

**MEETING MINUTES  
ST THOMAS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
WEDNESDAY APRIL 5, 2023 8:00AM ROOM 304 CITY HALL AND VIA ZOOM**

Attendance:

Chair - Earl Taylor	Y	Susan Boldt	N
Vice Chair - Grayden Laing	Y 9:00am	Jennifer Childs	Y *
Secretary - Jolie Inthavong	N	Dana Vanzanten	Y
Treasurer - Tina Swaenepoel	Y 9:05am	Renee Carpenter	Y *
Beautification Chair-Vanessa Lockwood	Y *	Advisors:	
Promotions Chair - Julie Hosford	N	Sean Dyke	Y 8:55am
Promotions Co-Chair - Dave Thomson	Y	Elle Crevits	Y *
Reza Alavie	Y	Megan Pickersgill	Y *
Russell Schnurr	N	Paul Jenkins	Y 9:00am
Ian Gillespie	Y	Sarah Lynch	Y *
Duane Orth	Y *	Adrienne Griffin	N
Mayor Joe Preston	N	Sarah Noble	Y *
Sarah Van Pelt	Y	Annette S'barra	Y
		Suzanne Faris	Y
		* = joined via Zoom	
		Time = Departed the meeting	

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:05am 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**

A number of Agenda additions and corrections were requested:

Added 5. Deputations category, Balance of Agenda Categories renumbered

Staff Report: moved to Chair Report

Chair Report - Added Social Media Advertising, Added Print Advertising

Promotions Report - Added Nostalgia Nights Car Show, Added Radio Advertising

Beautification Report - Added Downtown Business Street Signs, Added 2023 Banners, Added Canada Summer Jobs.

Advisory Committee Updates - Added Parks Dept Updates - Adrienne.

Motion by Sarah Van Pelt, Seconded by Ian, "To confirm the amended April 5, 2023 Agenda as distributed." Carried

#### **4. Confirmation of Minutes**

February 1, 2023 Minutes - it was noted that the Minutes that were emailed on April 4th 9:38pm did not have the casual / quoted comments removed as previously requested at the March Meeting.

March 1, 2023 Minutes - it was noted that the Minutes emailed to the Board on April 4th 9:39pm were missing the Chair Report including Newsletter Stats, Social Media Stats and DDB Dollar Stats.

As such, updates to the minutes are requested and will be reviewed at the May meeting, No Motion to accept was proposed.

Note: Meeting Minutes can be found at [www.downtownstthomas.ca/monthly-minutes](http://www.downtownstthomas.ca/monthly-minutes)

#### **5. Deputations**

None

#### **6. Chair Report - Earl**

##### Newsletter

Earl reported that Annette continues to produce and email a bi-weekly newsletter along with specialty newsletters as required.

- A Newsletter was issued on March 10th. 298 Recipients, 48% Open rate, Facebook reach 187
- A Newsletter issued on March 24th. 298 Recipients, 45.1% Open rate, Facebook reach 92
- A Talbot Street Construction newsletter - "We are open for Business" was issued on March 20th. 300 Recipients, 48.0% Open rate
- A newsletter seeking volunteers for the Home Show was issued on March 22nd. 298 Recipients, 50.8% Open rate. Facebook reach 258
- A 4th Annual Shop Hop Newsletter was issued on March 27th seeking businesses who wanted to participate. 298 Recipients, 48.7% Open rate, Facebook reach 886.

##### Downtown Dollars Tracking - Annette

Earl reported that, thanks to Annette's data collection, \$4,540.00 DDB Dollars were recorded as being redeemed in March. A total of \$15,275.00 DDB\$ have been redeemed YTD and of this \$225.00 are from the 2021 DDB\$ promotion and \$3,975.00 are from the 2022 DDB\$ promotion. Earl made 17 DDB Dollar merchant pickups in March.

##### Business Updates - new / relocated / lost

No new updates

##### Social Media

Earl reported that our Twitter account @stthomasddb now has 547 Followers (was 544 last month), our DDB Facebook page [www.FB/downtownstthomas](http://www.FB/downtownstthomas) has 3306 Followers (was 3283 Followers last month) and our Instagram/stthomasDDB page has 1234 Followers (was 1225 last month).

### Social Media Advertising

Earl presented a Young and Free Press proposal offering to assist with the DDB Instagram and Twitter posts featuring businesses in the downtown core as well as local landmarks and hidden gems and facts, with a focus on construction on Talbot Street through the summer and fall, to help generate interest in exploring the area. After a discussion it was decided to proceed.

Motion by Tina, Seconded by Grayden "To approve a Young and Free Press proposal to produce 4 weekly DDB Instagram Posts (including Posts, reels and stories) and 4 unique DDB posts on Twitter beginning May 15 through to September 15th at a monthly cost of \$450.00." Carried

### Print Advertising

Earl presented a proposal received from Hometown St Thomas magazine offering Downtown businesses in the DDB footprint a 50% reduction on advertising costs through the construction months of May, June and July. After a discussion, it was suggested that the DDB should also participate.

Motion by Grayden, Seconded by Dave "That the DDB book a 1/2 page ad in each of the 3 editions at a cost of \$362.50 per month." Carried

### Website

Sarah Van Pelt reported that she is once again able to start work on a new DDB website. It was suggested that the website outline be submitted to all board members for review and further discussion at the May meeting.

### Talbot Street Construction Updates

Earl reported that 3 weekly reports, as supplied by The City, have been posted on Facebook and added to the DDB website. For full details visit [www.downtownstthomas.ca/2023-talbot-street-construction](http://www.downtownstthomas.ca/2023-talbot-street-construction)

Only about 40 people have signed up to the construction update emails being issued by the City. A Facebook post was issued on April 4th with instructions on how to sign up for the update emails.

### New member training status

Earl mentioned that all new members must, if not done already, complete their training and submit their Police Checks to the City as soon as possible.

## **7. Finance Report - Tina**

Tina provided a monthly statement update on the financial status of the DDB accounts. Our accounts have not been fully setup in the City Accounting system yet.

Motion by Sarah Van Pelt, Seconded by Reza, "To accept the financial report and to pay the outstanding bills" Carried

## **8. Reports**

### **8.1 Promotions Report - Dave**

Earl mentioned that a change to the Promotions Chair position was proposed. After a discussion it was decided to proceed.

Motion by Grayden, Seconded by Tina, "To install Dave Thomson as the Promotions Chair" Carried

#### Home Show

Dave reported that we had a great turnout at the Home Show. A total of 1,372 ballots were completed with 34 requesting to be added to the newsletter email list. Dave thanked those that assisted with setup on Thursday evening, working in the booth through the weekend and removing the booth on Sunday afternoon.

#### Shop Hop

Dave reported that plans are in place for this weekends event. The Shop Hop radio ads began on Sunday March 26th and will run through to Saturday April 8th.

Dave thanked Annette for visiting so many downtown businesses and getting 38 businesses involved from Take 5 Oil Change in the east to Oh My Fur and Whiskers in the west end of Talbot Street. Dave has confirmed that the Easter Bunny will be downtown from 12 - 2pm with treats.

#### Nostalgia Nights Car Show - Earl

Earl reported that, after holding 3 meetings in February and March, the committee has pinned down a plan to move the car show to the Ross Street to CASO Crossing corridor. The Special Events Application is on the agenda for the April 5th meeting.

Pending approval, the committee will begin to finalize plans.

Reference the attached meeting report.

#### Radio Advertising - Dave

Dave reported that the Home Show ad finished on Sunday March 26th and the Shop Hop ads began immediately and will run through to Sunday April 8th. The "Support our Downtown businesses during Construction" ads will then begin.

### **8.2 Beautification Report - Vanessa**

#### Downtown Business Street Signs

Vanessa reported that a replacement sign was installed at Lockwood Books and the signs at Your Fish and Chips and Harvest Moon were repaired.

#### 2023 Banner Program

Vanessa reported, with input from Sarah Van Pelt, that 13 new businesses responded to the search for businesses that wanted to participate in the 2023 banners program. Sarah mentioned that due to the low number of new banners, that the deadline could be extended to April 13th. The balance of the required banners will be randomly selected from the 2022 banner inventory and a total of 53 banners will be installed on April 23rd.

## Canada Summer Jobs

Earl reported that he has not received an update from Canada Summer Jobs yet.

### 8.3 Reports

#### Parks Dept Update - Adrienne

Adrienne submitted a written report stating that the planters in the construction zone have been moved to new locations along Talbot Street east including Memorial Park and Moore Street.

#### 8.4 Council Update - Mayor Preston

No report

To view City Council Agenda and Minutes visit <https://www.stthomas.ca/cms/one.aspx?portalId=12189805&pageId=12517512>

#### 8.5 Municipal Heritage Committee Update - Russell

Russell advised the Chair prior to the meeting that he is hosting a delegation from Aeres University in the Netherlands and is unable to attend. He will provide an update on this project at our next meeting.

Visit <https://www.stthomas.ca/cms/one.aspx?portalId=12189805&pageId=13290088> for more information.

#### 8.6 CIP Program - Russell

No report

Visit <https://www.stthomas.ca/search/default.aspx?q=Cip&type=-1,12189805-12410,12189721-117,12189721-127&sortBy=Relevance&pg=0> for more information.

#### 8.7 Railway City Tourism Report - Megan

Megan reported on the Scavenger Hunt project happening this summer, with many locations located in the Downtown - information is available at [www.railwaycitytourism.com/dt-hunt](http://www.railwaycitytourism.com/dt-hunt)

A door hanger message will be distributed to residential homes throughout the city promoting upcoming events.

#### 8.8 Economic Development Report - Sean

No report

#### 8.9 SBEC - Sarah / Elle

Sarah Lynch reported that the Summer Company student project and the Starter Company Boot Camp will begin soon.

#### 8.10 Chamber of Commerce Report - Paul

Paul submitted the following written report:

March Pulse Survey of Membership – top two concerns – inflationary pressure; employee recruitment/retention

April 5th – Job Fair (recruitment)

April 14th – Impact Awards Thursday April 27th, 4:30-7pm

April 27th – Young Entrepreneurs Initiative @ The Atrium, 4:30-7pm

April 19th – Business After Five @ The Atrium with Go Vertical Media

May 9th – Job Support Workshop (retention)

May 17th – Business After Five @ Railway Museum with Abode Home Comfort

May 25th – Members' Golf @ Union (SOLD OUT)

- Still have rapid tests, if needed
- Still a few Impact Award tickets, if you know a guy

Visit <https://www.stthomaschamber.on.ca> for full details

## 9. Coming Events

- Easter Shop Hop - Saturday April 8th all day - Easter Bunny 12-2pm
- Nostalgia Nights Car Show - Saturday July 15th 4-9pm
- Downtown Pumpkin Prowl - Friday October 27th 5-8pm
- Tree Lighting Celebration - Friday November 17th 5:30-7pm
- Optimist Santa Claus Parade - Saturday November 18th 6pm
- Black Friday - Friday November 24th
- Downtown Santa - Saturday December 2nd 11-1pm

## Other Events

- Business After 5 - Wednesday April 19th at the Atrium

## 10. Adjournment

Motion by Sarah Van Pelt, Seconded by Dave, "To adjourn the meeting at 9:15am"  
Carried

**Next Meeting: Wednesday May 3, 2023 at 8:00AM at City Hall Room 304 and via Zoom if required.**

## Attachments:

### **Nostalgia Nights Car Show Report April 5, 2023**

### **Nostalgia Nights Car Show Meeting #1 February 14, 2023 at 9:00am at Why Not Cookies**

Attendance: Earl Taylor, Rob Burns, Bob Ward, Dan Vernackt, Annette Sbarra, Shawn Deneire. Regrets: Tina Swaenepoel, Grayden Laing

This being our first meeting, a basic discussion was held about what options might be possible. With the Talbot Street construction, returning to the same Talbot Street footprint would not be possible.

The date of Saturday July 15th was chosen.

The ECRM location presented great possibilities. The committee decided to end the meeting with an on site walk-about so as to get an overall understanding of the site.

Meeting adjourned.

## **Nostalgia Nights Car Show Meeting #2**

### **March 9, 2023 at 9:00am at Why Not Cookies**

Attendance: Earl Taylor, Rob Burns, Bob Ward, Dan Vernackt, Shawn Deneire, Dave Thomson, Tina Swaenepoel. Annette Sbarra, Julie Hosford, Jolie Inthavong

Regrets: Grayden Laing

Earl reported that at our March 1st DDB meeting, a number of concerns were raised in regards to the car show.

First - Spending our DDB budgeted \$7,000 on an event that is not downtown. The few businesses that actually stay open during the event would lose much needed income.

Second, was the brownfield contamination of the ECRM lands.

Earl mentioned that in discussions with the ECRM, that one complaint from the public could be detrimental to both them and of course, us. It was decided to look for an alternate location.

The committee talked about moving to the east section of Talbot Street, possibly taking in the Van Pelt and McCaig property.

Earl volunteered to investigate a number of logistics based on our previous car shows.

The meeting ended with the decision to do an on site walk-about to get an overview of the site.

Meeting adjourned.

## **Nostalgia Nights Car Show Meeting #3**

### **Thursday March 30, 2023 at 9:00am at Why Not Cookies**

Attendance: Earl Taylor, Rob Burns, Bob Ward, Shawn Deneire, Dave Thomson, Annette Sbarra, Tina Swaenepoel

Regrets: Dan Vernackt, Grayden Laing

Earl thanked everyone for being so helpful and positive despite the challenges encountered to date. Since our last meeting on March 9th, Earl mentioned that a number of logistics have been answered:

1. The next Special Events meeting is scheduled for Wednesday April 5th - an application will be submitted on Friday March 31st using the footprint of Talbot Street from Ross to CASO Crossing and Ross to the tracks with crossovers as mentioned below.
2. The city has identified that the Talbot Street construction will be at the Ross Street intersection by July 15th, however they have promised that they will move any fencing and level the intersection so that it is fully available to access Ross Street to the south. It was suggested that we block Ross Street at Centre Street - just south of the railway track.
3. The McCaigs have said that they will allow us to use the Talbot and Ross property - It was suggested that we use this property for craft / artists, the Car bash event, the Optimist food trailer and perhaps some specialty vehicles. A basic contract for McCaigs to define the date, responsibility, insurance etc is required.

4. McCaigs have also offered use of the former Grace United Church parking lot on Balaclava Street if needed - do we need it? maybe public parking.
5. Gurr Auto is happy to let us use their parking lot and hydro for our main stage location.
6. We need to keep the Horton Street intersection open to provide access for the wedding at the CASO Station.
7. Boston Pizza will cooperate if we keep the Balaclava intersection open for access to their east side parking lot entrance.
8. As a signalled intersection, Food Basics is on board but insists that we keep the Manitoba intersection open for access to their parking lot.
9. The ECRM will allow us to have use of their Thomas the Tank loading platform for the train at the east side of Ross Street area. Earl reported that he thanked ECRM for their willingness to help and explained the concerns raised - they understand our predicament.
10. Doug Tarry is very amenable to letting us use their front and east side parking lots but this is not yet confirmed. We'll hope for the best.
11. Wendy's is on board for sponsorship of the main stage.
12. The PSTR using our DDB Coach are pencilled in and will send us a contract.
13. Rob has booked REACT and St John Ambulance as well as Ken Chaplin and The Band.

Once we obtain city approval, Rob will handle our Old Auto advertising and the Scotts Printing flyers.

14. Bob is working on talks with a couple of service clubs for volunteer help.
15. Earl will talk with CTP Computers to see if they will allow us to use their hydro for our second band.
16. With so many food and beverage establishments in this new area, it was decided that we will not need any other food trucks.
17. Sponsorship, Car Awards, radio and print advertising, website, social media, Volunteers, calls for crafters / artists, train tickets, garbage cans, barricades, signage, insurance riders, Port-a-potties, Bombshell Beauties, Car clubs etc will begin shortly.

Next meeting - Thursday April 20, 2023 at 9:00am at Why Not Cookies  
Meeting adjourned.