

**MEETING MINUTES
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 3, 2021 8:30am VIA ZOOM**

Attendance:

Chair - Earl Taylor	Y	Advisors:	
Vice Chair - Dave Thomson	N	Sean Dyke	Y left 8:55am
Treasurer - Sarah Van Pelt	N	Tara McCaulley	Y
Beautification Chair - Grayden Laing	Y	Adrienne Jefferson	Y
Promotions Chair - Susan Boldt	N	Megan Pickersgill	N
Secretary - Jazz Staddon	N	Paul Jenkins	Y
Reza Alavie	Y	Duane Orth	Y
Russ Schnurr	Y		
Ian Gillespie	Y	Annette S'barra	Y
Mayor Joe Preston	Y		

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:31 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 new Declarations presented

- 3. Confirmation of Agenda**

Motion by Russell, Seconded by Grayden, "To confirm the February 3, 2021 Agenda as distributed." Carried

- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**

Motion by Grayden, Seconded by Russell "To confirm the minutes of the January 6, 2021 meeting as distributed" Carried

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

- 5. Deputations**

None

- 6. Chair Report**

Social Media

Earl reported that our Twitter account @stthomasddb now has 507 Followers (was 506 last month), our DDB Facebook page www.FB/downtownstthomas has 1949 Likes (was 1926 last month) and our Instagram/stthomasDDB page has 1093 Followers (Was 1053 last month).

Crime Prevention / CCTV Cameras

Earl reported that the 3 cameras are fully functional now and that according to Chief Herridge, one incident captured by the cameras is helping with an ongoing investigation.

Earl also reported that he will be attending a meeting of the Crime Prevention Committee which is planned for February 9th to discuss the many reports of people sleeping in the bank vestibules and other Downtown issues.

AGM

Earl reported that the 2020 AGM was held as a virtual Zoom meeting event on Wednesday January 20th at 8:30am with 33 Business and property owners in attendance. The 2021 Budget as presented was passed.

COVID-19 Update

Earl reported that the Ontario Lockdown was extended from January 28th to February 9th, 2021 and as such, our Downtown businesses are operating in an online / Curbside pickup mode.

Earl also reported that a second letter, similar to the one submitted in April, was sent to MP Vecchio and MPP Yurek defining the unfairness of the non essential business model that currently allows big box stores to remain open selling products to in-person customers when our Downtown businesses can't. An acknowledgement was received from each but no solutions were offered.

#StThomasProud Interview

Earl reported that he, along with Mayor Preston, were interviewed by Mike Vecchio on the Rogers TV #StThomasProud program on Thursday January 28th. <https://rogerstv.com/show?lid=12&rid=26&sid=8128&gid=596311>

Customer Service Requests

Earl reported that 2 Customer Service requests were submitted to the City. One to move a garbage can from 546 Talbot to 572 Talbot and the second to clean up a broken garbage bag at 546 Talbot. Both have been completed.

7. Finance Report

Earl provided an update on the accounts that were paid in January.

Motion by Russell, Seconded by Grayden "To accept the financial report and to pay the outstanding bills" Carried

8. Reports

8.1 Promotions Report - Susan

Business Welcome Package

Susan provided a report saying that a welcome basket/flowers will be delivered to new businesses RetroRecords, Hometown Junction and Sub Zero Ice Cream.

Downtown Vibe - Reza

Reza reported that the 7th issue - January, was printed by LKP Printing at a cost of \$1,270.12 with \$300.00 recovered in paid advertising. Reza also reported that he is working on the February issue.

Past issues can be found at www.Issuu.com/STTHOMASDDB and through the Downtown Vibe Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/TheDowntownVibe which now has 104 Likes (was 85 Likes)

Business Video Production

Grayden reported that he has scheduled a “business check-in” with Crocker’s and Now and Zen.

Radio Advertising

Dave reported that MYFM has continued to doubled the ads from January 1st to February 14th at no additional cost.

The Shop Downtown St Thomas ads are currently running.

Website Design - Sarah

No update

However, Annette continues to maintain the current DDB website - Annette continues to update the membership database as well.

Newsletter - Annette

Annette reported that she continues to produce and email a weekly newsletter to 408 business addresses.

STEAM Centre

Earl reported that a program that we pitched to the STEAM Centre has been accepted. Their students are ready to help our Downtown businesses develop their online Virtual Marketplace. Through the Ivey Business school they are working on prototyping this project with a few Downtown businesses. Their first task will be to go through and look at all downtown businesses and what online presence businesses currently have so they can assess the perceived gaps.

8 businesses including Streamliners Coffee Bar, Camden Technologies, Le Cafe Siam, Your Fish and Chips, Wimpys Diner, Caps Off Brewing, Home Junction and Fan of the Sport have already signed up but we have an opening for more.

The next Beautification / Promotion Meeting will be scheduled if required.

8.2 Beautification Report - Grayden

Downtown Business Street Signs

No new signs were installed in January.

Downtown Directional Signs

Earl reported that McBain Signs finished the installation of 8 more Downtown directional signs at South Edgware and Burwell, Kains and Flora, Highbury and South Edgware, Scott and Hiawatha, First and Edward, Talbot and Burwell, Talbotville - Sunset and Talbot Line and Wellington at Regan Bourne.

Downtown Summer Students

Earl reported that he has completed and submitted a Canada Summer Jobs application for 2 Summer Students running for 10 weeks from June 28th to September 3rd. Earl also reported that, in discussions with Mayor Preston, a CSJ application for 1 Downtown worker was submitted for 1 position running for 23 weeks beginning April 26th through to October.

LED Christmas Lights

Earl reported that Entegrus removed the 62 LED Christmas Lights on the week of January 18th and returned them to storage.

L&PS Clock Vandalism

Earl reported that a police report was submitted on February 3rd after a call was received to notify us that the clock was acting strangely. It was discovered that the GPS sensor had been removed from the base of the clock face. Earl will contact our insurance provider to seek repairs.

Sidewalk Patios

Earl reported that 4 Downtown restaurants will be participating in this 2021 project - The Roadhouse, Bella Jacks, Streamliners and Why Not Cookies. The Bistro patio unit is available for use by another restaurant.

The next Beautification / Promotion Meeting will be scheduled as required.

8.3 Downtown Dollars - Susan / Annette

Earl reported that, thanks to Annette's data collection, \$1,100.00 DDB Dollars including \$10.00 from the August VIBE and \$125.00 Christmas Care DDB Dollars were redeemed in January. Full report filed.

Thanks to Susan for her dedication to responding to the many calls and picking up redeemed DDB Dollars and issuing cheques.

Earl reported that he tuned into a gift card webinar which discussed the program implemented by the Peterborough BIA. Further research is required to understand how we could implement a similar system here.

8.4 Parks Dept Update - Adrienne

Adrienne reported that Parks have evaluated the 2021 flower basket program and have decided that they will not be installing flower baskets in 2021.

However, the 27 Urns will be planted with Red and Purple this year. The winter greens will be removed and the covers installed soon. The St Thomas Horticultural Society will be composting / using a few of the items for their projects.

8.5 Council Update - Mayor Preston

Mayor Preston reported that the Thursday January 28th Community Zoom meeting, which was well attended, was well received. The meeting can be viewed at:

<http://video.isilive.ca/stthomas/>

[Jan%2028%20Downtown%20merchants%20meeting.mp4.html](http://video.isilive.ca/stthomas/Jan%2028%20Downtown%20merchants%20meeting.mp4.html)

Earl reported that the previously approved letter was submitted to Southwestern Health on January and that a reply from Peter Heywood was received acknowledging our concerns. Mr Heywood's comments are as follows:

"The Needle Management Strategy includes:

1. An education and awareness campaign;
2. Reporting system;
3. Training for our community partners, businesses and members of the public; and
4. A collection program in partnership with Regional HIV/AIDS.

We are planning to share the Strategy at the meeting of the Reference Committee on February 1st. There is a high degree of importance associated with this Strategy, and we look forward to sharing it with the Reference Committee and moving the Strategy from vision to action."

8.6 Municipal Heritage Committee Update - Russell

Russell reported that 3 projects are underway - Casey's Creative Kitchens west wall brick repairs, 244-248 Talbot facade work and Holy Angels fencing

Russell also reported that they are looking for sponsors for our Courthouse Area, Old St. Thomas Church Area, and Talbot Street Walking Tour maps. A new historic churches map that will be printed soon. Earl mentioned that we will submit this request for sponsors through our DDB Newsletter but we need to obtain the advertising proposal first.

8.7 CIP Program - Russell and Susan

The committee continues to work on creating a list of historically significant building so that they can be made aware of requested changes before they happen. Visit <http://viewer.mapme.com/stthomasheritage>.

8.8 Railway City Tourism Report - Megan

No report

8.9 Economic Development Report - Sean

Sean reported that the St Thomas EDC has been nominated for an EDCO award.

8.10 SBEC - Tara

Tara reported that the EDC is now managing the Horton Market and they are seeking a Manager. Tara also mentioned a new Tech Alliance project called 5-10-15 which is seeking innovative projects to boost Downtowns with 4 awards of \$15,000.

Between April and December 2020, 45 businesses opened and 34 expanded throughout St Thomas and Elgin County.

The 2021 Bridges to Better Business is scheduled for sometime in October.

8.11 Chamber of Commerce Report - Paul

Paul reported that the Ontario reopening is now scheduled for February 19th. Paul is working with local businesses to coordinate their questions and concerns about funding initiatives.

New Business

Earl raised the concern that we will probably lose many, if not all, of our 2021 events like Shop Hop, Nostalgia Nights and Pumpkin Prowl due to COVID restrictions. A robust discussion identified a number of new ideas that could be used to replace some of these lost events.

Baby Picture Photo contest - Reza, Duane and Grayden will work to initiate this idea.

A Puppy Parade and a drive-by Car Show and a Photo contest identifying your Curbside pickup purchases were identified as possible events.

9. **Coming Events** - dependant on COVID restrictions status.

Easter Shop Hop - Saturday April 3rd, 2021

Nostalgia Nights Car Show - Saturday July 11, 2021

Pumpkin Prowl - Friday October 29, 2021

Tree Lighting Celebration - Friday November 19, 2021

10. **Adjournment**

Motion by Duane Seconded by Joe, "To adjourn the meeting at 9:51am." Carried

Upcoming Committee Meetings

Beautification / Promotion Meeting to be scheduled as required.

Next Meeting: Wednesday March 3, 2021 at 8:30am via ZOOM Meeting

2021 Cross Street Banner Schedule

The 2021 cross street banner schedule is as follows:

Since the cross street banner pole was destroyed due to a wind storm on November 1st, 2020 and has not been installed yet, the following schedule is on hold.

January 2 - May 3	NEW DDB Winter Banner
April 5 - April 19	MS Society (No contact)
April 19 - May 3	Cancelled - Alzheimer's Society (May 9th Walk)
May 3 - June 1	Horton Market (Mothers Day May 9th)
May 4 - June 1 (East Pole)	Cancelled - Victim Services (week of May 4 - May 30)
June 1 - June 21	Lions Car Show (June 20th)
June 21 - July 12	Nostalgia Nights Car Show (July 10th)
Pending above	Special installation - Horton Market
July 12 - September 1	(Revised to October) Thanks for Shopping Downtown St Thomas
September 1 - September 20	Alzheimer's Scavenger Hunt
September 1 - September 27	Railway City Road Races (4th Sunday in Sept = 26th)
August / September	Volunteer Elgin (No contact)
September	(Cancelled- Violence Against Women - Walk a Mile)
September 27 - October 29	Love Where You Shop
October	VON (No contact)
October 29 - November 15	Optimist Santa Claus Parade (November 20th)
November 15 - January 2, 2022	DDB Merry Christmas / Love Where You Shop
Downtown Banners	Summer installation week of May 3rd - 10th Winter installation typically scheduled for 1st week of November.
LED Snowflakes	Installation scheduled for 1st week of November, Removal scheduled for 3rd or 4th week of January.