



Old Strathcona Business Association Annual General Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Epic Market, 8115 Gateway Boulevard NW

ATTENDEES

Board Members:

Kris Armitage (chair)
Al Gothjelpsen
Anastasia Arabia

Dominic McKenzie
John Mackell
Michelle Childs

Rob Ferguson

Honourary Board Member:

Megan Dart

Ryan Eidick

Old Strathcona Business Association and Support:

Cherie Klassen, Executive Director

Ruby Benson, Member
Communications Coordinator
Carrie Mittelstadt, Board Secretary

Annie Melnychuk, Marketing
Coordinator

Members:

Ailynn Wong
Caitlin Bernier
CJ Rowein
Corinne Lillo
Dani Checknita
Grace Emmanuel
Hazel Suter
James Ortlieb
Jason Wong
Jay Sarhadi

Jeff Nachtigall
Jeff Nordstrom
Lisa Kerbrat
Manny Valencia
Mark Wilson
Melanie Checknita
Michelle Childs
Myles Berlin
Parker Ortlieb
Philippe Dupuis

Rahim Jaffer
Rod West
Sandra Cuellar
Seann Childs
Terry Brodeur
Winfield Wong
Yannick Vienne
Yvan Chartrand

Guests:

City of Edmonton:

Charles Gordon
Tom Mansfield
Stephen Duffy
Austin Fried
Carrie Holstead
Kathryn Cardinal

Edmonton Police Services:

Greg Kitura
Michael Elliott
Quentin Miller
Trevor Bohachuyk

Kate Wright, Strathcona MLA
Constituency Office

Adrienne Wiebe, Village Goods

Board Member Regrets:

Amber McKinnon

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

K. Armitage called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

K. Armitage welcomed the attendees to the meeting, shared a land acknowledgement, and thanked the Epic Market team for the venue. He then introduced the board of directors, the OSBA staff, and guests from the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Police Services, and Rachel Notley's office.

3. NEW COMMUNICATIONS CODE OF CONDUCT

K. Armitage introduced the Communications Code of Conduct to the attendees and explained its development and purpose. A copy of the Communications Code of Conduct was included in the meeting packages provided to attendees.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Motion: To accept the Old Strathcona Business Association's 2024 annual general meeting agenda, dated October 9, 2024, as presented. Moved by K. Armitage and seconded by M. Childs. A majority was in favour, and the motion was carried.

5. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Motion: To accept the Old Strathcona Business Association's 2023 annual general meeting minutes, dated October 11, 2023, as presented. Moved by K. Armitage, seconded by R. Ferguson. A majority was in favour, and the motion was carried.

6. CALL FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS

K. Armitage talked about the purpose of the Old Strathcona Business Association (OSBA). He also talked about the role of the board, introduced the board nomination process, and clarified that nominations must be made by a levy-paying member who is a business owner, or the official designate of a business.

Board nomination forms were sent to all members by email. There were five nominations received, and there are four returning members. K. Armitage thanked the new nominees for volunteering to support the OSBA.

Per the governance guidelines, K. Armitage called for nominations from the floor three times. After the third call for nominations, Coreen Lillo (Lillo's Music Shop), Seann Childs (Pedego Edmonton), and Parker Ortlieb (Sid's Selfie World) nominated themselves.

There was discussion about the maximum number of board members possible (fifteen), and why the OSBA governance guidelines were set at nine. K. Armitage shared that this was advised as best practice. C. Gordon from the City of Edmonton indicated that there is an allowance for up to fifteen, but individual business improvement areas (BIAs) can choose to limit the number of board members.

Each board member on the ballot shared a little about themselves and why they want to be involved with the OSBA.

Motion to amend the governance guidelines to allow for twelve nominations this year. Moved by R. Jaffer and seconded by T. Brodeur. Thirteen members voted in favour and eight members were opposed. The motion was carried.

Motion: to close nominations for board members. Moved by K. Armitage, and seconded by A. Gothjelpsen. A majority was in favour, and the motion was carried.

7. 2025 OSBA BOARD ELECTION

K. Armitage reviewed the election voting procedure. Honorary directors are not elected but will be appointed by the new board in 2025 as required.

Motion: To accept the 2025 OSBA Board of Directors nominees as presented, being Amber McKinnon (Naturally Inclined Health), Anastasia Arabia (Trend Research), Corinne Lillo (Lillo's Music), Jeff Nordstrom (ATB Financial), Jennifer Keith (Epic Market), John Mackell (Laurel's on Whyte), Kris Armitage (Knifewear), Parker Ortlieb (Sid's Selfie World), Rahim Jaffer (Rooster Kitchen), Seann Childs (Pedego Bikes), Yannick Vienne (Red Pony Consignment), and Yvan Chartrand (Bonjour Bakery). Moved by K. Armitage and seconded by W. Wong. A majority was in favour, and the motion was carried. Three members were opposed.

8. OSBA PROJECTS UPDATE AND 2025 GROWTH

J. Mackell reviewed the vision, mission, and values of the OSBA. C. Klassen shared the pillars that support the strategic plan.

C. Klassen provided an update on the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy. The City council debated the strategy yesterday. There were 23 speakers, 14 in favour and nine opposed or who had concerns. There were 85 letters sent to the council via the OSBA's letter-writing campaign. Two motions were made to undertake a comprehensive parking study and to create a reserve fund to accelerate funding.

J. Mackell provided an update on cleanliness and the pressure washing and sidewalk cleaning that has been completed, including on the parklets and street furniture. Year-to-date, there have been 1,332 hours of litter pick up, 365 bags of litter collected, and 124 needles collected.

C. Klassen shared updates on the beautification efforts in the area, including over 100 flower baskets or barrels, six new decorative crosswalks (four designed by local artists), two traffic control box wraps, and repainting of the Spur Line alley with new art. The intent is to make it a welcoming and photographable district. The street furniture project resulted in a nomination for a Canadian Tourism Award for "Innovator of the Year," which is a first for a BIA.

The summer team consisted of two students. Their wages were offset by a grant. The highlights of their accomplishments included 548 businesses visited to provide summer survival guides, coordination of the Pet Prowl, social media and blog creation, annual member survey postcard distribution, vacancy report creation, and more than sixty 311 reports.

The annual member survey recently closed. J. Mackell encouraged members to participate in the member survey to have their voices heard. The most important BIA initiatives noted by members via the survey included beautification and cleanliness. The top two priorities that members would like to focus on were: improving safety and street cleaning. In addition, members noted that 56% were aware of the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy and 37% were not aware.

C. Klassen shared that there is a 19% vacancy for main-floor retail (a 1% decrease from 2023). In Q1 and Q2, there were 41 openings and 50 closures. Big developments include the South Scona Parking Lot "The Hat" (Cidex) and Station Park (Beljan).

The plans and projects for winter were highlighted, including Winter Whyte Light Up, a new scavenger hunt, and winter greenery and placemaking.

J. Mackell previewed the growth priorities planned for 2025-2026. A fourth OSBA team member will be added, which will allow for additional marketing and the exploration of boundary expansion southeast into Happy Beer Street. Exploration into a street outreach team will be undertaken in 2025. Once the boundaries have been expanded, rebranding and place branding will be undertaken.

In response to a question about the proposed boundary expansion, C. Klassen explained the background of the OSBA's creation. The businesses in the proposed expansion area would be petitioned to determine their support. Businesses would have an opportunity to speak for or against. If businesses are opposed to the expansion, they can make their feelings known. It is up to City council to decide for or against the expansion.

9. 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET

A. Arabia reviewed the highlights of the proposed 2025 budget, including the considerations of members' feedback about crime and safety, cleanliness and beautification, and advocacy; concerns about the vibrancy of the area during construction; and the increase in inflation. Construction is likely within the next five to ten years, and it will either be a like-for-like replacement or the initiation of the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy.

The OSBA levy was stagnant from 2012 to 2019, decreased in 2021 and 2022 due to the pandemic, and increased slightly in 2023. A more significant increase is being proposed in 2025 to proactively address growth and priorities.

The budgeted income for 2025 includes the increased levy to \$700,000, a student grant recovery of \$5,000, \$43,000 from reserves, other recovery of \$25,000, and deferred revenue of the window repair grant of approximately \$120,000, bringing total projected revenue to \$893,000.

The largest increases will be for the additional staff member, seed money for the development of a street outreach team, an increased marketing budget, increased advocacy, and initiating the boundary expansion.

Motion: To approve the OSBA's 2025 proposed budget as presented. Moved by A. Arabia and seconded by K. Armitage. Fifteen people were in favour, and six people were opposed. The motion was carried.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: to adjourn the business meeting at 7:48 p.m. Moved by K. Armitage and seconded by A. Arabia. A majority was in favour, and the motion carried.