

**MEETING MINUTES
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WEDNESDAY JUNE 3, 2020 8:30am VIA ZOOM**

Attendance:

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

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

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 Reza, Seconded by Susan, "To confirm the June 3, 2020 Agenda as distributed." Carried

- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**

Motion by Russ, Seconded by Susan, "To confirm the minutes of the May 6, 2020 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 456 Followers (was 452 last month), our DDB Facebook page www.FB/downtownstthomas has 1703 Likes (was 1671 last month) and our Instagram/stthomasDDB page has 840 Followers (Was 830 last month).

Crime Prevention / CCTV Cameras

Earl reported that our CCTV Camera plan was approved by City Council. The suppliers have been instructed to start sourcing the equipment. An report has been submitted to the Privacy Commission. If everything goes to plan we hope to have cameras installed by late summer.

Downtown Police Presence

Chief Herridge reported that Constable Katherine McNeil will be working full time throughout the 2020 summer throughout the Downtown core. Moving forward to 2021, a foot patrol position will be created within the STPS to continue the Downtown patrols. They will continue to use the L&PS Station as their Downtown office until Tourism re-occupies the building. At that time, they are looking for a Talbot Street storefront to setup an office but failing that the STPL has offered them space within the library.

COVID-19 Business updates

We failed to get the Curbside Pickup system setup.

Ross Street Business Area

Earl reported that he is in discussions with OBIAA in regards to determining if we can help the Ross Street business district. 2 options are being explored, a) either we add them to our footprint or b) we help them setup their own BIA.

7. Finance Report

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

Motion by Reza, Seconded by Russ, "To accept the financial report and pay the outstanding bills" Carried

8. Reports

8.1 Parks Dept Update - Adrienne

Adrienne reported that the 27 planters and the flower beds will be planted on June 5th, 2020 and maintained throughout the summer.

The sidewalk weed spraying program has begun.

The existing plants that would have been used for the hanging baskets were sold through the library and the \$9,400 funds generated will be donated to the Food Bank.

8.2 Council Update - Mayor Preston

No report

8.3 Municipal Heritage Committee Update - Russell

Russell reported that no new activity has taken place however the next meeting is scheduled for June 10th to review 4 applications plus the murals program.

8.4 Railway City Tourism Report - Megan

Megan reported that 4 murals are being planned including the Moore Street walkway near K&K Locksmith.

8.5 Economic Development Report - Sean

Sean reported that 200 bags consisting of local products are being offered for sale at \$119.00. The bags are being sold to raise funds for the Food Bank.

8.6 SBEC - Tara

Tara reported that the new Business Development Program has been launched in cooperation with the St Thomas EDC, County of Elgin EDC, SBEC and the DDB.

Typically we bring together 400-500 people to celebrate small businesses in our community, which includes a food showcase, keynote speaker and our small business awards.

On July 30th we are excited to welcome Social Entrepreneur and CBC's Dragons' Den Top Game Changer, Barb Stegemann, founder, and CEO of [The 7 Virtues](#), as our special, online guest for Part One of Bridges to Better Business 2020.

We are excited to chat with Barb about her philosophies about business and the idea that doing good is good business, a concept that we need more than ever as we work to reopen the Canadian Economy.

We are all experiencing the challenges of Covid-19. Barb will share how despite the temporary closing of her 600 stores and the inability to travel to the USA to train beauty advisors, her social enterprise has found new ways to go where the customers are. Barb will share ideas and ways she has implemented to increase online sales by 139% with her distribution channel and how new thinking and new specials tripled the sales on her own website for her Nova Scotia business. Barb will share ways of thinking that can be applied to any SME.

But Bridges isn't only about a speaker. It's also about celebrating our local businesses and tasting some delicious food too! Since we don't want anyone to miss out on these amazing opportunities, we are working with local food businesses to provide a savings package with each ticket purchased for future visits to some of our incredible local establishments. This helps businesses generate revenue during a very interesting time. We even have a special meal add on option in the works for an incredible meal to enjoy at home the evening of the event and pick up of this meal will be at Caps Off in downtown St. Thomas.

Part two of our Bridges event will be presented in the fall of 2020. Our small business awards will be presented and we would love to continue to highlight a business in downtown St. Thomas.

A brief discussion was held. Sponsorship includes Logo with link on SBEC website, Logo on event welcome screen, Sponsorship announcement on Social Media, Thank you on Social Media, Recognition in SBEC Newsletter, 2 Complimentary event tickets with Dinner upgrade

Motion by Russ, Seconded by Ian, "To sponsor the 2020 Bridges to Better Business event at the \$1,000.00 sponsorship level as previously budgeted" Carried

Business Development Fund

This fund of \$50,000 will be used to assist small businesses in St Thomas, Elgin County and Downtown St Thomas. Funding up to \$2,000 will help them advance their online businesses.

Tara also discussed the re-opening of the GROW facility at the Caboose

8.7 Chamber of Commerce Report - Paul

Paul reported on the following upcoming events:

- June 3rd Coffee Talk with Mayor Joe and Sean Dyke updating about City issues with Q+A after.
- Best Ball Golf at Iron Creek - August 13th
- Members Golf at Union Golf Course- September 16th.
- Continuing to reach out to Members to see if there are things the Chamber can do to assist/ to introduce / to support and to advocate for.

Visit www.stthomaschamber.on.ca for more information on all upcoming events.

Paul also reported on a discussion being held between the Chamber, St Thomas Elgin Home Builders, St Thomas EDC, The County of Elgin EDC and The St Thomas DDB about relaunching a “More Life” advertising program to enhance the current “25% More Life” program.

8.8 Downtown Dollars - Susan

\$25 DDB Dollars (at Alines from the EDC product bags) and zero Christmas Care DDB Dollars were redeemed in May.

8.9 Promotions Report - Susan

Coupon Book

Earl reported that we have 10,000 Coupon Books ready for distribution. However, since our events have been cancelled and our retail businesses closed we have decided to find another way to get the books into circulation. Sarah is arranging to mail 5,000 of the Coupon Books and copies are being delivered to all of the advertisers.

Reza has volunteered to have a number of Coupon Books delivered through the Yurek delivery system.

Business Welcome Package

Susan reported that no flowers or a Welcome package in the month of May.

Business Video Production

Grayden reported that the You Tube channel will be launched soon.

Grayden reported that, to date, 10 Business Check-in video's have featuring Yureks, Purely Wicked, Step Above Dance, Myrtle, Susan Pereira, Why Not Cookies, Conrad Denture, Cofield and Oh My Fur and Whiskers have been released.

Motion by Susan, Seconded by Russ “ To allocate a further 2,000.00 for the production of 20 Business Check-in videos” Carried

Grayden also reported that the following businesses received their \$2,500 DMS funding: L’Ore Canine Clips and Spa, Limitless Tattoo, T-Shirt Junction, Reith & Associates, K&K Locksmith, Rail City Bistro, Locke Insurance and CTP Computers. The DMS program has now been extended to August 30th from May 30th.

Radio Advertising

Dave reported that the new “Downtown St Thomas” was revised to add that most Downtown businesses are now open to provide Curbside pickup as well as in-person shopping using safety precautions. These ads are running at 12 per week.

Joe Thornton Community Centre Slide Show

Grayden reported that he and Annette have not been able to make any updates due to the closure of the building.

Website Design

No update

Mural Program

Susan and Sarah reported that the new mural Program is being developed further.

Downtown Vibe - Reza

Objective

The purpose of **The Downtown Vibe** is to provide relevant information to a targeted audience.

COVID-19 has hit Downtown St. Thomas hard. The Vibe will help create credibility and build awareness for the Downtown community, its merchants and events.

So what role does DDB play?

1. DDB is the heartbeat, brains and core muscles of the Downtown community.
2. DDB is the backbone of most attractions to the City.
3. DDB makes decisions based on the safety and well-being of its members.
4. DDB plans for ways to best serve the Downtown community through various events and by initiating activities to help its members.

R.O.I.

All things being equal, snail mail has a higher response rate because it demonstrates more effort than sending an email and, therefore, is seen as showing more concern.

We have no way of emailing the residents in our given area. We may take The Downtown Vibe online in three to six months. We will ask people to opt in our email database.

However, to start, we need to show both merchants and residents that we are making a serious effort to revive the Downtown Vibe.

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

8.10 Beautification Report - Grayden

Downtown Business Signs

Earl reported that no new signs were installed in March or April. However, a new business called Sugar is setting up at 558 Talbot Street and a new sign will be produced when possible. The sign at Arable blew off the wall during a heavy wind and will be reinstalled when possible.

Cross Street Banner Schedule

Earl reported that the current Love Where You Shop banner remains in place since the Horton Market has been cancelled.

Banners

Earl reported that he worked with Moonlight Painters on Sunday May 31st to remove 16 Winter banners and repair 20 existing Canada Flag banners.

Sidewalk Patio Program

Earl reported that City Council has approved the Sidewalk Patio Program. Applications have been received from Streamliners, The Roadhouse, The Bistro, Bella Jacks and Why Not Cookies.

Installation of the patios is dependant on the State of Emergency timelines.

Summer Students - Earl

Earl reported that we received an email from Canada Summer Jon's this week and we have been denied funding due to the large number applications.

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

8.11 CIP - Susan and Russell

Susan reported that no meetings are planned.

9. Coming Events - dependant on COVID restrictions

- Pumpkin Prowl - Friday October 30th 5-8pm
- Tree Lighting Celebration - Friday November 13th 5:30 - 7pm
- Downtown Santa - Saturday December 5th 10am - 2pm

10. Adjournment

Motion by Susan, Seconded by Grayden "To adjourn the meeting at 9:35am." Carried

Upcoming Committee Meetings - TBD

Next Meeting: Wednesday July 8, 2020 at 8:30am via ZOOM Meeting

2020 Cross Street Banner Schedule

The 2020 cross street banner schedule is as follows:

January 2 - May 4	NEW DDB Winter Banner
April 1 - April 22	MS Society (No contact)
April 22 - May 4	Cancelled - Alzheimer's Society (May 11th Walk)
May 4 - June 1	Cancelled due to Covid-19 Horton Market (Mothers Day May 10th)
May 4 - June 1 (East Pole)	Cancelled - Victim Services (week of May 4 - May 30)
June 1 - June 22	Cancelled due to Covid-19 Lions Car Show (June 21st)
June 22 - July 13	Cancelled due to Covid-19 Nostalgia Nights Car Show (July 11th)
July 13 - September 1	Thanks for Shopping Downtown St Thomas
September 1 - September 28	Railway City Road Races (4th Sunday in Sept = 27th)
August / September	Volunteer Elgin (No contact)
September	(Cancelled- Violence Against Women - Walk a Mile)
September 28 - October 28	Horton Market
October	VON (No contact)
October 26 - November 16	Optimist Santa Claus Parade (November 14th)
November 16 - January 2, 2021	DDB Merry Christmas / Love Where You Shop
Downtown Banners	Cancelled due to Covid-19 Summer installation May 3rd - 10th Winter installation November 1st - 8th
LED Snowflakes	Installation November 2nd - 13th, 2020 Removal mid January / early February