

MEETING MINUTES
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WEDNESDAY MAY 14, 2025 8:30AM ROOM 304 CITY HALL / ZOOM

Attendance:

Chair - Grayden Laing	Y
Vice Chair-Renee Carpenter	Y
Past Chair-Earl Taylor	Y
Treasurer-Tina Swaenepoel	Y
Promotions Chair-Dave Thomson	Y

Reza Alavie	N
Jennifer Childs	N
Suzanne Faris	N
Ian Gillespie	Y
Duane Orth	Y
Mayor Preston	N
Russell Schnurr	N
Sarah Van Pelt	Y

Advisors:

Emily Mason	N
Sean Dyke	N
Paul Jenkins	Y
Jessica Pietens	N
Sarah Noble	N

Megan Pickersgill	N
Aaron Devries	Y
Cody Montgomery	Y
Tara McCaulley	N

Staff:

Sarah Lynch	Y
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- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:34 am meeting Quorum.

Mission: To cultivate a community of all Downtown property and business owners and residents, while advocating, beautifying and actively promoting our businesses and authentic heritage in Downtown St Thomas.

Vision: To engage, inspire and welcome our community and visitors to experience Downtown St Thomas as a unique destination.

- 2. Declaration of Conflict:**

No Declarations were presented.

- 3. Confirmation of Agenda**

Motion by Tina Swaenepoel. Seconded by Renee Carpenter. "To confirm the May 14, 2025 Agenda as distributed." Carried.

- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**

Motion by Duane Orth. Seconded by Ian Gillespie. "To confirm the April 9, 2025 Minutes as distributed." Carried.

Note: Meeting Minutes can be found at www.downtownstthomas.ca/monthly-minutes

5. Deputations

None

6. Chair Report - Grayden

Business Updates – New/relocated/lost

-The Craft Hive left at the end of April.

-infuZed tZ will be closing storefront location

-Rituals is now open at 550 Talbot St. (Where Jazz the Brow Boss used to be)

Social Media Updates

Facebook engagement has seen a decline this month, which is typical for this time of year. Instagram activity has increased significantly, with a 397% uptick in reach.

Additional content is pending as we await more downtown imagery from Grayden.

Shawn D. has begun contributing to posts.

7. Finance Report – Tina

Tina reviewed the report with board.

Sarah will speak with treasury regarding account for cameras.

Downtown Dollars Tracking

Sarah reported that \$585 DDB\$ were redeemed in April. A total of \$600 DDB\$ were sold in April with a total of \$3,700 sold YTD. Sarah made 6 DDB\$ pick-ups in April.

8. Reports

8.1 Parks Dept Update – Cody

Operations are ramping up for the busy season. Temporary staff are currently in place, and recruitment is underway for a temporary downtown head gardener. The invasive species inspector has started and is focusing efforts along Talbot Street. Hanging baskets have been planted and are currently in the greenhouse, with installation planned for June 10th or 11th.

8.2 Promotions Report

Radio – Dave

Downtown Dollars campaign – reminders to spend will continue to go out. Upcoming promotions include two scripted commercials for Nostalgia Nights sponsors, followed by a second event reminder.

Dave proposed including business member names in future radio ads. He will create a rotating script format featuring four businesses at a time (up to 60 businesses per year), based on first-come, first-served. These mentions will be part of the DDB's existing radio advertising budget.

Sarah will send out an email/newsletter and social media posts after Nostalgia Nights to promote the opportunity and allow Dave time to prepare sample scripts.
DDB summer students will assist by distributing information to Downtown businesses.

Yurek Pickleball Tournament– Reza

Yurek's is excited to organize this fun, community-centered event aimed at raising both awareness and critical funds to support The INN. They would love your help in getting the word out. Whether it's a quick post on your social media, an email to your family and friends, or your own participation, any support would go a long way.

Saturday, May 31st 9am-2pm at The Courthouse Pickleball. Tickets are \$50 each, includes play, pizza lunch and soft drink. For more information visit yurekpharmacy.com/ticketpickleball. 100% of the proceeds go to support The Inn.

Website update – Sarah Van Pelt

Very close to going live. Redding is currently making adjustments to 6-7 items and then can go live.

8.3 Beautification Report

New signs – Sarah

Rituals new sign. Cura will be installed shortly by building owners. Van Pelts will remove infuZed tZ and Craft Hive during next installation.

8.4 Council Update - Mayor Preston

Earl: Communications Department will work on process regarding the City Flag

8.5 Municipal Heritage Committee Update - Russell

There have been some changes to the Indwell building proposed on the former Balaclava school site to better fit with the heritage building.

8.6 CIP Program – Russell

No Report.

8.7 Railway City Tourism Report – Megan

No Report.

8.8 Economic Development Report – Sean

No Report

8.9 SBEC – Emily

No Report

8.10 Chamber of Commerce Report – Paul

- The next Business After 5 will take place Wednesday May 21, 2025 @ CASO by Reith & Associates.
- Paul and Maria visited Queens Park yesterday for advocacy. Social issues a discussion for the safety and vibrancy of downtowns. Canadian Chamber advocating for stricter repercussions for vandalism etc.
- 2 new summer students
- Mini golf, Thursday May 15, 2025 5pm-7pm at Putting Zoo.
- Looking to schedule MP/MPP lunch sometime over summer.
- Family picnic in August.
- The Chamber is looking for 12 sponsors of \$1000/each to support the YEI. Opportunity to speak once a year to promote organization, recognition on banner etc.

Visit www.stthomaschamber.on.ca for full details.

9. Old Business

9.1 Summer Students:

Sarah reported that she conducted 5 interviews for the 2 positions and 2 students were offered the position. Both will begin the last week of June for 8 weeks.

9.2 DDB\$ Tracking System:

A new tracking system has been implemented to improve accuracy and reduce errors. During the transition, some missing data was identified. Support was provided to assist with reconciliation, and relevant documentation was forwarded to Treasury to address discrepancies.

9.3 Storage Bin Update:

Several volunteers assisted with relocating items from the South Edgeware storage unit to the new location at the Horton Farmers' Market on April 26. Outdated materials were sorted and disposed of. Special thanks to Jennings and Van Pelts for providing trucks to support the move.

9.4 Banner Installation:

Downtown Banners, including the new "Shop Local" and "Canadian Flags" were installed on April 27th.

9.5 Scotiabank account update:

Looking into switching the TD account to Scotiabank to reduce fees. Grayden will review potential transfer costs, with plans to finalize by next month.

10. New Business

10.1 YEI and Horton Farmers' Market sponsorship:

Horton Farmers' Market: Requested \$2,500 (regular sponsorship is \$5,000). With savings from storage and waived rental fees, the board supported this as a strong downtown partnership. Executive will explore branded swag for giveaways.

Motion: Renee Carpenter. Seconded by Sarah Van Pelt ,to sponsor Horton Farmers' Market for \$2,500. Carried

YEI (Youth Entrepreneurs Initiative): Requested \$1,000. Board supported with encouragement to host at least one downtown event and provide volunteer support at future events.

Motion: Tina Swaenepoel. Seconded by Ian Gillespie to sponsor YEI for \$1,000. Carried

10.2 Scrimgeour & Company – Audited report presentation on June 11, 2025 meeting.

11. Coming Event

- Mini Golf at the Putting Zoo Thursday 5pm-7pm
- Chamber of Commerce Business After 5 – Wed. May 21st, 5-7pm @ CASO
- Youth Market Thursday May 29 @ CASO 5pm-7pm

12. Adjournment

Motion by Sarah Van Pelt. Seconded by Earl Taylor. "To adjourn meeting at 9:39am". Carried.

Next Meeting: Wednesday June 11, 2025 at 8:30am in room 304.