



MINUTES

Virtual meeting (via ZOOM) on February 24, 2023, 11:00 a.m.

Present: Jesse Hamilton, Jerry Feltis (for Jeff Suddaby), Steve Carr, Chirag Patel, Scott Morrison, Bob Stone, Rachel Hunt, Nate Smith
Regrets: none
Staff: Kelly Haywood, Torin Suddaby, Dawn Huddlestone, Barb Bloomfield, Rhonda Christenson
Guests: Kirstin Maxwell, Lauren MacDermid (Town of Huntsville); Ellen Selby (BIA)

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m.

1. Welcome and agenda approval

***Motion:** To accept the agenda as presented.*

Moved by: Chirag Patel

Seconded by: Scott Morrison

CARRIED

2. Declaration of conflict of interest – none

3. Approval of meeting minutes

***Motion:** To accept the minutes from the February 16, 2023 meeting as presented*

Moved by: Steve Carr

Seconded by: Chirag Patel

CARRIED

4. Unfinished business

a. Huntsville Festival of the Arts – funding request (\$40,000)

At its Feb 16, 2023 meeting, the Board requested additional information regarding the HfA ask for \$40,000. Kelly Haywood reviewed details provided by Dan Watson.

Discussion:

The Board wants to ensure that the marketing spend for this funding is for specific events, rather than general marketing. Discussion regarding whether HfA should be included as a community partner, receiving an annual lump sum. This will be included for consideration in the upcoming budget presentation, however the Board is pausing partnership decisions until the new tourism entity/DMO is confirmed.

***Motion:** To provide Huntsville Festival of the Arts \$40,000 for 2023 programming as outlined*

Moved by: Jesse Hamilton

Seconded by: Steve Carr



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- b. Muskoka Hornets correspondence – unused funds from 2022
At its Jan 26, 2023 meeting, the Board requested additional information about Muskoka Hornets correspondence indicating they hadn't used all of their 2022 funding.

Discussion:

Brief comments regarding this organization's efficient use of funds and the number of tournaments they bring to town.

Motion: *To allow Muskoka Hornets to retain the unused funding from 2022 to be used toward tournaments in its 2023 season*

Moved by: Scott Morrison

Seconded by: Jesse Hamilton

CARRIED

5. Staff update

- a. Eclipse update and future discussion

Staff presented potential options for the future of Eclipse next season and beyond for information, including: the same lights at Muskoka Heritage Place with growth in downtown Huntsville; annual growth on existing MHP site with same lights in downtown Huntsville; annual growth on existing MHP site as well as growth across Huntsville; the same installations at MHP with addition of a treewalk village in the adjacent forest; or Eclipse moves to the forest adjacent to the pioneer village as a treewalk village.

The company that installs the treewalk will do a site visit at MHP with staff in the coming weeks, and will present ideas to the Board at its March meeting. Other locations are also a possibility.

Discussion:

The Board is interested in the possibility of a year-round attraction, noting that Eclipse as it is will have a short lifespan, and would like to see additional funding opportunities explored for future expansion to ensure sustainability and longevity of the attraction.

The Board will need to consider the best location for this attraction going forward. If at MHP, Town Council and its committees (Community Services and Waterfront Master Plan Committee) and staff will need to assess its suitability, although there is appetite on Council to see the MHP property be utilized more and be a centrepiece of downtown Huntsville. Discussion process at the Town would take several months.

There was concern expressed that the treewalk would be seen from the pioneer village.

The Board would like to see ticket prices remain affordable, and would consider special package pricing with hotels if the treewalk goes ahead.



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A funding commitment will have to wait until after a decision on the DMO is made, however staff noted that some funds will have to be released to engage the company beyond the initial site visit into ideas/plan/NDA.

6. Round table discussion

a. Agreement with the Town of Huntsville

The Board was reminded of the wording in the TPA, following discussion regarding Town fees at the previous meeting:

“The Town’s contribution of seventy per cent (70%) of the MAT proceeds to the Association shall be considered as the Town’s contribution to any future projects the Association funds and/ or is a partner in. All future Association agreements with organizations or businesses receiving money from the Fund shall contain the following language, or similar wording to this effect, ‘In entering into this agreement the recipient of funds agrees that it shall not approach the Town of Huntsville for additional funding or in-kind requests for this event, project or program. In the event an approach is made, whether or not funding is received from the Town, any funding received, or to be received, from the Association becomes void and shall immediately be re-paid to the Association.’”

The Board Chair noted that the spirit of the original discussion vs. the language used to justify direction are two different things, and further discussion is needed.

b. Announcement re: pause in funding

The Board would like to see a media release go out to let the community know that HMATA funding will be paused until further notice.

c. Closing date for Eclipse

Staff noted that Eclipse will close for the season on Saturday, March 17 with a food truck party featuring music by Sean Cotton.

7. Next Meeting & Adjournment

- **Next meeting**

The tentative date for the next meeting is Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. (to be confirmed at a later date)

- **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Moved by: Steve Carr



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Seconded by: Chirag Patel
CARRIED