



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 27th, 2023  
11:00 am (ET) Virtual Meeting Minutes

### LVBIA Board Members Attendees

Charles Arbez, BIA Chair   Hullmark Developments LTD.
Sandy Weir, BIA Vice-Chair   Smooth Wax Bar
Kendell Chase, BIA Secretary   York Heritage Properties
Praveen Vilvanathan, BIA Treasurer   IWGplc
Ben Hahn, BIA Director   Coach House Law
Chris Atkins, BIA Director   First Capital
Chris Fraser, BIA Director   Moveable Inc.
Chris Wilkins, BIA Director   The School Finder Group
Abhi Kathuria, BIA Executive Director
Swareema Rajkhowa, BIA Coordinator

### Non- Board Members Attendees

Ausma Malik, Deputy Mayor   City of Toronto
Ned Sabev, Economic Advisor   City of Toronto
John Kiru, Executive Director   TABIA
Bob Gore, Auditor   Robert Gore Associates
Vienna O'Shea, Councillor's Office Staff   City of Toronto

## Guests- Business Members

Jane Siklos   York Heritage Properties
Julie Kaye   Telecom by Design
Janis Braun   First Capital REIT
David James   Liberty Market Building Inc.
Rachel Curry   Rachel Currey Real Estate

### 1. Call to Order, Introductions, Opening Remarks, and Land Acknowledgement

- LVBIA by-laws require a 20-day notice of the meeting along with accompanying materials, all of which have been complied with.
- **Confirmed Quorum of the Board is Present (4)**

### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- No conflicts declared

### Approval of Agenda

**MOTION:** “To approve the 2023 AGM Agenda”  
**FIRST:** Chris Fraser, BIA Director | Moveable Inc.  
**SECONDER:** Praveen Vilvanathan, BIA Treasurer | IWGplc  
**ANYONE OPPOSED:** NO

### 3. Approval of 2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes

**MOTION:** “To approve the 2022 Annual General Meeting Minutes”  
**FIRST:** Kendell Chase, BIA Secretary | York Heritage Properties  
**SECONDER:** Sandy Weir, BIA Vice-Chair | Smooth Wax Bar  
**ANYONE OPPOSED:** NO

### 4. Auditor’s 2021 Report

- The current auditor is **Robert Gore & Associates**
- Found no mistakes in LVBIA books & records, and were able to issue a clean audit opinion based on the analysis conducted.
- Copy of the financial statements is available to everyone
- The organization had an operating surplus for the year of \$99,000 on a total revenue of \$443,000 reflected by an accumulation of net assets that has grown from \$366,000 beginning of the year to \$465,000 at the end of the year. The predominant cause of the increase is underspending on salaries (the hiring agenda came through a bit more slowly than anticipated), and streetscape improvements were significantly below the plan from a budget perspective. Otherwise, spending was relatively on target.
- Event revenue was down a bit which was attributed to a bit of post-COVID pressure on people being able to offer up sponsorship to support events.
- Festivals and Events - GML came in slightly over budget.
- The budget for “Provision for Uncollected Levies” (which is determined by the City) was quite significant. The actual, which is also provided by the City, came in at a much more modest number. This drove down spending and significantly resulted in a surplus for the year.

- No concerns and also see no issues in the financial statements; everything else is consistent with the budget and expectations.

**MOTION: “To approve the 2022 Audited Financial Statements”**

**FIRST:** Praveen Vilvanathan, BIA Treasurer | IWGplc

**SECONDER:** Chris Fraser, BIA Director | Moveable Inc.

**ANYONE OPPOSED:** NO

## 5. Appointment of Auditor for 2022

- After careful review and consideration, the Liberty Village BIA is pleased to put forward Robert Gore & Associates as the BIA’s Auditor for 2023.

**MOTION: “To approve Robert Gore & Associates as our BIA’s Auditor for 2023 Financial Statements”**

**FIRST:** Praveen Vilvanathan, BIA Treasurer | IWGplc

**SECONDER:** Sandy Weir, BIA Vice-Chair | Smooth Wax Bar

**ANYONE OPPOSED:** NO

## 6. Update from Deputy Mayor Ausma Malik, City Councillor Ward 10

- The Deputy Mayor praised LVBIA’s accomplishments in 2023. She expressed that LVBIA is one of the most important and engaged voices for the business community in the downtown area and thanked the organization for its leadership on important issues affecting the businesses in the neighbourhood.
- The Deputy Mayor shared that she was incredibly pleased to join the BIA at the annual GML and thanked the BIA leadership for its collaboration and care in putting together the event and bringing the community together. GML is a remarkable expression of the work that LVBIA does.
- The Deputy Mayor expressed that during this term, her office has been proud to connect and partner with the BIA on several issues. This included some planning issues in the neighbourhood, particularly the well-being and safety around Lampport Stadium.
- The Ontario Line is bringing a lot of change that is impacting our downtown. The Deputy Mayor shared that one of the first pieces of leadership at the start of her term was making sure they were able to set the expectations about what the City was looking for from the provincial government and Metrolinx during the construction. The Deputy mayor chaired the Ontario Line subcommittee that made sure to put forward recommendations that reflected the needs and concerns of the community.
- The Exhibition Station piece related to the Ontario Line is a huge opportunity to connect more people to the neighbourhood and also presents its challenges. The Deputy Mayor’s office will continue to provide information and support efforts for transparency from Metrolinx as work at the Exhibition Station continues. The Deputy Mayor commended the BIA for being provocative around this matter and sharing the various resources and notices with the community.
- The Deputy Mayor’s office and the BIA have also been actively doing some ongoing advocacy around preserving local art pieces (the silos) that are affected by the Ontario Line work.
- The Deputy Mayor also shared that she and her office are excited to partner with the BIA as the City prepares to welcome new visitors and new opportunities with the FIFA World Cup in 2026. Liberty Village being such a centrepiece of where the action is going to be happening, we want to ensure that we are leveraging this opportunity for our local businesses and creating a lasting tangible community benefit and infrastructure for us to be able to benefit from in the future.
- Lastly, she commended the BIA for all the opportunities that the BIA has been able to create to promote and support local businesses, especially as the Holiday season is upon us with the ShopLiberty2Win program.
- The Deputy Mayor affirmed her commitment to continuing to come alongside each other to make sure that the Liberty Village neighbourhood shines.

## **7. 2023 Year in Review (Presented by Sandy Weir, Vice-Chair LVBIA)**

### ***Liberty Market Building Art Mural***

- Through the City of Toronto Outdoor Mural & Street Art Program and in collaboration with Lifetime Developments, we present to you our new Art mural “Dream Big” by artist Anthony Ricciardi. The mural stands tall on the south side of the Liberty Market Building’s Boiler House.
- The art mural will contribute to creating a sense of place and community for residents and local businesses and a recognizable gathering spot for visitors and neighbours alike. It will increase vibrancy, create a photo opportunity, and generate interest amongst a younger demographic that Liberty Village has. Higher footfall as a result of the project will help alleviate some of the challenges faced by many of our business members in the Liberty Market Building.

### ***Walk Liberty 2.0***

- In 2023, With the help of City of Toronto Transit Expansion Grant Program funding, we were able to relaunch the Walk Liberty 2.0.
- With the help of this grant funding, we continued to maintain Walk Liberty by making updates to the business directory, adding more restaurants, and patios, and promoting the historical context of the area.
- The program continues to be a successful initiative for our BIA by encouraging visitors residents and employees to get outside and explore the neighborhood and all it has to offer
- As part of the program, we also did multiple walking tours to promote the area
- You can visit [www.libertyvillagebia.com/walk-liberty](http://www.libertyvillagebia.com/walk-liberty) for the full tour, or scan one of the 10 signposts throughout the neighborhood

### ***Liberty Village Bonus e-Gift Card***

- Since 2020, we have been launching the Liberty Village bonus e-Gift card promotion - which is a virtual gift card that automatically gives consumers an extra 25% on the amount that they purchase to spend at participating businesses in Liberty Village. The 25% Bonus amount and all processing fees were paid for by our BIA.
- This program provided a variety of benefits to our members:
- Businesses were able to increase their sales without reducing their margins
- The bonus money acted as an incentive for residents to shop locally and It Introduced residents to new businesses within their community
- Lifetime sales (3 years)- \$165,148 economic impact
- With a successful campaign this year, we will be bringing back the campaign again In 2024
- If you are interested in becoming a merchant, please contact Abhi our Executive Director at [admin@libertyvillagebia.com](mailto:admin@libertyvillagebia.com) for the next steps!

### ***ShopLibertyVillage2Win***

- In Spring 2023, we launched the ShopLibertyVillage2Win campaign to raise awareness of the importance of supporting local businesses. The campaign encourages people to shop local and support our neighbourhood businesses.
- The reported economic impact of the campaign was \$130,000
- During the campaign, we engaged with 115+ businesses

- All of the participating businesses said the campaign was beneficial and would like to see it run again
- The campaign was so successful that we brought it back for the Holiday Season and currently running the campaign until December 12th.

### ***Give Me Liberty***

- On June 23rd, Give Me Liberty returned! We closed down the parking lot on Fraser Ave. to cars and had a one-day festival showcasing local businesses with live music, activities, games, and activities.
- Give Me Liberty 2023 was a huge success! We managed to raise around 50k in sponsorships and had representation from 35+ local vendors who set up their booths.
- Some of the highlights of the festival:
  - We had a great turnout and visitors loved the vibe, food, and entertainment- 3000+
  - Vendors were happy with their placements and stakeholders felt supported
  - 96% were inspired to return to Liberty Village
  - Nodo and Burger Drops collaborated with their special burger and supported feeding the guests
  - Retail, Restaurants, and services businesses supported
  - Live entertainment (dancers, music, photo booth, lawn games, kids zone, activations, etc.

### ***Live at Liberty Music Series***

- This year we hosted the Live at Liberty Music series twice, from January to March and August to October, hosting live music shows for a total of 12 weeks. The music series showcased a variety of local musical talent
- Overall, the performances were effective at drawing people into our neighbourhood and strengthening the social fabric of our community
- We will continue this initiative as an annual series in 2024

### ***Holiday Season Ugly Sweater Party***

- To close off 2023, we are hosting an “Ugly Sweater Party” on December 14th at Left Field Brewery for our members, employees, business owners, and residents.

### ***Promoting Liberty Village***

- Through our social media platforms, the LVBIA website, blogs, and newsletters we are providing additional support to our members and helping them promote their businesses, office spaces, promotions, etc.
- As part of our marketing strategy to help our members including commercial property owners showcase the desirability of Liberty Village as a place to live, work, and play, we are also doing a branding video. Among other elements, the video will also highlight office spaces.

### ***Awarded Grants Funding & Successful Projects***

- This year Liberty Village BIA was selected for multiple grants from the city;
- The Main Street Innovation Fund-\$25,000. The grant funding was used to create a BIA financial operations manual that allows BIAs to adhere to the Financial recommendations laid out by the Auditors General Office and will be used by all the BIAs
- The Transit Expansion Grant- \$10,000. The grant funding was used for the Walk Liberty 2.0

Interactive portal, and the Liberty Village Branding Video project (In progress).

- The Main Street Innovation Fund-\$25,000 for the Winter Music series
- The Outdoor Mural Grant Funding- \$7,500 for Liberty Market Building mural
- The Main Street Innovation Fund-\$50,000 for Lights at Liberty- Interactive Lights Project at Liberty Market Building- Currently Pending
- The Transit Expansion Grant- \$25,000 for Considerate Construction tool kit manual- Currently Pending

### **2024 Objectives**

- In 2024 with the help of our standing committees, we will continue our streetscape improvement projects, annual events, shop local campaigns, innovative projects, and promoting commercial properties.
- With Exhibition station construction and other major construction projects, we will continue our monthly checkpoints with Metrolinx and LV Construction hub, Councillor office, and advocate for our membership with all levels of government and stakeholders. Under the Advocacy Committee, we will also be planning and working around the FIFA World Cup.

### **Streetscape**

- Our streetscape work will continue to improve the sights and vibrancy of the neighbourhood. In 2024 we will be planning some incredible projects to add to our Liberty Village Legacy and will also be working with the city to bring new improvements that would align with the FIFA World Cup.

### **2024 Events**

- In 2024 we will be bringing back our annual Give Me Liberty, Live at Liberty Music series, Networking event, and Holiday season event.
- Our goal is to expand our reach and attract even more local vendors, artists, and musicians, and promote the event not only in Liberty Village but also in the wider Toronto Area to showcase the village and the businesses to attract returning audiences to the area.

### **Community and Member Engagement**

- In 2024, we will continue to build upon our relationships and increase our engagement opportunities with our members. We'll host more networking events, and promote the area and our businesses through our social media, monthly e-newsletters, and BIA information sessions.
- The Liberty Village Board of Management has several standing committees committed to improving, beautifying, and maintaining Liberty Village.

### **BIA Boundary Expansion Update**

- The Liberty Village BIA Board of Management has voted to not start the expansion process and to postpone the boundary expansion until next year as we are waiting for more information from the city.

## **9. Proposed Program and Budget for 2023 (Presented by Praveen Vilvanathan, Treasurer LVBIA)**

- It has been endorsed by the Board of Management and reflects the priorities for next year as set out by our standing committees.
- The budget summary had been circulated by the City of Toronto to all property owners and by the BIA through all our platforms.

- As seen on the top of the budget summary, the total levy amount for 2024 is \$422,657. This captures the increase in the levy rate of 4.0%.
- In addition to our levy, the LVBIA will be actively seeking grants for various projects and initiatives.
- We are confident that we can secure some of the grants such as the mural grant of \$7,500 the City's Winter Activation grant of \$50,000, and the Main Street Innovation fund of \$25,000
- In 2024, we will be bringing back our Annual Street Festival, Give Me Liberty, Live at Liberty music series, Holiday season event, and networking event
- We will continue providing support to our commercial properties and retail spaces by promoting them on our channels.
- Our goal will be to continue advocating on behalf of our members with Metrolinx for the Exhibition station, any construction projects, and streetscape improvements.
- The board and staff will also be working with the FIFA WC Toronto Secretariat Department and city departments to plan various projects that would help us in branding the Liberty Village Cup.
- Additionally, we will be actively seeking sponsors for our 2024 Event programming and are hoping that we can secure at least \$50,000 in sponsorships.

**MOTION: "To approve the 2024 Budget as presented"**

**FIRST:** Charles Arbez, BIA Chair | Hullmark Developments LTD.

**SECONDER:** Sandy Weir, BIA Vice-Chair | Smooth Wax Bar

**ANYONE OPPOSED:** NO

## 11. Discussion

- **John Kiru:** Thanked all the current Board Members. He shared that the FedDev announced a \$18M continuation of the recovery grant that they give to the City of Toronto Economic Development; so the MIF grants etc. will again be available for the BIA to apply for.
- He also shared that TABIA has been able to successfully advocate with the City Council for a continuation of the small business tax class provision that provides a 15% reduction to the property tax bills for commercial properties (29,000 plus properties across the City). Of the 102 properties that make up Liberty Village BIA, 42 properties are going to be the beneficiaries of this reduction. TABIA is actively trying to work with the City of Toronto Finance Department to expand the definition to capture more of the smaller businesses that are deserving of this initiative. Lastly, he also shared that TABIA has just secured an agreement with MPAC where they will provide us with all the BIA information from roll numbers to ownership, data, etc. This will be the foundational data that TABIA will build other layers of analytics on top of (demography, mobility, etc.).
- **Charles Arbez:** Thanked everyone for joining the meeting and also thanked the team for all the hard work and efforts.

## 12. Adjournment

**MOTION: "To adjourn the 2023 AGM Meeting"**

**FIRST:** Chris Fraser | Moveable Inc.

**SECONDER:** Sandy Weir, BIA Vice-Chair | Smooth Wax Bar