



MINUTES

Virtual meeting held on Zoom
January 9, 2024, 2:30 p.m.

Present: Jeff Suddaby, Chirag Patel, Steve Carr, Marisa Kapourelakos, Rachel Hunt, Bob Stone, Scott Morrison (joined at 2:47), Andrew Buwalda (joined at 3:11)
Regrets: none
Staff: Kelly Haywood, Dawn Huddlestone, Halley Clover, Rhonda Christenson, Torin Suddaby
Guests: Lauren MacDermid, Town of Huntsville

1. Welcome and agenda approval

The meeting was called to order at 2:32 p.m.
The Chair added to the agenda: 5. Investment update
Moved by: Bob Stone
Seconded by: Steve Carr
CARRIED

2. Declaration of conflict of interest – none

3. Approval of meeting minutes

Motion: *To accept the minutes from the November 14, 2023 meeting as presented.*
Moved by: Steve Carr
Seconded by: Rachel Hunt
CARRIED

4. Presentation – Muskoka Tourism Marketing Association (MTMA)

The MTMA ED provided an overview of how HMATA funding was used in 2023, and a funding request with corresponding proposed spends for 2024. (See presentation attached to the agenda.)
To be discussed at the next meeting.

5. Investment update

Staff noted that the savings account they planned to deposit a reserve into isn't available for corporations. Recommend a 6-month GIC with HSBC at a 5.25% rate instead.
Staff also recommend that the payroll reserve of \$150,000 be deposited at HSBC as well.
To be discussed further at the next meeting.

6. HMATA sponsorship evaluation discussion and example

The ED reviewed a proposed sponsorship evaluation formula for events, using the Muskoka Limberettes as an example. Attractions would have a different formula.

Discussion:



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- Need to consider a cap on funds per organization, agreed upon by Board, to ensure funds are being distributed throughout the community.
- Also need to take into account whether organization is for-profit or non-profit, and if for-profit, will event/project revenue stay in the community or be used to market Huntsville?
- There should be a cancellation clause in any agreement, and what will happen to the funds in that event.
- Rather than bonuses for meeting variables, there should be a percentage deducted from the base amount for any items not met. (e.g. not mid-week, not shoulder season, etc.)
- Q: Is HMATA liable if event has some kind of catastrophic lost (injury, lawsuits, etc.), and should have disclaimer in agreement and request proof of insurance that names HMATA as insured party?
Staff note: Organizations would need to add HMATA to their insurance. Staff investigating liability insurance for other purposes (staff, volunteers, etc.)
- Need a max. funding amount, depending on type of event (not all are created equal). The burden would then be on the applicant to prove a business case if they are requesting more. Perhaps orgs can apply within funding bands (each with a cap), with criteria being more stringent the higher the ask.
- General Board consensus on a cap for funding per organization is \$25,000.
- Does the ask align with HMATA's tourism/marketing objectives?
- Need to explain the process to applicants in advance, and HMATA needs to get in ahead of bids so that dates can be selected that are better for accommodators.

7. Previous business

7.1. Ontario Gymnastics Championships

Motion: *To support the Muskoka Limberettes Gymnastics Club in the amount of \$20,000.*

Moved by: Steve Carr

Seconded by: Andrew Buwalda

CARRIED

7.2. CSC ice surface flooring

Discussion:

The floor has value, but cost is too high and benefit is more to Town than HMATA. Town will also incur both storage and staffing costs. It doesn't necessarily fit HMATA's mandate - need to develop a formula for infrastructure/assets. Town contribution is currently unknown, but unlikely they would buy floor, but would need to build a heated building for storage. Floor would allow for many things – robotics, gymnastics, etc. How will this impact tourism numbers?



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Could the spend be spread out over 10 years (with Town carrying initial cost)? HMATA should partner, but not shoulder full amount. What would the entire project cost (flooring, storage, labour)? Could be cost prohibitive for small events to use the flooring due to installation/removal costs. Would like to understand what Town believes the ROI would be (number of years), and then HMATA could decide if its worth investing in. Also need to consider other variables (e.g. acoustics in the Don Lough not great for concerts). It may be hard to get comparison data from other municipalities, as few own something like this. Staff to ask for further information from Town staff.

7.3. Affirmation of e-vote

Motion: *To affirm the Board's unanimous electronic decision to provide the Huntsville/Lake of Bays Chamber of Commerce with \$15,000 to enhance the River Mill Park skating rink experience.*

Moved by: Rachel Hunt

Seconded by: Marisa Kapourelakos

CARRIED

8. TPA update

Postponed to next meeting.

Staff request that Board members respond with feedback to email sent in December.

9. Business plan update

Staff provided an overview of business plan updates, including public-facing tourism brand; corporate/association market (conferences, conventions, trade shows, etc.), FAM (familiarization) tours, value-add for conferences like vouchers or special rates; leisure travel especially in shoulder seasons, including outdoor activities with low environmental impact and low impact on local residents; marketing partnerships with Muskoka Tourism, etc.; sport tourism/events, in particular seniors' events with mid-week potential; event tourism/bids.

Discussion: Trade shows may not be beneficial (small fish, big pond, so would need to be selective), but FAM tours can be successful if we can get people to Huntsville; staff should proactively approach local organizations about hosting shoulder-season/winter events; need to find ways to include smaller accommodations in corporate revenue opportunities; many people don't know where Huntsville is so brand awareness/community perception needed; digital billboard buy in GTA may be worthwhile; balance focus between corporate, leisure, and sport tourism; staff to gather data to define date range for shoulder/off-season.



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Motion: *To approve Visit Huntsville as HMATA's public-facing tourism brand.*

Moved by: Scott Morrison

Seconded by: Rachel Hunt

CARRIED

10. Delegation procedure and proposal review

Staff propose that first staff review proposals and bring forward an initial summary of proposals and perhaps a video from proponents, so Board can decide whether they want an in-person presentation as well.

10.1 Huntsville Curling Club – to present at next meeting

10.2 MSCLE – staff to let them know their ask isn't a fit right now

11. Next meetings and adjournment

- Next meetings:
 - Tuesday, January 30 at 2:30 p.m., Active Living Centre, meeting room 4
 - Tuesday, February 13 at 2:30 p.m., Huntsville Public Library, Friends Room
 - Tuesday, March 5 at 2:30 p.m., Holiday Inn Express & Suites

- Adjournment

Motion: *To adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m.*

Moved by: Scott Morrison

Seconded by: Chirag Patel

CARRIED