



MINUTES

In-person meeting at the Active Living Centre, and online via Zoom
January 30, 2024, 2:30 p.m.

Present: Jeff Suddaby, Scott Morrison, Andrew Buwalda, Chirag Patel, Steve Campbell, Steve Carr (Zoom), Marisa Kapourelakos (Zoom)
Regrets: none
Staff: Kelly Haywood, Dawn Huddlestone; Rhonda Christenson (Zoom)
Guests: Lauren MacDermid, Town of Huntsville; Halley Clover, Chamber; Barb Bloomfield and Torin Suddaby, Chamber (Zoom)

1. Welcome and agenda approval

The meeting was called to order at 2:37 p.m.

1.1. Agenda approval

The Chair noted that the following items will be deferred: 7. Huntsville brand presentation (Lisa Spolnik) and 8. TPA update (Kirstin Maxwell).

Motion: *To approve the agenda as amended.*

Moved by: Scott Morrison

Seconded by: Andrew Buwalda

CARRIED

1.2. Downtown Huntsville BIA rep

The Chair acknowledged that Rachel Hunt has resigned from the Board as the Downtown Huntsville BIA representative and welcomed Steve Campbell to the Board as the BIA's new representative. Steve provided a brief bio.

2. Declaration of conflict of interest – none

3. Approval of meeting minutes

Motion: *To accept the minutes from the January 9, 2024 meeting as presented.*

Moved by: Chirag Patel

Seconded by: Andrew Buwalda

CARRIED

4. Presentation – Huntsville Curling Club

The HCC president, Ron Kreutzer, provided an overview of the club's efforts to make its facility fully accessible, at which point it will be the only fully accessible curling club in the Muskoka region. Fundraising is underway, and some renovations have been completed already. The club is seeking financial support from HMATA to help with further renovations. Two possible options were presented: one-time funding of \$30,000, which could be split into three annual payments of \$10,000 each, and which would be recognized on a donor wall and HMATA could receive 10-year naming



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rights for the kitchen or lounge area; or one-time funding of \$20,000, which would support installation of the portico and installation of the new front entrance and which would be recognized on a plaque.

Funding ask to be discussed by the Board at the next meeting.

5. Financials and investment update (Andrew Buwalda)

The Secretary/Treasurer provided an overview of financials to date and forecast to the end of the fiscal year (May 31, 2024). Grants to be removed from forecast going forward, unless there are active applications or funds have been received. Funds available for disbursement to the end of the fiscal year: \$29,100.

Short-term investments are being finalized with Scotiabank: \$400,000 will be moved into a 388-day GIC at 5.2% and \$218,000 into a cashable GIC at 4.25%.

The main motion was amended to include these details.

Motion: *To accept the financials and investments as presented, including short-term investments at Scotiabank of \$400,000 into a 388-day GIC at a rate of 5.2% and \$218,000 into a cashable GIC at a rate of 4.25%.*

Moved by: Chirag Patel

Seconded by: Scott Morrison

CARRIED

6. Previous business – Muskoka Tourism funding

The Chair reminded the Board of the details of Muskoka Tourism's request for funding: \$25,000 for a Huntsville-specific spring marketing campaign. Recommended that focus be on spring campaigns only.

Discussion: Good opportunity because HMATA does not have any assets in market currently; Board should consider if it wants to focus on product development and engage Muskoka Tourism for awareness; as other MATs come online in other Muskoka municipalities, there is the potential for diluted messaging – Huntsville has the opportunity to be in a leadership position given its accommodation and experience assets compared to other municipalities; Muskoka will always have a stronger brand than Huntsville on its own; should HMATA be putting more funds into marketing rather than supporting events?

Motion: *To provide \$25,000 to the Muskoka Tourism Marketing Association for a Huntsville-focused spring marketing campaign.*



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Moved by: Scott Morrison
Seconded by: Andrew Buwalda
CARRIED

7. Huntsville Brand

Presentation by Town staff has been postponed to a future meeting.

The ED noted that Town staff are concerned that Visit Huntsville will cause confusion with their frequent call to action, “visit Huntsville.ca”. Propose Explore Huntsville, which would engage both activity and locals even that’s not HMATA’s mandate – it’s more inclusive.

Discussion: Don’t necessarily feel there would be confusion, but consensus is to switch to Explore Huntsville (explorehuntsville.ca) because it feels more active; Town does get a lot of tourism inquiries which HMATA staff will work to change; may be worthwhile to develop a landing page for visithuntsville.ca that directs people to either the Town for municipal info or Explore Huntsville for tourism info.

Motion: To replace Visit Huntsville and visithuntsville.ca with Explore Huntsville and explorehuntsville.ca as HMATA’s public-facing tourism brand.

Moved by: Andrew Buwalda
Seconded by: Chirag Patel

CARRIED

8. Sponsorship formula and funding applications

ED reviewed adjusted formula and suggested that funding bands be used to determine the percentage of revenue an organization is eligible for. The formula would then be applied, after which more subjective criteria could be considered.

Discussion: Should events that would happen anyhow be funded? It’s a question worth asking, but does not have to result in a ‘no’. Also need to consider if recurring annual events are supported in perpetuity, or if HMATA should focus on underwriting new events and ventures to help them become self-sustaining. There still needs to be a funding cap, regardless of how much the formula indicates they are eligible for. Also consider that brand awareness, which can be hard to measure, is part of HMATA’s mandate, and large-scale, professional events that are marketed internationally also have value. Need to also consider the overall impact on the tourism economy (both small and large hotels/resorts, restaurants, other tourism operators). The formula is just one tool, and the funding decision will also be informed by the organization’s application and presentation. HMATA’s financial constraints also need to be taken into account – dollars spent on community activations



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takes away from marketing and vice versa. Intake periods need to be established (twice per year suggested).

9. ED report

9.1. Delegation proposals

Ironman to present at next meeting, along with Huntsville Festival of the Arts. More information to come regarding Knights of Columbus tournament.

9.2. Business plan update

To be discussed in closed session due to human resources component.

9.3. Website transition

Staff have begun migrating Huntsville Adventures content, which has been hosted by the Chamber, to HMATA's site. Lake of Bays tourism information needs to be stripped out.

9.4. Winter marketing campaign

Information to come via email for Board's consideration – a digital push with a contest package for February and March.

10. Closed session

Motion: To enter closed session at 4:38 p.m.

Moved by: Andrew Buwalda

Seconded by: Chirag Patel

CARRIED

Discussion: budget and staffing.

Motion: To leave closed session at 5:45 p.m.

Moved by: Andrew Buwalda

Seconded by: Chirag Patel

CARRIED

11. Next meetings and adjournment

- Next meetings:
 - 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
 - Tuesday, March 26 at 2:30 p.m., location TBD



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- Adjournment
Motion: *To adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m.*
Moved by: Scott Morrison
CARRIED