

**MEETING MINUTES
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 2, 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	N	Adrienne Jefferson	Y
Promotions Chair - Susan Boldt	Y	Megan Pickersgill	Y
Secretary - Jazz Staddon	N	Barry Fitzgerald	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 8:32am 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 Barry, Seconded by Susan, "To confirm the December 2, 2020 Agenda as distributed." Carried

- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**

Motion by Russ, Seconded by Susan, "To confirm the minutes of the November 4, 2020 meeting as distributed" Carried

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

- 5. Deputations**

None

- 6. Chair Report**

Duane has completed his Police Check and the online Accessible Customer Service Training program. Ian is working on his items, Grayden has completed his Police check and Jazz has yet to complete her items.

Social Media

Earl reported that our Twitter account @stthomasddb now has 493 Followers (was 479 last month), our DDB Facebook page www.FB/downtownstthomas has 1861 Likes (was 1803 last month) and our Instagram/stthomasDDB page has 1043 Followers (Was 1026 last month).

Crime Prevention / CCTV Cameras

Earl reported that a replacement camera pole at Talbot and Moore was re- installed on Monday November 30th. In discussion with Environmental Services, a new cross street banner pole will be installed approximately 5 feet east of the original pole to eliminate future problems.

Installation of the remaining 7 cameras will begin soon since we have received approval of our Project CCTV St. Thomas: A Progressive CCTV Surveillance Initiative, has been approved for funding under the Ontario Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Grant Program in the amount of \$87,047.50 for fiscal years 2020-21.

AGM

Earl reported that work has started on the development of a virtual AGM for Wednesday January 20th at 8:30am. A list of Downtown property owners has been requested for Treasury to develop a mailing which must occur 30 days prior to the AGM.

COVID-19 Update

Earl reported that Southwest Health moved back into the Orange category on November 21st.

Beginning Monday November 30th, St Thomas Police, St Thomas Bylaw officers and Southwest Health have begun random inspections of Downtown businesses. Chief Herridge reported that on day one, 23 businesses including big box stores were visited and the response was overwhelmingly positive. SWPH took the lead providing literature and answering questions, Bylaw Enforcement followed explaining their responsibilities, and STPS PC's McNeil/Gillies outlined the police role. Unfortunately, 1 business did not have hand sanitizer available due to the type of business.

7. Finance Report

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

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

Earl provided an initial review of the 2021 Budget process showing a small surplus due to the cancellation of some events however due to the implementation of a number of new initiatives, the surplus was used to cover these projects.

An approval of the budget will be required at the January 6th, 2021 meeting, in time for the January 20th, 2021 AGM.

8. Reports

8.1 Parks Dept Update - Adrienne

Adrienne reported that the 162 Red and Bronze Mums were removed on the week of November 16th and the winter greens were planted at a budgeted cost of \$2,320.14. Plans are in place for the 2021 planters being purple - red Begonias / Petunias.

8.2 Council Update - Mayor Preston

Mayor Preston reported that the plans for the December 4 - 6th EML reverse parade are now complete. Budget deliberations begin next week.

8.3 Municipal Heritage Committee Update - Russell

Russell 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 need to obtain the advertising costs first.

Russ gave an overview of the state of the Urban Design Guidelines. Earl reported that a DDB letter of support was forwarded through the MHC to City Council on November 24th.

8.4 CIP Program - Russell

More information will be available next month however the committee continues to work to create 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>. Their next meeting is scheduled for December 11th.

8.5 Railway City Tourism Report - Megan

Megan reported on the holiday promos that showcase Downtown businesses online and takes visitors to their websites.

The Arts Crawl event is planned for June 2021 vs February.

Earl reported that, as previously requested, he has supplied a list 10+ interesting facts about Downtown that Megan will use in future projects.

8.6 Economic Development Report - Sean

No report

8.7 SBEC - Tara

Tara reported that she is busy with the Business Development Fund client reports

Tara also reported that they are hiring a new business advisor with a January 4th start date. They are slap doing a Holiday promotion that this week focuses on the Downtown businesses.

8.8 Chamber of Commerce Report - Barry

Barry reported on the following upcoming events:

- Barry Fitzgerald roast - December 2nd at CASO.

Barry reported that 2 of the So Much More Life billboards are now located at Union Pipe and GCW.

Earl thanked Barry for his work with our DDB over the past number of years and wished him well on his retirement. We will invite CEO Paul Jenkins to our January meeting.

8.9 Downtown Dollars - Susan / Annette

Earl reported that, thanks to Annette's data collection, \$1,235.00 DDB Dollars including \$910.00 from the DDB Coupons as published in the August edition of the Downtown Vibe and \$25 Christmas Care DDB Dollars were redeemed in November.

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

8.10 Promotions Report - Susan

Business Welcome Package

Susan reported that she will visit the new business - Home Brew Junction

Downtown Vibe - Reza

Reza reported that the 4th issue - November, was printed by LKP Printing at a cost of \$1,270.12 with \$300.00 recovered in paid advertising.

The December issue has been printed by LKP Printing and is being delivered to Downtown businesses this week with \$700.00 recovered in paid advertising.

Business Video Production

Grayden reported that he will reimplement the video program soon. Earl suggested that we should test the Ricoh 360 camera and the new Matterport program to create a Virtual Tour of a Downtown business.

Grayden also reported that he is completing a "business check-in" with JHL Mini Studio, Cafe Siam, Crocker's and now and Zen.

Radio Advertising

Dave reported that the Christmas spots began after Remembrance Day and are currently running. The Downtown Santa ad will continue through to December 5th and the It's a Magical Time ad will run through December. The New Years ad will then run after January 1st.

Website Design - Sarah

No update

However, Annette continues to maintain the current DDB website - posting information about the Moonlight Masquerade and the Black Friday events. 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.

Tree Lighting Celebration

Earl reported that CLC Tree Service installed the tree lights on November 9th at a cost of \$2,415.94 with \$1,200.00 recovered in sponsorship thanks to Yurek Pharmacy and Home Healthcare.

Earl reported that the reinvented Tree Lighting Celebration occurred on Friday November 20th at 6pm when Santa arrived on a St Thomas Fire Truck and, with the help of Peter Yurek, flipped the switch to light the tree.

Thanks to MYFM for doing a Facebook Live post and to Grayden for creating a social media post. Dave reported that the MYFM Facebook post had 7,500 views, 15,384 reached, 101 Likes and 66 shares.

Due to a shortage of Letters to Santa at the November 13th deadline, the Rogers TV event was cancelled. However, on November 17th Susan received 50 letters from St Anne's and Morrison. As a reward, Susan delivered 65 colouring books and crayon gifts to the school as a thank you for participating.

The letters have been forwarded to Rogers TV for use at the December 4th Thrill of Hope parade as well at a Call-in Santa event.

Downtown Santa

Dave and Grayden, will continue the Downtown Santa tradition, hosting this event on Saturday December 5th from 12pm - 2pm. To save Susan the work involved in picking up redeemed DDB Dollars, Earl will provide Dave with \$750 cash. As purchases are paid, Susan will collect a receipt.

Susan volunteered her 2 children to accompany Santa as elves.

Reverse Santa Claus Parade

Earl reported that the Reverse Santa Claus Parade, now known as A Thrill of Hope is scheduled for Pinafore Park on December 4th to 6th from 4pm - 9pm.

Our DDB has decided to participate. Rob Burns, Grayden and Earl have volunteered to install the lighted Downtown skyline, as used on our previous parade entry at 12 noon on Friday December 4th. A generator has been rented at a cost of \$300.00

Moonlight Masquerade - Grayden

Earl reported that, due to the pending Freedom Protest event for Saturday November 14th, many downtown businesses decided to close during the day. However, since they planned to open in the evening, at the suggestion of Shawn Devree's, a new event was quickly organized. With the help of Susan, Grayden, Sarah and Annette, a newsletter was issued, posters distributed, social media posts were created and a 5' x 8' sign was designed and installed at Given.

13 businesses participated including Wish You Would Wear 65 Talbot (Jumbo Caboose), T Shirt Junction 321 Talbot, Now & Zen Thrift Emporium 349 Talbot, Crockers 445 Talbot, Slate 538 Talbot, Saint T Fashions 587 Talbot, Aether Boutique & Studio 613 Talbot #102, A Handmade Tale 626 Talbot, Purely Wicked 633 Talbot, Myrtle 691 Talbot, Given 730 Talbot, The Bottlery 965 Talbot, Ice Box 125 Ross

Congratulations to Sonja Winfield-Lawrence, Julie Nichols and Kim Gadsdon for each winning \$50 Downtown Dollars for posting to our social media pages.

To obtain an understanding of the impact of this protest, the following item was sent in the December 4th Newsletter:

Thomas Police Services is looking for input from Downtown St Thomas business owners who had to close or alter their business hours on Saturday November 14th as a result of the Freedom Protest. Your input will be used to assist in the case being developed by the crown attorney as related to how it impacted our community and the livelihood of Downtown business owners. Your input is extremely important so please consider submitting your report as soon as possible. Contact Mike Buttinger directly at 519-317-5122 or through STPS at 519-631-1224 ext 4267

Black Friday - Earl

A last minute suggestion from Shawn Devree's at Myrtle to hold a Black Friday event was launched. Grayden reported that activity was steady through the day but slower in the evening.

17 businesses participated including T Shirt Junction 321 Talbot Street, Now and Zen 394 Talbot Street, Mugford Shoes 429 Talbot Street (open till 8pm), Crockers 445 Talbot Street, Home Brew Junction 452 Talbot Street, Yurek Pharmacy 519 Talbot Street, The Brow Boss 550A Talbot Street, Caps Off Brewing 168 Curtis Street, From the Vines 168 Curtis Street, Fan of the Sport 571 Talbot Street, Saint T Fashions 587 Talbot Street, Aether Boutique & Studio, 613 Talbot Street, A Handmade Tale 626 Talbot Street, Purely Wicked 633 Talbot Street, Medlyn Studio 643 Talbot Street, Myrtle 691 Talbot Street, Given 730 Talbot Street

Congratulations to Kathy Westelaken for winning \$50 Downtown Dollars for posting to our social media pages.

The Most Local Time of The Year

A new Digital Main Street event has been developed to help in creating a Christmas themed Augmented Reality app based event using the "ENGAGE ARt" app. We have partnered with Tech Alliance, representing Digital Main Street and EXAR Studios who will be developing the AR event. The walking path, meant to be a 10 minute walk, will occur starting at CASO and running to City Hall. We are 1 of 5 municipalities using this event including Town of Strathroy-Caradoc, Downtown London BIA, Bayfield Chamber of Commerce and the Municipality of Bluewater.

Checkout <https://techalliance.ca/the-most-local-time-of-the-year> for complete details. Dave has developed a radio advertising plan that will run between Dec 10th and Dec 31st airing 2 per day but also another 1 per day using the remaining spots the DDB has from the 2020 Coupon Book. Total cost will be \$500.00. MYFM will also do 2 FB posts at NO CHARGE to compliment the on air campaign.

Annette is creating a newsletter article and Earl will develop a Facebook event. Tech Alliance has provided a poster that will be printed and delivered to businesses in the walking path area.

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

8.11 Beautification Report - Grayden

Cross Street Banner Schedule

Earl reported that due to the destruction of the cross street banner pole on November 2nd, the banner program is on hold. A new pole is scheduled to be installed soon.

Downtown Business Street Signs

A new sign for Locke's Insurance, which went missing is being designed for installation on their existing bracket. The Sugarr sign was moved from 633 Talbot to 399 Talbot. However, due to the McBain fire, these items will be completed when they are running again.

Downtown Directional Signs

Earl reported that McBain Signs will be installing 6 more Downtown directional signs at South Edgware and Burwell, Kains and Flora, Scott and Hiawatha, First and Edward, Talbotville - Sunset and Talbot Line and Wellington at Regan Bourne.

Summer (Fall) Students - Earl

Earl reported that Max McCaulley and Brayden Carvery continue to work 2 hours each on every Saturday, until snowfall, to make a cleanup pass through our Downtown.

LED Christmas Lights / Carollers

Earl reported that Entegrus installed the 62 LED Christmas Lights during the week of November 13th to 18th.

As a thank you, Earl reported that he is investigating the delivery of a number of gift cards to the installation team.

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

9. Coming Events - dependant on COVID restrictions status

- Reverse Santa Claus Parade - December 4th - 6th
- Downtown Santa - Saturday December 5th 12Noon - 2pm
- The Most Local Time of the Year - December 11th - January 4th.
- Virtual Annual General Meeting - Wednesday January 20th at 8:30am via Zoom

10. Adjournment

Motion by Barry, Seconded by Duane "To adjourn the meeting at 9:49am." Carried

Upcoming Committee Meetings

Beautification / Promotion Meeting to be scheduled as required.

Next Meeting: Wednesday January 6, 2021 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)
June 22nd	Special installation - Horton Market
July 13 - September 1 (Revised to October)	Thanks for Shopping Downtown St Thomas
September 1 - September 20	Alzheimer's Scavenger Hunt
September 1 - September 28	Cancelled due to COVID-19 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	Love Where You Shop
October	VON (No contact)
October 28 - November 16	Cancelled due to COVID-19 Optimist Santa Claus Parade (November 21st)

The banner pole was destroyed due to a wind storm on November 1st, 2020

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 16th - 20th, 2020, Removal mid January / early February