

## Midnight Madness is schedule for Aug. 21

By Bill Rea

It's going to be much the same format this year when the Bolton Business Improvement Area (BIA) puts on its annual Midnight Madness festivities.

The Madness this year is set for Aug. 21, with the following Friday (Aug. 28) being named as the rain date.

The BIA's Board of Management Monday voted to go ahead with the annual festival, although there was an effort to cut back on the expenditure.

Board Vice-Chair Tony Viola put forth a motion to put a \$10,000 ceiling on spending for the event. The Board opted to keep the \$20,000 that had been budgetted for.

There is still lots of enthusiasm for the event.

"It's one of my favourite things to do on this Board," commented Director Luci Verdile.

Viola had suggested setting up a committee to look at the costs.

Councillor Rob Mezzapelli wondered if such an event had ever been done for less than \$10,000. Viola said it had been for years, but Director (and former BIA's Chair) Jimmy Pountney said it's been done for the last eight years for a little less than \$20,000. Councillor Annette Groves agreed it would be hard to put on something like that for just \$10,000. She added the Town has community grants available for such things, but it would be too late to seek one for this year.

"Ten thousand bucks goes a long way," Viola maintained, adding people will come to the event to have a good time. "What else do we need?"

He also wondered if it's necessary to have attractions for children, commenting the Madness is held for merchants. "It's not for the kids," he said.

Groves suggested the organizing committee that will be setting up the Madness look at how they could keep costs down, rather than having to work with a \$10,000 ceiling. Chair Jean Carberry observed there is \$20,000 set aside in the BIA's budget, adding it's not necessary to spend it all. Verdile added \$20,000 is always budgetted, but the Madness usually comes in around \$18,000.

Viola commented there were seven bands at the Madness last year, adding they didn't need that many.

"We have a lot of talent in Bolton; local talent," he said.

Pountney later said he's been trying to follow a pattern that creates a Madness event that is successful and that the community looks forward to.

"I know it can't be done properly for less than it's been done over the last eight years," he remarked. "It's what the community wanted, and still wants today."

"It can't be done for less," he added, commenting they aren't trying to spend excessive amounts. "The costs are the costs."

But Viola was maintaining they can still put on a fun event with less money. He said he chaired the BIA for eight years, and he's convinced they can do it with a couple of good bands, with young local talent filling in time on the stage for very little money.

He also said a lot of people don't realize it's the BIA that puts on the Madness, financing the effort from additional taxes they pay as part of the Business Improvement Area.

"Just because there's \$20,000 in the budget for Midnight Madness doesn't mean we have to spend it all," he declared, adding he's sure it could be done for less.