



Preston Street BIA BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 12, 2022 9:30 am to 11:30 am
[Zoom Video Call](#)

Attendance: Lauryn Santini, Shane Olsen, Steve Moffatt, Joey Frangione, Antonella Ceglia, Claudio Lepore, Marcus Filoso, Tony Zacconi, Lindsay Childerhose, Rebecca Judd

1. Approval of Minutes

Approved by Steve Moffatt
Seconded by Claudio Lepore

Approval of Agenda

Approved by Steve Moffatt
Seconded by Shane Olsen

2. Chairperson's Report:

2.1 Italian Festival

The Italian Festival returned on the weekend of June 17-19. Lindsay has shared the Italian Festival promotional video with the Board of Directors. Steve proposes that the Board submits their own photos and videos to the BIA, to be used in future marketing campaigns as well. Lindsay and Rebecca will be saving these assets and sharing the content with BIA audiences. They will also make available a link to a shared-drive with all photos and videos from the event.

2.1.1 Internal Post-Mortem

The BIA will be hosting a post-mortem meeting with all organizers from the Italian Festival to review this year's event and identify pain points. The meeting will take place on August 4th. In anticipation of the post-mortem, Lindsay and Rebecca share some issues that were identified by members with the Board.

The BIA received an email from Perch detailing their concerns throughout the Italian Festival. As they are located right in front of the 301 Preston lot, they had a



unique and, ultimately negative, experience during the event due to the sheer volume of attendees approaching their storefront.

The first complaint from Perch pertained to restroom access; festival attendees came to their restaurant asking to use the restroom—many under the influence—and the operators felt unsafe in denying them access. Lindsay shares that this complaint was heard from other businesses as well. Booking public restrooms was not in the BIA's scope during planning, as we dealt mostly with patio extensions – each of which had their respective private washrooms. In years' past, when Italian Week Ottawa used 301 Preston as a 'fairground', it's assumed that washroom access was available at that location. When the city disallowed IWO from putting amusement rides at 301, it's believed that re-including public washrooms into the event site plan may have been overlooked. Lindsay mentions that this issue will be on the agenda for the post-mortem to correct for next year. Antonella mentions that restroom access has been a recurring issue for the Festival, and that it is difficult to control both as a business and a BIA. She inquires as to whether the ICCO had Port-A-Potties set up at their display at the Scotiabank parking lot; Lindsay says there were none there this year, and that their display was scaled-down from previous years.

Perch also brought up the issue of waste management; indicating that there was overflow left on the side of the street near the corner of Preston/Louisa for three days following the event. Lindsay notes that it is believed that this garbage came from 301 Preston. The city was instructed only to empty their own bins at the end of the event; Lindsay had to contact waste management to make a specialty pick-up for the waste that was left behind. This will also be added to the agenda for the post-mortem meeting to discuss with IWO.

Perch also experienced acts of vandalism throughout the festival; flowers were ripped out of their flowerbeds, broken glass, stolen inventory and attendees were found drinking and smoking in the laneway beside the restaurant. Perch has asked that vulnerable areas such as these be identified in advance. Lindsay mentions that added precautions could be taken in future such as barricading off laneways or having an extra security member monitoring the area. She will talk to the company about this. Marcus mentions that this has been a recurring issue.

Perch also described having issues using the access passes that were delivered by the BIA. Lindsay mentions that this complaint was echoed by other members as well. Although the access passes are discussed in great detail with the security lead before the event, Lindsay explains that there seems to have been a communication issue with the security leads and the personnel manning the barricades. This will be discussed at the post-mortem; the BIA will ask security to



better communicate with each of his staff members for next year. Antonella mentions that this has been a recurring issue with the passes.

Lauryn mentions some additional complaints from the community. Many of her customers noted that the IWO Main Stage did not adequately incorporate Italian culture. She also shares that many activities and animations did not come south of Beech, and the BIA needs to address how to spread these displays. Rebecca responds that this could be addressed in many ways: the BIA could reach out to businesses in these outside pockets and encourage them in their own Festival preparation, and the BIA could station performers in those pockets. Lindsay recommends that the BIA should ‘sound map’ in the future, to ensure competing sounds and animations are spread-out and there are no “dead zones”.

2.1.1.1 Outside Vendors at BIA Events

On Saturday of the Festival, the BIA received phone calls from Farinella and Pietro’s Corner about the Stella Luna gelato food truck on the corner of Aberdeen and Preston. These businesses initially thought that the BIA brought Stella Luna to the area; Lindsay explained that this would have been the choice of the private lot owner and not the BIA, adding that the objective of the event was to drive sales for member businesses and not bring in outside competition. Lindsay explains that Bylaw visited the site on Saturday morning and ticketed Stella Luna for operating within 30 metres of a location holding a Special Events Permit. Stella Luna continued to operate on both Saturday and Sunday, despite being ticketed by Bylaw both days. Lindsay asks the Board what role the BIA should play in this sort of circumstance going forward, as ultimately both the neighbouring restaurants and the lot owners are members of the BIA.

Steve reiterates that private lot owners can do what they wish with their property, even if it means hiring third-party vendors. He also believes that private lot owners should be informing the BIA in advance of what outside vendors they wish to hire, and whether they’ve followed the necessary processes. Steve shares that the BIA should make this a policy for next year and share it with the membership in advance.

Marcus shares Steve’s belief but reiterates that the vendors themselves need to get their own licenses and permits to conduct their business. Steve inquires as to whether the BIA can ask lot owners to hire vendors with businesses/services outside of the area’s scope. Lauryn interjects and shares that she doesn’t agree, noting the competition she faces with



artisans like those at the Preston Street Market. She feels that the BIA is not able to control competition; if everyone follows the rules, businesses and lot owners should be allowed to do what they choose.

Rebecca returns to the '30 metres' rule, asking whether that stands irrespective of whether the vendor gets a permit. Lindsay clarifies that outside vendors would have needed to be part of the BIA/IWO/etc.'s Special Events Permit that was issued by the City months prior; if they had been part of that, the outside vendors would have been allowed to conduct their business. Steve agrees that the City regulations are what the BIA must abide by; in this instance, although Stella Luna sells gelato, the issue that the BIA *can* address is that lot owners need to keep us informed and follow regulations. The BIA must abide by the City's rules; if lot owners wish to bring vendors, they need to be part of the application.

Steve and Tony agree that future IF communications must remind the members of the BIA's mandate – to promote *member* businesses of Little Italy. Overlap between vendor goods and member goods should be avoided, to be considerate to other businesses. Future communications must also share the BIA's role in this issue, to avoid member complaints or speculation.

Shane raises that lot owners are technically member businesses. Marcus and Lauryn note that, if vendors and lot owners abide by regulations, any kind of vendor should be allowed.

Joey inquires as to whether the BIA could identify their own vendor carts and place them at individual lots, so that lot owners make a profit while the BIA has some control with vendor goods. The Board agrees that this is an approach to consider in the future. The Board recognizes that they cannot say 'yes or no' to vendor types, but that recommendations could be made to the lot owners. Steve raises that, regardless of whether the BIA decides the vendor, the lot owner/vendor ultimately *does* have to declare themselves to the BIA.

2.1.1.2 Festival Name and Branding Challenges

The BIA once again faced challenges in naming and branding the festival due to competing interests with other organizers. Since 2017, the BIA has used "Italian Festival" to advertise the activities put on by Preston Street during Grand Finale Weekend. Italian Week indicated that they would not use the words "Italian Festival" in any of their branding – which caused



confusion for the public and took away from the ability for both parties to market the event. Most recently, IWO has proposed that a new name be chosen for the festival going forward. This has been added to the agenda for the post-mortem meeting.

The Board understands these frustrations, explaining that they have been long-standing and that it is of little importance to attendees. Shane mentions that the BIA cannot fully adopt 'Italian Week Festival' if it does not host programming all week. Steve and Antonella propose something like 'Festa Italiana'. Steve makes the distinction between sharing a name and hosting activities together – the purpose would be for marketing, not sharing the events themselves.

Lindsay proposes that sponsorship agreements be produced next year and included some written expectation on shared language. The Board agrees with this approach and will revisit this issue at a later time.

2.1.1.3 IWO Sponsorship

The BIA received feedback from organizers about Italian Festival sponsorships that will be included in the post-mortem discussions.

The Board agrees that any sponsorship agreements made this year were not multi-year commitments. The BIA will revisit these decisions entirely if and when a similar proposal is made to the Board next year.

Lindsay notes that management of the festival logistics remained similar to year's past.

2.1.2 Preston Street Market

The BIA is looking into moving future markets to 301 Preston Street to see if this will positively impact traffic. Although the BIA was unable to get approval for this for the upcoming market on July 17th, the City has indicated that the BIA will hear back in time for July 31st. Going forward, the markets will be held every second week to concentrate resources. Amanda and Lindsay have agreed to try a later start and end time, 11:00am-4:00pm, to avoid the slow morning hours and capture the pre-dinner traffic on the street. End time, 11:00am-4:00pm, to avoid the slow morning hours and capture the pre-dinner traffic on the street.

Further Market details under Downtown Recovery Grant.



2.2 Update on Grants

2.2.1 Downtown Recovery Grant

The BIA has purchased sign holders, feather banners, a branded steel-frame tent and two large tourist chairs as installations through the Downtown Recovery Grant. This grant has also been used for media buys and marketing initiatives.

The large chairs will be finished by DFC Woodworks next week, but the illustrator must do the artwork on them before they can be installed. Once the artwork is done in Kemptville, they will be brought to Little Italy.

About \$4000 is remaining from this grant, which must be used by July 30th. To spend these funds, the BIA is elevating the future Preston Street Markets with additional animations such as face painting and live music.

2.2.2 ACFO Bilingualism Grant

The BIA has received \$18,000 from the ACFO for bilingual marketing initiatives. These funds must be used by the end of 2022 and are to be used for professional services (photography, translation, and graphic design), promotion and advertising (media buys), and hospitality. Lindsay initially applied for \$20,000 and is awaiting the reworked budget.

2.3 Street Maintenance

2.3.1 Carling Electrical Box

The electrical box on the corner of Carling and Preston has been put back in place. Lindsay asks the Board about wrapping the box in the Italian car design, like the others on the street. SignFx has quoted the BIA \$593.25 to wrap the box and still has the design on file. The Board agrees to continue using this artwork. This expense will be put through the My Main Street Community Activator Grant.

2.3.2 City of Ottawa Mural Grant

The proposed mural has since gone through further revisions from Dominic Laporte, at the request of the 180 Preston Street building owner. The BIA was not able to get approval from the building owner to proceed with installing the mural. The BIA will instead propose the existing mural design at alternative properties in Little Italy – the grant must be used by the end of summer.

Antonella inquires as to whether any murals could be painted on the exterior of the Queensway overpass, and whether that would be impacted by the rebuild. Lindsay and Rebecca respond that they can investigate this through the City of Ottawa. Antonella also proposes that the BIA should do a call-out to members with the existing mural proposal.



2.3.3 Tri-Colour Bench Replacement

Lindsay spoke with the City last week to confirm any updates on the benches. These should be delivered and installed by the fall.

2.3.4 Crosswalk Art

Despite numerous requests, the BIA has not heard back from the City of Ottawa about any progress on the crosswalk art. The BIA last heard from the City about receiving a warrant permit to inspect the proposed locations (North/South at Preston and Young and North/South at Preston and Pamilla), but the City has disregarded the BIA's attempts to continue the project. Lindsay and Rebecca will keep trying to follow up about this initiative and update the Board should any progress be made. If the crosswalk art cannot be completed, the BIA is looking into ways to repurpose the funds received from the Community Activator grant.

3. Marketing Update:

3.1 Social Media and Website Report

Rebecca walks the Board through the various Italian Festival marketing endeavours – both those that were paid for by the BIA, and additional products shared by the media and community. This includes Narcity, apt613, influencers, and Mike Scherling's photography and videography services.

Following the Festival, the BIA has reached over 5500 followers on Instagram, largely due to Italian Festival marketing, the Preston Street Market and People on Preston videos. Facebook has also grown since the Festival, nearing close to 500 likes and over 500 follows.

Web traffic has also surged due to the event pages, with the Festival page and Italian Car Parade taking top spots. These numbers are expected to continue to grow as POP is re-advertised and the event marketing increases.

4. Financial Report:

4.1 Operating Status

The June Operating Status will be circulated once it is received.

5. Other:

5.1 La Vendemmia



Lindsay and Rebecca ask the Board if they would like to bring back the La Vendemmia Starlit Dinner/Long Table Dinner and Grape Stomping activities this Fall. Lindsay indicates that \$10,000 has been reserved for La Vendemmia in the budget. The Board responds that they'd like to see both the grape stomping and long-table dinner return; Antonella asks that they be held closer together to build momentum.

The Board refreshes Lindsay and Rebecca on the event logistics: the restaurants who provided food were compensated by the BIA, and previously used family-style dining. The road was closed only between George Street and Aberdeen Street. To have a cleaner dining atmosphere, the Board agrees that buffet-style should be considered, and that staff should be hired through an external agency. Antonella asks Lindsay to visit the storage unit and check for the tablecloths that were previously used; the tables and chairs were rented. Resident notification should be a priority around the Aberdeen area.

Antonella offers to have a call with Lindsay and Rebecca at a later date to refresh them of La Vendemmia details.