

Downtown Stratford BIA

Board of Directors Meeting January 27, 2026

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

MINUTES

Board in Attendance: Melissa Orr, Shawn Malvern, Carly Douglas, Carl Gross, Councillor Burbach; Stephanie Theodoropolous, Jennifer Birmingham via Zoom

Staff present: Jamie Pritchard

1. Call to Order – Meeting Chair

2. Land Acknowledgement

3. Respectful Conduct Statement

4. Adopt Agenda for January 27, 2026 Meeting

MOTION: That the January 27, 2026 agenda be adopted as amended moved by Councillor Burbach, seconded by Carly Douglas. 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 January 27, 2026.

6. Adopt Public Minutes of November 25, 2025, Meeting

MOTION: That the public minutes of November 25, 2025, be adopted as presented, moved by Carly Douglas, seconded by Stephanie Theodoropolous. Carried.

7. Executive Committee Elections

Recording Secretary declares Nominations Open for Chair.

Recording Secretary asks for Nominations.

Melissa Orr nominates Stephanie Theodoropolous for the Chair position.

Recording Secretary asks for any further nominations.

Recording Secretary asks for motion to close nominations for Chair. Shawn Malvern closes nominations for Chair, seconded by Carly.

Recording Secretary asks Stephanie Theodoropolous if they wish the Nomination to Stand. Agree.

Recording Secretary asks for all those in support of Stephanie Theodoropolous as Chair to raise their hand. Stephanie Theodoropolous is declared Chair for the current year.

Newly elected Chair declares Nominations Open for Vice-Chair.

Newly elected Chair asks for Nominations.

Shawn Malvern nominates Melissa Orr for the Vice-Chair position.

Newly elected Chair asks for any further nominations.

Newly elected Chair asks for motion to close nominations for Vice-Chair. Councillor Burbach closes nominations for Chair, seconded by Carly Douglas.

Newly elected Chair asks Melissa Orr if they wish the Nomination to Stand. Agree.

Newly elected Chair asks for all those in support of Melissa Orr as Vice-Chair to raise their hand. Melissa Orr is declared as Vice-Chair for the current year.

Newly elected Vice-Chair declares Nominations Open for Secretary.

Newly elected Vice-Chair asks for Nominations.

Jennifer Birmingham nominates Megan Chisholm for the Secretary position.

Newly elected Chair asks for any further nominations.

Newly elected Chair asks for motion to close nominations for Secretary. Stephanie

Theodoropolous closes nominations for Secretary, seconded by Melissa Orr.

Megan Chisholm agreed via electronic communication that they wish their Nomination to Stand.

Newly elected Chair asks for all those in support of Megan Chisholm as Secretary to raise their hand. Megan Chisholm is declared as Secretary for the current year.

Newly elected Vice-Chair declares Nominations Open for Treasurer.

Newly elected Vice-Chair asks for Nominations.

Stephanie Theodoropolous nominates Jennifer Birmingham for the Treasurer position.

Newly elected Vice-Chair asks for any further nominations.

Newly elected Vice-Chair asks for motion to close nominations for Treasurer. Carly Douglas closes nominations for Treasurer, seconded by Councillor Burbach.

Newly elected Vice-Chair asks Jennifer Birmingham if they wish their Nomination to Stand. Agree.

Newly elected Vice-Chair asks for all those in support of Jennifer Birmingham as Treasurer to raise their hand. Jennifer Birmingham is declared as Treasurer for the current year.

8. Annual General Meeting

The BIA needs to provide their budget to the BIA members prior to sending the budget to Council. It was preferred that the BIA does not hold two Annual General Meetings, but to move the meeting with the members to the fall. The Board would set their budget in August, and the member mailing would be sent out in September. The final Board approval would remain at the November Board meeting and to the City by December 1st.

MOTION: That the BIA move the Annual General Meeting to October to comply with the Municipal Act moved by Shawn Malvern, seconded by Carly Douglas. Carried.

9. Treasurer Report

- Alternate Funding Working Group – no update.

Winter Wonderland expenses are paid. The BIA 2026 budget was approved by Council.

Counterfeit Downtown Dollars used at a BIA business on January 24, 2026, at a value of \$90. There was no update available from police services today. Further action for the Downtown Dollar program is being explored.

MOTION: That the BIA reimburse the BIA business for the \$90 that was lost, moved by Stephanie Theodoropolous, seconded by Carly Douglas. Carried.

The General Manager will investigate the digital dollar options again and report back.

10. Council Update

Council approved 5 monthly overnight and 10 daily overnight parking passes for the Erie Street parking lot.

Snow removal has been challenging. Weighing out new equipment for the change in the level of service and if it is worth it.

Bowl Bar property will be separate condo units behind the restaurant. Owned by BMI Group. Police Services moving out of downtown – the BIA would prefer that a station stays downtown as that keeps police presence moving through downtown by car and by bike.

11. Sub-Committee and Working Group Update

Advocacy and Education

<BIA Advocacy and Education Minutes Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 10:00 am | Zoom>
Job Fair survey was sent out with 8 responses to-date to participate in a March event.

Marketing

<Marketing Sub-Committee Minutes Wednesday January 14, 9:00AM>
<Q1 2026 Marketing Strategy & Q4 Review January – March Fresh By Selena>
<'Awesome April' Meeting Minutes | Jan 20 2025>

Website visitors increased 33% in 2025. Less money was spent on Website promotion.

Awesome April Working Group

Doors Open and Nashville Takeover in April. The group is working on promotion and member involvement for a strong month.

Beautification

<Beautification Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday Jan 8, 9:30 AM – Via Zoom>

Four working groups, including a new Sub-Committee member.

Working on the Ontario Street mural.

Exploring the sprinklers in Market Square and if those could work again and cost.

12. Governance Review

The BIA is waiting for the Clerk's Office to review the governance documents that were submitted a year ago.

The City is still waiting on the revised Official Plan to move forward with boundary changes.

13. General Manager Report

<General Managers Report to the Board of Directors January 20, 2025>

Reported on during other places in the agenda.

14. New Business

A business downtown requested that they be allowed to stucco the painted brick on the back of their building. The Heritage Stratford Committee refused the request. The request was appealed and brought Council. Council said no as the reported deteriorating brick appears to be in good condition and should be stripped and repointed.

*Carly Douglas has now left. Quorum is intact.

The recommendation from a Councillor to resurrect the façade loan program from the City.

15. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the Board meeting at 7:50 P.M. moved by Stephanie Theodoropolous.