

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD**  
**WEDNESDAY JULY 9, 2025 8:30AM ROOM 304 CITY HALL / ZOOM**

**Attendance:**

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

Reza Alavie	Y
Jennifer Childs	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	N
Cody Montgomery	Y
Tara McCaulley	Y

**Staff:**

Sarah Lynch	Y
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**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:34am 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 Duane Orth. Seconded by Earl Taylor. "To confirm the July 9, 2025 Agenda as distributed." Carried.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

Motion by Tina Swaenepoel. Seconded by Ian Gillespie. "To confirm the June 11, 2025 Minutes as distributed." Carried.

Note: Meeting Minutes can be found at [www.downtownstthomas.ca/monthly-minutes](http://www.downtownstthomas.ca/monthly-minutes)

**5. Deputations**

No Deputations were presented.

**6. Chair Report - Grayden**

Business Updates – New/relocated/lost



- New: Jade Lemonade Thrift was planning to open in the next few weeks but due to fire, is looking for a new space.
- Lost: Titewads has closed  
Sewatohkwat Cannabis

#### Social Media Updates

200,000 views over past 28 days, in large part due to Nostalgia Nights marketing, thanks to Sarah Noble.

### **7. Finance Report**

The financial report was presented and reviewed by the board.

#### Downtown Dollars Tracking

Sarah reported that \$730 in DDB\$ were redeemed in June and \$3,150 so far in July. She completed 9 DDB\$ pickups.

To date in 2025, \$4,975 DDB\$ have been issued — \$650 donated and \$4,325 sold. Of this, \$1,090 has been redeemed, with \$3,885 outstanding.

Since 2018, \$293,240 DDB\$ have been issued, with \$252,520 redeemed and \$40,720 still outstanding.

### **8. Reports**

#### **8.1 Parks Dept Update – Cody**

Providing support for Nostalgia Nights this coming weekend. Some of the hanging baskets have wilted as a result of the fire that occurred. Cody will ask gardener from last year about 4<sup>th</sup> large flowerpot location with hopes to move a couple of planters to Holy Angels area. Will also investigate maintaining shrubs around Downtown signs at East and West ends of Talbot to make more visible.

#### **8.2 Promotions Report**

Radio – Dave – No report

Downtown Vibe – Latest issue of Downtown Vibe has been printed and distributed. Canada post has distributed this edition of the Vibe. Reza will send Sarah L. a new link to the Vibe online (ISSUU).

#### Website update – Sarah Van Pelt

Some updates are required, and Redding will need to be contacted again. Tara suggested the potential to update the strategic plan and noted that funding may be available through the former RED (Rural Economic Development) program. She will forward a presentation she recently viewed for the board's review.

#### **8.3 Beautification Report**

##### New signs – Sarah

Yurek Pharmacy has requested a sign. Sarah V will create.

#### **8.4 Council Update - Mayor Preston**

No Report.

#### **8.5 Municipal Heritage Committee Update - Russell**

No Report.



## **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 – Jessica**

Recently met with Hailey MacMillan who is opening Jade Lemonde Thrift downtown beside the St. Thomas Transit building but due to fire, is looking for a new space. Starter Co. will be hosting our fourth workshop this month with Jason from Nice Robot AI who is going to go through how business owners can utilize ChatGPT in their business'. Summer Co.- we had our full-day training session in June, providing students with foundational knowledge in business planning, marketing, and budgeting. This year's students are operating a range of exciting businesses, from car detailing to alternative fashion to gluten-free baking mixes. Several students will be participating as vendors at Nostalgia Nights in Downtown St. Thomas, giving them valuable real-world experience in sales and community engagement.

## **8.10 Chamber of Commerce Report – Paul**

-Participating at Nostalgia Nights hosting Chill and Cheers Station in Hepburn parkette

-The next Business After 5 will take place Wednesday July 9, 2025 @ Home Hardware

-Chamber Family Picnic July 27, 2025 at Fanshawe College.

-MP & MPP Luncheon July 28, 2025. At ECRM – with catering by Ruby Blues, submit questions ahead of time to Paul or Christy.

Visit [www.stthomaschamber.on.ca](http://www.stthomaschamber.on.ca) for full details.

## **9. Old Business**

### **10. New Business**

10.1 Bridges To Better Business Downtown - Reminder to vote for Bridges To Better Business Downtown nominations.

10.2 Impact of recent downtown fire - The board discussed concerns regarding the future of the affected lot. Grayden will draft a letter to Council regarding the approach. Suggestions included adding a wall and mural and addressing similar spaces near Grace Café and Grand Central. Paul shared examples from other communities, and Grayden requested ideas to support impacted businesses, including potential future opportunities.

### **11. Coming Event**

-Chamber of Commerce Business After 5 – Wednesday July 9, 2025 @ Home Hardware

-Nostalgia Nights – July 12, 2025 4pm-9pm

### **12. Adjournment**

Motion by Sarah Van Pelt. Seconded by Tara McCaulley. "To adjourn meeting at 9:12 am". Carried.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday September 10, 2025 at 8:30am in room 304.**