

## **Downtown Stratford BIA**

Board of Directors Meeting July 22, 2025

6:15 P.M. 47 Downie Street, Stratford, ON

### **MINUTES**

Board in Attendance: Melissa Orr, Jennifer Birmingham, Carly Douglas, Carl Gross, Ryan O'Donnell, Councillor Burbach

1. Call to Order – Meeting Chair

2. Land Acknowledgement

3. Respectful Conduct Statement

4. Adopt Agenda for July 22, 2025 Meeting

MOTION: That the July 22, 2025 agenda be adopted as presented moved by Jennifer Birmingham, seconded by Councillor Burbach. Carried.

5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof:

The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act requires any member of a Committee of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of a Committee of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of a Committee of Council and otherwise comply with the Act.

Name

Item

Nature

None declared July 22, 2025.

6. Adopt Public Minutes of June 24, 2025, Meeting

MOTION: That the public minutes of June 24, 2025, be adopted, moved by Ryan O'Donnell, seconded by Megan Chisholm. Carried.

7. Treasurer Report

Revenue 48% - Expenses 32%

Ellams mural has been getting a lot of positive attention.

The General Manager got three quotes for insurance due to the increases over the years. A new vendor was decided for a savings of \$1,068 in total. This should be reviewed every three to five years.

The budget lines cannot be changed as they are approved by Council, however, internally we can make sure that the Board is aware of expenditures that put a line over budget to get the surplus for the year closer to \$0. The Marketing Sub-Committee would like to run a Ten Bucks Back program later in 2025 at a cost of \$12,500.

Motion: That D261 Promotion be overspent by \$12,500 to run a second Ten Bucks Back program in 2025 moved by Jennifer Birmingham, seconded by Ryan O'Donnell. Carried.

8. Council Update

The Grand Trunk preferred option for Council is to keep part of the structure to work with.

The BIA Boundary Review is tied to the Official Plan Review. It cannot happen separately.

New CAO is Andre Morin, former Director of Corporate Services in Stratford. Adam Betteridge is back to the Director of Planning position and working on the Official Plan Review.

## 9. Sub-Committee and Working Group Update

### Advocacy and Education

Working on NDTR film screening on September 30 and Orange Shirts for BIA members.

Investigating bringing more Chinese culture to the annual dragon boat festival that ties into the new documentary being shown at City Hall in early September, plus the boat in Market Square as of August 1.

Also looking at a Japanese culture connection with Forgiveness at the Festival. Collaboration with the Festival should be explored.

Planning a Show & Tell November 3 to present what's new for the holiday season & winter.

### Beautification

<Beautification Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday July 10>

The blocks are being repaired due to damage from the police station construction, plus the new block.

Bike racks – Working with ATAC with police services paying for one. Racks near Livery disappeared over the winter.

Working on bench art options with sponsored art.

Have picked the next art mural location and are reviewing budget and building options.

Working on selfie spot structures around the downtown. Interchangeable parts for different events/seasons would make it more versatile.

### Marketing

<Marketing Sub-Committee Minutes Wednesday July 9>

Social videos are doing well. Next step is to work on making them into blog posts.

Working with the Chamber on corporate gifts and Downtown Dollar sales.

Extra Ten Bucks Back campaign running the first two weeks of October and spent by December 24, 2025. A request to rethink the end date was brought forward.

Banners on light posts – this is being spoken about again. They are expensive and there are times that they are reserved for other purposes.

Wanderland – Live music, DJ, York Street activation. Revisiting the horse and carriage route.

Working with the Festival on upcoming promotion relating to the newsletter.

Sidewalk Sale was very busy. A survey will be sent out to the members. The less-traveled streets were not as busy. Receipts for a chance to win Downtown Dollars went well.

## 10. Governance Review

Nothing to report.

## 11. Alternative Funding Working Group

Nothing to report.

## 12. General Manager Report

<General Managers Report to the Board of Directors July 15, 2025>

WhatsApp is being used to send one-way communication to members that sign up.

Car Free Friday was well attended. All held in June "bike month" this year.

Downtown Dollars June POS sales were down \$3,000 over June 2024. Working on corporate order increases.

Job section of Web site is live. The site has been running well.

Coffee Club at The Boathouse was a success. Next is July 31 at Benessere.

### 13. New Business

New large "Stratford chair" is being built to go beside the Veterans Drive bandshell, in cooperation with the Rotary Club of Stratford.

\*Carly Douglas has left.

Suggestion to hold a downtown job fair next spring. Referred to the A&E Sub-Committee. It was brought forward that something like the Show & Tell event may be helpful. This could be a good way to get the Web site job board promoted. Could something be done in the schools to teach them about what businesses are looking for and what is available? Civics & Careers is a compulsory grade ten course. Could the BIA tap into the Conestoga College students? Could a partnership with Partners in Employment be possible?

### 14. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:24 P.M. moved by Megan Chisholm.