

Sparks Street BIA Board Meeting

April 22nd 2:00p-3:00p

Online (ZOOM)

- Ian Wright
- Elaine Schwartz
- Jeff O'Reilly
- Lindsay Appotive
- Kevin McHale
- Laura Young
- Marissa Lord

Declaration of Conflict of Interest - none

Agenda Items

1. **Approval of Agenda (2 Min)** Jeff, Lindsay
2. **Approval of past minutes (3 Min)** Jeff, Lindsay,
3. **Opening remarks – Ian**
4. **Digital Main Street**
 - *Kevin provided the produced spots from the DMS Video campaign, True Bijoux and the Sparks Street Brand Anthem*
 - *Great opportunity for learning about or video capabilities, pleased with the results and how we can evolve the program*
 - *Great call from business owners, and call out to the community in that Sparks Street is a place you can be successful*
 - *Dan Rascal Productions will return to shoot more BROLL and we can pull if you need any visuals*
 - *Thanked the board for their accommodation and participation on this project*
 - *Jeff reflected that will see the real value of being on Sparks Street*
 - *Kevin would like to showcase the worst of Sparks and use for decision makers, because there are many things that need to be fixed, sending it to an MP or Councillor – reminder of being accountable to promises*
 - *Federal Budget will look to expand the DMS project with new opportunities and what ideas they are looking to Fund, we will look to share those opportunities*
 - *Kevin suggested Graphic Design to rebuild logos, a grant to refresh would be valuable to small businesses*
 - *Jeff said a total rebrand may not what they want but a refresh or tweak would be practical for the newer businesses (as they are new enough they would not require a rebrand) The quality will improve for certain – a good idea*

5. Marketing Update (Laura)

- *Laura reviewed the 2021 Sparks Street Spring marketing strategy (see deck)*
- *Will look to revise dates based on current restrictions*
- *Jeff noted that any way to engage social media followers and create loyalty is a good thing*
- *Jeff flagged the challenge with Covid restrictions*
- *Laura confirmed that the dates are flexible to encourage shopping in store, or visiting the street and curbside. All pending restrictions*
- *Kevin noted that we will strike a balance of lockdown versus engagement, push that positivity*
- *Ideally we can go back to in person shopping, and get that experience,*
- *Jeff agreed saying that there is a pent up need for the public to get out and experience things again*
- *Jeff suggested a picture of the day using the hashtag just to make sure that it is connected to Sparks Street*
- *Kevin reminded everyone that we really look forward to the merchant engagement wherever possible in this social campaigns using the product or service you do – just have fun and engage with our landmarks and contests*

ACTION: WE will revisit the financial asks for each campaign in a few weeks and present to the Board for voting, can also be done by Email

6. Executive Director Update

- *We have partnered with Centretown Community Association, great to have this connection*
- *Looking for 8 gardeners for planter boxes, making inroads, long term great relationship*
- *We will be painting the mural on our Shed this spring as part of our City grant funding that was approved, will be up for minimum 2 years*
- *Six businesses took the Grant writing opportunity Sparks Street offered, some to refresh their applications. Successful participation, lets make sure we hire someone to help navigate frustrations for our members and businesses, great to have these offerings*

7. OCOBIA update

- *Half way through the process of cleaning out governance for ALL BIAs in the City*
- *The Councillor is a representative of Council no voting rights but great to have identified their roles*
- *A lot of clarity in play now*
- *Bylaws and constitution for bare minimum of Rules that will line up with the municipal act*
- *We've pulled outdated or misinterpreted rules, these documents will be reviewed regularly Code of Conduct will be clean and easier on BIA staff*
- *We continue to sit on the Economic Task force and push letters when needed*
- *Should be approved by June, board will vote for new document and remove old*

8. Governance Update (above via OCOBIA)

9. Mall Authority Update (Kevin)

- a. **Public Realm projects-** *new Muskoka chairs , mini library, bottle filling stations, designing a playground, developing a greenery space, confirming location for a permanent bathroom, self cleaning unit out of Italy, looking for it not to interfere with businesses and events and clearances*
Light Court – *fourteen lights in a section of Block 3, immersive experience (via Creative Labs, as well as globes to put on the street from a Winterlude project we have permission to use them for the cost of installation, we'll be removing the "S" of the lampposts and replacing with the globes , we will explore integrating into our Christmas décor*
Do we look at doing more for holidays and Christmas, is there a big element that we can bring in that is a social media draw
- b. **Interlock** – *Elgin Street is ¾ complete, , Rabbit Hole/Brixton is out for tender manholes need to be reset, Hydro one may involved*
 - *Lindsay wanted to confirm when the project would be done, we will attempt before high season, but will push to Fall if we have to – we are working through the bureaucracy of the City , getting away from asphalt patch and move to interlock*
- c. **Patios** - *contracts cleaned up, revised rules and regulations approved, falls in line with City of Ottawa with design standards and accessibility, clear concise well managed process*

Other policies are all accessible to anyone who wants to see them

10. Other Business

Social Media Update (Marissa)

- *Traffic has increased dramatically, BIA Update page is updated weekly, provided govt updates, links, and practical communications for the membership*
- *All information is sent in our mailer but this page serves as landing page for all the information*
- *Blog has been successful largest readership occurs during contesting*
- *Membership Update Mailer – finessing for weekly updates via MailChimp, open rate is good, higher than average with 50% - helps us to share more valuable communications to share based on interest (click rates)*
- *Reach is 1.5-2K views on FB, Instagram is 5000, Twitter is 8000, we have been keeping up with social interests with lack of eventing, rare to receive negative feedback*
- *We encourage our members to tag us in their content*
- *We are working on branded highlight covers and will continue to support local*
- *Want to highlight businesses in a more playful manner, will apply when relevant #SparksPhotoChallenge and #MySparksStreet, we'll do recognition of those who tag us*
- *Kevin wants to make sure that there is information of value, and will lessen*
- *Complimented the active channels and pleased our personality is showing*

Adjournment, Jeff, seconded by Ian

Next Meeting - *Thursday, May 20*