

MEETING MINUTES
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8, 2025 8:30AM ROOM 304 CITY HALL

Attendance:

Chair - Grayden Laing	Y
Vice Chair-Renee Carpenter	Y
Past Chair-Earl Taylor	Y
Treasurer-Tina Swaenepoel	Y
Promotions Chair-Dave Thomson	N
Reza Alavie	N
Jennifer Childs	N
Ian Gillespie	Y
Duane Orth	Y
Mayor Preston	Y
Russell Schnurr	N
Sarah Van Pelt	N

Advisors:

Emily Mason	N
Sean Dyke	N
Paul Jenkins	N
Jessica Pietens	N
Sarah Noble	N
Megan Pickersgill	N
Aaron Devries	N
Tara McCaulley	Y
Todd Sawyer	N
Cody Montgomery	N

Staff:

Sarah Lynch	Y
-------------	---

- 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 Tara McCaulley. Seconded by Mayor Joe Preston. "To confirm the October 8, 2025 Agenda as distributed." Carried.

- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**

Motion by Duane Orth. Seconded by Tina Swaenepoel. "To confirm the September 10, 2025 Minutes as distributed." Carried.

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

- 5. Deputations**

No Deputations were presented.

- 6. Chair Report - Grayden**

Business Updates – New/relocated/lost

- New: Gamut Hair Studio 368 Talbot St., Jade Lemonade Thrift 385 Talbot St.

-Lost: Pup Scrubs left but new grooming business will open in same space in November.

Social Media Updates

- Normal numbers. No significant changes.

7. Finance Report

The financial report was presented and reviewed by the board.

Downtown Dollars Tracking

Sarah reported that \$1,570 in DDB\$ were redeemed in September.

To date in 2025, \$6,200 DDB\$ have been issued — \$1,150 donated and \$5050 sold. Of this, \$1,495 has been redeemed, with \$4,705 outstanding.

Since 2018, \$294,465 DDB\$ have been issued, with \$255,080 redeemed and \$39,385 still outstanding.

8. Reports

8.1 Parks Dept Update – Todd

No Report.

8.2 Promotions Report

Radio – Dave

Pumpkin Prowl spot starting Thursday and working on all new Christmas spots to follow.

Downtown Vibe - Reza

No report

8.3 Beautification Report & Event Update

New signs – Sarah

Royal LePage has requested a sign.

Flowerpots

Moonlight Painters has been watering flowers, since last meeting.

Banners

Van Pelts have once again generously donated the use of their van for banner removal. Moonlight Painters has been tentatively scheduled for the removal of the banners Sunday October 26th with a rain date the following Sunday, November 2. Tina, Dennis, Grayden and Sarah assist with removal. Councillor Earl Taylor suggested we consider reintroducing banners that honour fallen soldiers. McBain's will have graphics from previous years the DDB had these banners installed. The Armories may still have the old banners in storage.

Oktoberfest Recap:

Downtown Oktoberfest was a major success, drawing strong attendance throughout the day and evening. Highlights included the live performances by *Weiss Blau*, Witchazel and Reckless, the Police vs. Fire challenge was a huge hit with attendees as was the 3 on 3 road hockey, kids' crafts, and other activations. The free train rides and beer garden were also very popular. Feedback from both attendees and vendors has been overwhelmingly positive, with many noting the lively atmosphere and smooth organization. Opportunities for next year include expanding community activations, enhancing volunteer coordination, and introducing an *Oktoberfest Ambassador* role to boost engagement and promotion.

Pumpkin Prowl Update

Planning is underway for *Pumpkin Prowl* on **October 24th from 5–7 PM**. Downtown streets will be closed for safety, and participating businesses will hand out candy to trick-or-treaters. The City will once

again be set up in front of City Hall with staff and council volunteers. The event passport is being finalized, and we're looking to add a few new family-friendly activities to make the evening even more engaging. Fire would like to host a small "haunted hallway" on the 1st level of City Hall, pending approval. Mayor agreed this would be a great addition. Sarah will connect with REACT Inc.

Light Up Talbot Update

Preparations have begun for *Light Up Talbot* on November 14th. The program will feature local choirs, a possible nativity scene at Holy Angels, Fire Show with animation characters walking throughout the footprint, and the official tree lighting. We're encouraging local businesses to participate through window displays and extended shopping hours. Discussions are underway with partners to enhance lighting and community involvement throughout the event.

8.4 Council Update - Mayor Preston

Orange Shirt Day – The street was closed for safety and there was a full turnout. Library still under construction. Talbot and Burwell intersection, continuing to move forward.

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

New business will be moving into the RubyBlues space.

8.10 Chamber of Commerce Report – Paul

The next Business After 5 will take place Wednesday October 22, 2025 @ St. Anne's Centre
Visit www.stthomaschamber.on.ca for full details.

8.11 EBRC Report - Tara

- EBRC building has sold, new owner will be accommodating the other renters.

-Application for The Pitch is open, almost \$50,000 in prizes, of that, \$23,000 is cash. For new and expanding businesses and open to For Profit as well as Not for Profit. November 3rd is the application closing date, February 4th is the date of the event.

9. Old Business

9.1 Snowflake Repair Update

-11 repaired (labeled with green tape for the ones that are in working order and blue for the ones that do not work). There are currently 43 that are operational.

9.2 Banner Removal Volunteers

-Tina, Dennis, Grayden and Sarah

10. New Business

11. Coming Event

- Chamber of Commerce Jumbo Business After 5 – Wed. October 22 @ St. Anne’s Centre 40 Morrison Drive 4pm-7pm
- Pumpkin Prowl – Friday October 24, 2025 5:00pm-7:00pm
- Light Up Talbot – Friday November 14, 2025 5:00pm-9:00pm
- Horton Christmas Market – Saturday November 15, 2025 10:00am-4:00pm
- Optimist Santa Claus Parade – Saturday November 22, 2025 6:00pm

12. Adjournment

Motion by Tina Swaenepoel. Seconded by Mayor Joe Preston. “To adjourn meeting at 9:18 am”. Carried.

Next Meeting: Wednesday November 12, 2025 at 8:30am at St. Thomas Police Services 45 Caso Xing