitchell, Fringe Theatre Adventures
Ashley Salvador, YEGarden Suites

GUESTS

Gabriel Lorieau, Omada Commercial
Alison Rees-Middelton, Bryan & Alison's NoFrills
Heather Thomson, U of A School of Retailing
Councillor Ben Henderson
Connie Marciniuk, City of Edmonton, NET Team
Charles Gordon, City of Edmonton
James Robinson, City of Edmonton
Jeff Chase, City of Edmonton
Diana Cretu, Family Centre
Alexandra Ketchum, Village Goods
Roberta Taylor, Village Goods
Sergeant Mike Keef, EPS
Tom Pallas, EPS
Michelle Childs
Jill Rozell, Ice on Whyte
Amos Kajner-Nonnekas, Design Etc.

OSBA STAFF & SUPPORT

Cherie Klassen, Executive Director
Alanna Morton, Membership & Marketing Coordinator
Jeff Samsonow, Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Jody Craig (Recorder)

MEMBERS

Kim Fjordbotten, The Paint Spot
Jeff Nachtigall, Sugared & Spiced
Alix Bean, Roots on Whyte
Philip Chung, Glam Slam
Andy Ma, Scotiabank
Ric Williams, ZGM Marketing
Puneeta McBryan, ZGM Marketing
Christine Tamere, Continental Treat
Emily Sommers, Healing Waters Spa
Rahim Jaffer, Rooster Kitchen
Krissy Bobocel, EyeCare Group
Gerry Schulz, Nu2You
David Puyaoan, Hair Inc (Studio Hair Inc)
Rolando Sandrea, Avila Arepa
Stephen Johnson, Yates Whitaker LLP
Faith Giesbrecht, Avenue Appliance
Jimmy, Malt & Mortar/Julios
Signe Yerxa, John Fleuvog
Mark Wilson, Vivid Print

1. Call to Order

Kris Armitage called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

2. Welcome and Business Meeting Protocol

Kris Armitage welcomed and expressed appreciation to the attendees for taking the time to attend the first virtual 2020 Old Strathcona Business Association AGM. The past year has been exceptionally challenging and commended the business community for their tenacity and ability to

adapt. The OSBA board and team are here to support and advocate for businesses, and he expressed thanks to the team, Cherie Klassen, Alanna Morton, and Jeff Samsonow for their work. Kris Armitage provided an overview of what a Business Improvement Area (BIA) is noting that statistics show that businesses in a BIA recover faster than those that are not, which makes what OSBA does as a BIA more vital than ever.

The protocol and procedures for the general meeting were provided with intent to complete the business portion of the meeting within the hour. It was noted that only eligible business members were entitled to vote which is a for-profit business paying the BIA levy.

The poll feature was used to conduct votes on motions during the meeting, and a simple majority carried the motion. The meeting was recorded and only the presenters and presentation was shown on video, as an audio recording assists in accurate recording of the minutes for motions and pertinent information. For attendees with questions, the chat box was used to enter the questions, and monitoring was done by Alanna Morton and Jeff Samsonow.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: To accept the Old Strathcona Business Association 2020 Annual General Meeting Agenda as presented and/or amended.

Moved by Kris Armitage. Seconded by Anastasia Arabia.
Carried.

4. Adoption of the OSBA 2019 Spring General Meeting and Annual General Meeting Minutes

Kris Armitage, Chair, noted that as there was no 2020 Spring General Meeting (SGM) due to COVID, the minutes of the 2019 SGM were brought forward for approval.

MOTION: To accept the Old Strathcona Business Association Spring General Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2019 as presented and/or amended.

Moved by Kris Armitage. Seconded by Anastasia Arabia.
Carried.

MOTION: To accept the Old Strathcona Business Association 2019 Annual General Meeting Minutes of October 9, 2019 as presented and/or amended.

Moved by Kris Armitage. Seconded by Anastasia Arabia.
Carried.

5. OSBA 2019 Audited Financials

Anastasia Arabia indicated that the 2019 OSBA annual report and audited financials were posted on the OSBA website, and all attendees should have access to them thus a report was not provided.

Every year, OSBA hires an accountant to conduct an audit of the financial statements. In 2019, our auditor noted that the financial statements present a fair picture of the financial position of the association as of December 31, 2019. The audited financial statements have been reviewed and accepted by our board and were shared for information tonight only.

In 2019, we had additional revenue from sponsorships that we hadn't budgeted for, and came in under budget, which left us with a surplus of approximately \$18,230. The board chose to roll those funds into 2020 for surplus. Since the financials have been published in the 2019 annual report, the results were not reviewed for 2019.

6. 2020 Reports

6.1 2020 Activities & Economic Recovery Task Force Report

Cherie Klassen thanked everyone for taking time to join the meeting tonight and provided highlights of the OSBA 2020 activities and initiatives. Like all other businesses, when COVID hit in March, OSBA had to quickly adjust and switch gears with the plans.

The 2020 operational plan has been revised four times since the pandemic, and key changes were made to: create an economic recovery task force, create more space for patios and patrons, working with stakeholders to develop support programs for businesses and revamping winter plans.

Highlights of the activities during the year:

- Supported Ice on Whyte Festival and Skirts A Fire festival early in 2020
- hosted the first virtual "Coffee with a Cop"
- Monthly to weekly newsletter to focus on membership communications to support COVID-related updates. This included the addition of resources and pages to the website that focused on COVID-19 and update to the business directory that businesses are open.
- Conducted a COVID-19 impact assessment in the spring
- Created Economic Recovery Task Force and set strategic priorities for the year with a focus on enhancement of streetscape, public and outdoor activations.

In May, when businesses began reopening, we knew we would need more space, and a survey was done of the expanded sidewalk pilot program. Patrons stated they spent more time in our area. A road mural was added called Rainbow Road in Spurline Alley. People sought out our area for many of the enhancements and variety of businesses.

Other activities included supporting Grindstone Theatre's Mural Massive in September which was well organized and kept guests safe, and several new murals were added to East Whyte. OSBA is working closely with the City of Edmonton advocating for housing for the homeless, and the BIA Council of 13 BIAs has also been advocating to higher levels of government on these issues, and Mayor Iveson's recent announcement on a rapid housing plan is encouraging.

OSBA is working with the U of A School of Retailing to launch a digital main street program for businesses to help get them online. OSBA is also working with Business Link to launch a BIA-specific support program that includes workshops and one-on-one support for businesses. Both programs are scheduled to launch in the next few weeks and to only businesses in a BIA.

Economic Recovery Task Force Report

Matt Chapman, Chair of the Economic Recovery Task Force, provided an overview of the task force created in May that includes representation from board members, businesses,

art/theatre reps, commercial real estate and leasing reps, retail experts from the U of A, an urban planner and designer.

The business district was impacted by COVID-19 with business license cancellations and closures according to the city's reports, and from January to September 2020, we are down approximately a net total of 13 businesses. The positive news is that leasing agents have told us that Whyte Ave is the fastest submarket in Edmonton to recover and there are new developments that come to fruition later in 2020 and early in 2021.

This summer OSBA hired a student with a focus on economic recovery, with funding from the Canada Summer Jobs Grant. A COVID Safety Toolkit was created and is available on the OSBA website resources page.

The task force aligns with OSBA's strategic plan with three key areas of focus: public realm improvements and safety, collective marketing and grow local campaigns and business recruitment.

6.2 2020 Winter & Holiday Plans

Cherie Klassen provided an overview and highlights of the 2020 Winter & Holiday Plans. The winter and holiday plans were pivoted to expand the outdoor experience of Old Strathcona. Rather than hosting one event in McIntyre Park, the theme will be Winter Whyte Light Up all winter that will animate and light up the district drawing people to these spots.

OSBA is working with a design firm to create a storefront activation program for vacant storefronts adding light and art to the spaces. Whyte Wishes is even bigger and better this year, and will grant wishes for gifts from businesses. Reimagining of the weekend programming with pet photos with Drag Mrs. Claus, winter patio campaign and an active transportation event. A kick-off of the lights will coincide with a ShopHop weekend to promote late-night shopping in the area.

Cherie asked that attendees interested in the winter patio campaign contact OSBA. A callout for the Late-Night Shop Hop was posted in the last newsletter. If businesses were interested in participating, they were asked to contact Alanna Morton or Jeff Samsonow.

7. 2021 Old Strathcona Business Association Board Election

Kris Armitage, Chair, introduced the current Board of Directors and thanked Matt Chapman for his service as Past President and Chair and Adam Smith for serving two years on the board.

The role of the board is to represent the business community and support the larger business interests of the group, and the group of candidates presented as an entire slate included the honorary board members.

Board of Directors Candidates

1. Anastasia Arabia from Trend Research and current Treasurer to be serving a second term.
2. Kris Armitage, representing two retail stores, Knifewear and Kent of Inglewood, current Board Chair and serving a second term.
3. Al Gothjelsen from The Pint on Whyte and served in several roles on the board over the years.

4. Nella Sabo from Backbeat, located in East Whyte, will be serving her second term.
5. Alison Rees-Middleton from Bryan and Alison's No Frills and current member of the Economic Recovery Task Force.
6. Rolanda Sandra from Avila Arepa will be joining the board as new board member next year.
7. Ben Sir from the Buckingham and serving his second term
8. Emily Sommers from Healing Water Spa will be joining the board next year as a new board member

Three honorary directors to act as advisors to the board:

1. Adam Mitchell with Fringe Theatre Adventures as the festival and arts community liaison
2. Ashley Salvador and Travis Fong with YEGarden Suites to act as advisors on urban planning and redevelopment liaisons

All 11 candidates were nominated and fulfilled the requirements in our operating guidelines.

MOTION: To accept the 2021 Old Strathcona Business Association Board of Directors nominees as presented.

Moved by Kris Armitage. Seconded by Anastasia Arabia.
Carried

8. OSBA 2021 Strategic Priorities

Cherie Klassen, Executive Director, provided the highlights of the OSBA 2021 Strategic Priorities. She thanked Kris Armitage for leading our elections, and she is excited to say that it is the first time there was gender parity on the board. Economic development will be a priority, and we will focus on operating within our budget and apply for grants to assist with the process.

The four priorities identified for focus in 2021 that support the three-year strategic plan:

- Strengthening perception of safety and reality in our district to include street scaping, beautification, murals, Old Strathcona Street Team, and public safety protocols.
- Developing strategy to support balanced business mix with a big focus on developing business recruitment committee, business attraction plan and to promote new business and developments in the area. Cherie asked for interested members to contact OSBA if they were interested in joining the Business Recruitment Committee.
- Activation of underutilized spaces - focus will be on activating empty storefronts.
- Foster a healthy business community – support marketing campaigns and promoting our area as a destination, launch seasonal marketing campaigns, develop blog strategy, and continue to support festivals and events in whatever capacity they are. Continue to enhance member engagement with Summer Ambassadors and continue to work with U of A School of Retailing and Business Link on initiatives.

9. 2021 Proposed Budget

Anastasia Arabia, Treasurer, provided an overview of the levy history for context and the proposed budget for 2021. Last year, there was a vote to increase the budget by \$25,000 to support increased member engagement strategies and added staffing for the growing business district.

For the 2021 budget, a proposal to decrease the business levy to assist businesses experiencing economic hardship is being presented. The board thoroughly reviewed a few budget options for consideration and determined this to be the best option to help offset the budget and support our strategic priorities in 2021. This equates to a decrease in our levy of \$50,000 and using \$35,000 of our \$89,000 in savings.

OSBA has reduced member engagement costs, focused on staff resources, reducing costs for in-person, general meetings, reducing sponsorship budget and working on in-kind partnerships.

MOTION: To approve the 2021 Old Strathcona Business Association Proposed Budget as presented.

Moved by Anastasia Arabia. Seconded by Kris Armitage.
Carried

9. Adjournment of Business Meeting

Before officially adjourning a last call for additional questions was offered.

Kim Fjordbotten inquired if the proposal of the "Mural Walking Tour" guide or webpage or pdf would meet all the strategic goals? Cherie responded that it would meet the strategic goals and they could discuss if further offline.

Kris Armitage adjourned the business meeting at 6:07 pm.



2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday, October 7, 2020
6:30 to 7:00 pm
Q&A PANEL DISCUSSION

ECONOMIC RECOVERY: SURVIVE & THRIVE

Moderated by Cherie Klassen

Panelists: Gabriel Lorieau, Omada Commercial
 Alison Rees-Middleton, Bryan and Alison's No Frills
 Heather Thomson, University of Alberta, School of Retailing

Cherie introduced the panelists and thanked them for participating. Each panelist provided a brief overview of their background.

Gabriel (Gaby) Lorieau, Associate with Omada Commercial, a boutique commercial real estate firm in Edmonton. He specializes in leasing throughout the city with a focus on boutique retail and high street leasing.

Alison Rees-Middleton and her husband, Bryan, are co-owners of No Frills, a Loblaw grocery retail franchise located in Old Strathcona. She is responsible for managing and maintaining industry leading standards of health and safety training for department managers, supervisors, and part-time staff. Alison is an active member of the Economic Recovery Task Force and a newly appointed board member.

Heather Thomson, Executive Director, School of Retailing, U of A, works with retail and commercial real estate industries with an emphasis on education, consulting, academic research, applied research and industry outreach and is focused on helping people, businesses and communities grow.

Gaby

Q. What are some of the changes and shifts you've been seeing in Edmonton's commercial real estate market this year, particularly because of COVID?

A. Gaby indicated it has been interesting for everyone. They specialize in retail leasing and sales and biggest impact they have seen is on restaurants and general retail in the city. Many things were pushed back, however, some tenants prevailed and were able to reopen.

Fixtured space is in bigger demand and there are already existing spaces for tenants seeking lower business costs and turnkey spaces. They are cautiously optimistic to see where we go the next 6 to 12 months.

Alison

Q. As a grocery store, you never had to shut your doors this year. What are some of the things that you had to adjust or learn about after being deemed an essential service?

A. Being dubbed essential was good. For more than a few weeks, the shift was terrifying, the staff were scared to come back, customers were scared, and many felt like we didn't have many choices. One thing they had was their jobs and a decision they made was to relegate the fears

and decided not just to survive, as every day they do business matters to their customers and staff. We are all essential in a way. They had Loblaw's team of safety experts that would help them and took steps to make their customers more comfortable and safer.

They gave away free hand sanitizer and hand wipes to community businesses. They helped the OSBA with creating a safe practices guidebook. OSBA developed safety guidelines and they had been commended and known for their practices. Cherie heard from quite a few people that they chose to go to their store because they were focusing on keeping their customers safe.

Heather

Q. What have you been seeing as the biggest shifts and trends in retail because of COVID?

A. Some of the biggest shifts we are seeing because of the pandemic is what was expected. The need to get online was always coming but because of shut down we needed to get online faster.

Online local sales from May 2019 to May 2020 were up 150%. It was people wanting to shop online, but locally. There is a gap of people going out and looking for ways to support local. We saw this particularly when Amazon Prime was no longer Amazon Prime and there was a delay in receiving products. But a lot of businesses were not able to help their customers help them (the local business). There is not going to be an end to the pandemic. There is no such thing as omnichannel anymore, it's just how you run business. It will be fluid and it's important to have digital space and a physical presence which will often increase online sales from 17 to 25%. We need to make sure that we are doing what we can to make it sustainable. Sustainable supports and foundations and build business practices to maximize profitability.

Gaby

Q. Do you think pop-up retail will be something we see more of?

A. Some of the things we have seen is that pop-ups are working well. Posh pop-ups in the US were well done as the infrastructure was quite pretty. People were not responding to pop-ups that were shabby. As a retailer, you are providing things like customer service and pop-ups will be popular as we move forward. It allows groups, whether established or new, test out the market for a few months and they see a lot of in the fashion industry. They have done a few with Lords Shoes around the city and getting landlords on board to accommodate the pop-ups is important. Bridging the gap between animation and reality and when you activate storefronts, it helps to lease property and storefronts. We are on the right path to re-animate spaces. Repositioning of a building on what's coming in the area, changing the storefront appeal, and beautifying it is great. OSBA is on track here.

Gaby

Q. Will there be more of an appetite from property landlords?

A. Some buildings have chronic vacancy and first getting someone that is interested in the space and activating them will draw people. There is a perception when a storefront is vacant, it impacts the area. Drawing people to our street with the vacant storefronts. We have interest from property owners to activate current vacant spaces.

We cannot forget the Starbucks or Second Cup spaces, and now we need to find the best to activate the vacant spaces. We just want to find good business owners that will be here for the next 20 years.

Alison

Q. *How have you activated the safety guidelines?*

A. A lot of times we have tried to recreate the wheel, and when stage 1 was implemented, we were told not to wear a mask. They looked to Japan, as they kept their economy open as much as they could.

Four Cs were included in the helpful guide on how to prevent COVID. Avoid closed contact, continuous contact for a long time, and they put up transparency barriers, prevent people from piling up on each other, limit the number of people in the store, masks are mandated in the store for staff and created an outdoor space for staff. They have a cleaning company that sanitizes all high traffic touch areas from an hour before the store opens and an hour after they close. Masks are free and hand sanitizer is in the store. Implementing the new best practices and what they are hopeful for is when they do come through it, they hope they are all still around to look back together.

School of Retailing Project - Digital Main Street Program

Heather

It will be available starting next week, and in a nutshell, there is a team of 11 students that are being deployed. Digital system e.g. online ordering system and logistically each student will spend about 10 hours with businesses.

They will work with each business owner and understand where they are at this time and ensure that the business owner and manager feel confident about the digital transition. What they will do, if it is the right decision for the business, is they will create a simple website landing page and provide education, training, and development to help increase profitability. Three students will be assigned to the Old Strathcona Business District, and there will be a landing page coming out regarding the transition to this program.

Cherie

One thing that COVID has taught us is having an online presence is so important.

Gaby

He has a soft spot for Old Strathcona and Whyte Ave, and what he finds remarkable about it is there is always people looking to expand in the area. Over the summer they have seen a lot of businesses open (e.g. Crawford Block) and former vacant spaces have been leased. There is a lot happening, and they are seeing most of their action in the leasing world on Whyte Ave. It is from a lot of the boutique retailers and local entrepreneurs that are finding their own little opportunity and pursuing it.

Gaby

Q. *Will rents ever recover for landlords?*

A. They haven't seen much softening in the rates, and they need to keep in mind that for Edmonton, they have a few new projects in the area. Construction costs haven't really come down and it is about trying to reduce the gap and help improve the space. No landlord is the same and the way they are structured financially varies. Adding years to terms and discount as much as possible in the first year is an example.

Gaby

Q. *What is the prognosis for retail and hospitality in Edmonton particularly our area?*

- A. If people feel safe, they will continue to get out and dine and shop. Downsizing restaurants, increasing efficiencies, takeout only restaurants and they are making it work.

Heather

Q. *Do you see a direct correlation between COVID-19 numbers and decreased consumer retail traffic?*

- A. It will be interesting to see how the next wave will go, and when you compare it to the past summer, we didn't know a lot about COVID. For the most part a lot of retailers are continuing to do a good job, and we will see a lot of correlation with restaurants due to proximity. She thinks we will see it with restaurants but not as much as retail as the environments are safe.

Alison

As the numbers start to spike, people start hoarding. They haven't seen it yet and if there was a huge spike, people see the risk is low even with 1,000 cases. Glimmer of hope for our businesses as we head into winter and the New Year.

Gaby

Keeps going back to the activity we see in the area, and people are out there looking for spaces. Marcus (Made by Marcus) tells him how busy they are compared to other stores due to walkability, mix of other retail in the area, great destination for everyone to come and enjoy. Optimistic to see it unfold, this hasn't stopped, and they will continue to develop.

Heather

The good news is that consumer spending since the pandemic has not decreased. It is up about 3% from March this year. What is impressive about this BIA in particular, malls may see a shortage in the coming months, but the area such as Whyte will continue to see people. Buy in-store and pick up increased 500% over the summer. If you are offering online sales, pick up service is popular.

Alison

We have talked a lot in the Economic Recovery Task Force about how to come back to the area safely. Comfort is important and the easiest way to make people feel comfortable staff and customers alike, is to care about the people around you. We must keep everyone safe and healthy. Encourage everyone else to do what you're doing and show that you can be leaders in the community, showing compassion and empathy and provide them with the safety they need.

One thing we learned tonight is that we can do this again and if our members want us to continue, we can schedule this again. Huge thanks to the three panelists and to Eric for their volunteer time on the Economic Recovery Task Force.