

**MEETING MINUTES
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WEDNESDAY APRIL 8, 2020 at 11:00 am
By ZOOM**

Attendance:

Chair - Earl Taylor	Y	Advisors:	
Vice Chair - Dave Thomson	Y	Sean Dyke	N
Treasurer - Sarah Van Pelt	N	Tara McCaulley	Y
Beautification Chair - Grayden Laing	Y	Adrienne Jefferson	Y
Promotions Chair - Susan Boldt	Y	Megan Pickersgill	N
Secretary - Jazz Staddon	N	Barry Fitzgerald	Y
Reza Alavie	Y	Annette S'barra	Y
Russ Schnurr	N		
Mayor Joe Preston	N		

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:03am

2. Radio Advertising:

Dave presented a new radio script to replace the jingle.

During these unprecedented times, The St Thomas Downtown Development Board would like to remind you that we must still support our local downtown small businesses. Yes, stores may be closed but you can still support these businesses by shopping online or calling their store. Whether it's for clothing, shoes, pet supplies or food, many downtown businesses are offering delivery, with no contact. Let's all try our best to support our downtown St. Thomas Businesses.

This message brought to you by the St Thomas Downtown Development Board

3. Video's

Looking for new ways to get the word out, it was suggested that we use videos of Downtown businesses to post into social media channels. Grayden will work at producing a 1 - 2 minute ZOOM type interview with as many Downtown business owners as possible. These video will explain how, even though closed, they are "Open for Business" via call-in orders with curbside or delivery etc.

4. Home Show

This event has been postponed to an unknown date. The STEHBA had suggested producing a virtual home show but Earl advised them that this would not work for us. Earl suggested they refund our money, less expenses incurred to date. We are awaiting a decision.

5. Beerlesque

This event has been postponed to August 29th, however should it be cancelled we will ask for a refund of the \$1,000 sponsorship less expenses incurred to date.

6. Nostalgia Nights

Earl reported that, in discussions with Rob Burns, this event has been cancelled.

7. Summer Students

Earl reported that funding has not been confirmed yet. Note: After the meeting, the CSJ Program reported that they would fund to 100% and extend that funding to the winter. We await further details.

8. Banners

Earl reported that the banner installation has been planned for Sunday May 3rd or 10th however it's unknown whether we'll be able to a) obtain a road occupancy permit or b) whether we'll be permitted to install.

9. Security

Earl reported that the STPS have opened a new office at the L&PS Station to increase security in our Downtown. A number of issues have happened. We suggest that owners must continue to check their stores and if possible install security cameras.

During a Rogers TV interview, Earl reported that he emphasized this idea.

Also, the City has installed portable washrooms and Sharps containers at Hepburn Parkette, 230 Talbot Street and the L&PS station

10. New Business

- a) Tara presented a new program being organized through EDC and SBEC which would develop a fund to assist businesses to implement an online Shopify type website and then promote that through social media etc channels. SBEC also offers a number of training programs available to Business owners. Earl suggested that we should consider allocating funds to this program since we will not be hosting a few events such as the Nostalgia Nights Car Show etc.
- b) Adrienne reported that the planter flowers are being grown and the baskets will be planted the 1st week of May. Whether we can get them installed is unknown.
- c) The Horton Market Banner is scheduled for installation by Entegrus on May 4th but it's unknown if the Market will be opening at that time.
- d) Earl reported that the Facebook post about Foodland being the only Downtown grocery store offering food delivery obtained a 4000 reach.
- e) Annette continues to update the website to list Essential businesses that are open, Non-Essential businesses that are offering call-in / social media ordering and product delivery services and Restaurants that are offering delivery services. Also, a number of Newsletters are being distributed to report on financial assistance programs that are available.
- f) Grayden has produced a similar list on Establish Media
- g) SBEC is providing information on financial assistance programs being offered to local businesses.
- h) Previous thoughts about offering a 2 for 1 Downtown Dollar Program once this crisis ends could be examined.
- i) Tara reported that the Elgin Business Resource Centre offers a zero interest loans.

Next Meeting

Suggesting another ZOOM Meeting on Wednesday April 15th at 11am.