



WATERFRONT DISTRICT

MINTUES

The Waterfront District BIA

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

Monday, February 9, 2026

INVITED: John Murray, Chair
 Thomas Trist, Vice Chair
 Peter White, Past Chair
 Robyn Despins, Director
 Jordan Calonego, Director
 Connor Remus, Director
 Andrew Foulds, Councillor
 Kara Pratt, Recording Secretary

TENTATIVE:

REGRETS: Frank Marino, Director

GUEST(S): Daniel Trevisanutto & Sonia Kruger – Our Kids Count (Ribfest)

LOCATION/TIME: Goods & Co – Catered Snacks from off-site at 5:30 pm, in person.

Meeting Link:
Meeting ID:
Passcode:

Item	Description	Action
1.0	Meeting Call to Order and Disclosures of Interest Called to order @ 5:38 pm	
2.0	Approval of Agenda Motion: 2026-07 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: P. White Request to add labour relations/personnel concerns under New Business at the end of the meeting.	
3.0	Presentations Daniel Trevisanutto & Sonia Kruger – Our Kids Count (Ribfest)	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer in the Parks is using Marina Park on Wednesday-Thursday, making it unavailable for Ribfest, which runs Thursday – Sunday. • Two ribbers would set up in the Casino parking lot; Harbourfest activations on Red River Road. • Event goal: raise funds for Our Kids Count (OKC) and create a strong family/kids area. • Encourage BIA businesses and artisans to activate sidewalks and connect with local organizations. • Mutually beneficial partnership between the BIA and OKC. • OKC brings experienced volunteers and handles applications; BIA provides support and promotion. • Dates: August 27–30 (weekend before the long weekend), 11 a.m.–10 p.m. • Ribbers are travelling vendors (flat truck fee); open to including a local ribber. • BIA support: promote 50/50 (QR codes at checkouts), coordinate bands/local talent/dance studios, liaise with businesses. • Loose non-competition clause (no rib duplication). • Opportunity to engage businesses pre-event (e.g., “Ultimate Burger Battle” style lead-in). • Exploring joint Harbourfest/Ribfest marketing with Sociable Solutions. 	
4.0	<p>Approval of Minutes – January 12, 2026 – <i>sent electronically</i></p> <p>Motion: 2026-08 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: C. Remus</p>	Carried
5.0	<p>Business Arising from Past Minutes Confidentiality Agreement</p> <p>Sent out to BIA Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures • City of Thunder Bay Committee Orientation Presentation • City of Thunder Bay Code of Conduct • Gift Disclosure Policy • Supply Management Policy • Disclosure of Interest Guidelines • Transparency Disclosure Policy • Accessibility Training Booklet <p>R. Despina presented the list of documents for the BIA Board to review and sign – the top high-level items. The WDBIA Falls under the Municipal Act – attend meetings, review materials in advance, Closed session for Board only – the important thing about closed sessions or in camera sessions is they are not discussed outside of the closed session. Information – cannot be disclosed outside of in camera/closed sessions. Public audited financials can be shared outside of</p>	

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	<p>the Board. A. Foulds has mentioned the integrity commissioner. In the Board meeting is when to bring forward concerns and critical commentary can be made in the meeting – the Board Members are in solidarity with the decision.</p> <p>Summary of the topics and closing the loop.</p> <p>Forward to T. Trist and F. Marino for signature, as they were not in attendance at the meeting.</p>	
6.0	Reports	
6.1	<p>Chair's Report –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committee priorities – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Each committee to set up a regular monthly meeting (fixed schedule) b. Create top three priorities for the year c. Create a basic budget – connect with ED for previous budgets, if applicable. 2. Minutes from the most recent Executive Meeting (if applicable) <p>P. White spoke about how the AGM feedback highlighted an opportunity to better communicate the Board's work and successes. A moment for reflection and alignment.</p> <p>2024/25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red River Road construction was successfully navigated after years of planning; overall feedback has been positive aside from parking impacts. • Strong community programming: Tonka Tuesdays, Grinch event, Craft Revival, Harbourfest, Horse & Carriage, Canada Summer Jobs positions, and enhanced groundskeeping/sidewalk clean-up. • Retention of the Crooks lot pending future planning decisions. • Launch of Harbourfest. • Advancement of the Smart Growth Action Plan. • Implementation of 2-hour on-street parking. • Development of a Strategic Plan. • Introduction of the Ambassador Program. <p>Key message: recognize the progress, stay unified, and remember this work is important and led by a volunteer Board.</p>	
6.2	<p>ED Report –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Canada Summer Jobs - Applied for summer employees and placed in order of priority <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Convention and special events planner (Priority: 1) ii. Ambassador x 2 (Priority: 2) iii. Social media coordinator (Priority: 3) 	

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	<p style="text-align: center;">iv. Art coordinator - education (Priority: 4) v. Fundraising organizer (Priority: 5) b. NOHFC (no update)</p> <p>2. Growth / Strat Planning –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how to operationalize the strategic plan to create and align the ED work plan, create an annual action/work plan tied to budget and strategic objectives. • Clarify reporting requirements and progress updates. • Consider using a work plan template – look at examples from other organizations. • Form an ad hoc committee to ensure objectives are practical and actionable. • Aim to approve the Strategic Plan at the next meeting and move forward with annual review, action planning, and HR alignment. <p>Motion to refer to the framework in principle, refer it to the executive team, to either edit and create the plan – the work plan is reflective of the strategic plan, capacity and the budget – report back one month after the city council approves the budget. Come back with recommendations to the Board.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-08 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: R. Despins</p> <p>3. Ambassador & Safe Streets actions from Elevate – No update 4. Connaught Square discussion with Waverley Library – Follow-up</p>	Carried
6.2	<p>Finance Committee – Robyn</p> <p>1) Financial Statements – Confidential November and December 2025 financials were distributed to Waterfront District BIA Board members on February 9, 2026, reviewed, initialed, and returned.</p> <p>As new Treasurer, R. Despins requested clarification on financial disclosure policies, noting the statements are unaudited and intended to remain confidential to the Board. Discussion focused on what budget information can be shared publicly, with agreement to report on variances to the membership. R. Despins will develop clearer financial reporting guidelines for the future.</p> <p>A variance at the end of 2025 was noted, and adjustments are anticipated in the 2026 budget.</p> <p>2) Sponsorship Requests – a) Business: Wiggins Productions i) Amount: \$1,000 in BIA BUCKS / 2 events (\$500 per event)</p>	Information

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	<p>ii) Bucks/Advertising: As part of Rainbow Collective's 1st ever Frost Festival (Winter Pride), Drag Bingo, Wed. Feb 25 at Nortenos Cantina (18+), and Diva's Trivia Night: Queer Pop Culture, Thurs Feb 26 at Pocketchange (19+). Both events are free to attend and aim to provide enjoyable experiences that celebrate diversity and promote community engagement within the downtown core.</p> <p>Recommendation: \$1,000 in BIA Bucks – free events, ROI most likely due to the accepting nature of BIA Businesses.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-09 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: J. Calonego</p> <p>b) Business: Thunder Bay District Health Unit</p> <p>i) Amount: \$200 in BIA Bucks to align with \$200 Gift Certificate Purchase</p> <p>ii) Bucks/Advertising: Waterfront BIA will be highlighted as a sponsor through TBayOnTheMove.ca website, our social media networks and any opportunity we have in any promotion, events or initiatives.</p> <p>Recommendation: Align with past sponsorships of \$200 in BIA Bucks to promote active transportation. Harder push with the accessible streetscapes and bike lock-ups on the new streetscape. Potential of collaborative posts.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-10 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: R. Despins</p> <p>c) Business: Finlandia Co-operative of Thunder Bay</p> <p>i) Mailing Address: 234 Van Norman Street, Thunder Bay, ON, P7A 4B8, Canada</p> <p>ii) Amount: \$500</p> <p>iii) Bucks/Advertising: We will be advertising our event.</p> <p>iv) Description of Recognition: Display BIA logo on our advertising, and to shout you out before/during the event as one of our sponsors</p> <p>v) Description of Event/project: Annual St. Urho's Day parade and event that will be happening on March 14th, 2026. We will start by holding a parade from Bay and Algoma heading towards the downtown core. Once at Goods and Co, the parade will transition into a party for the afternoon: live entertainment (songs, comedy, dancing, etc.), local vendors, food sales, and more will draw people downtown. The previous two events post-pandemic have attracted more than 200 people.</p> <p>Recommendation: \$250 in BIA Bucks to promote the afterparty.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-11 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: C. Remus</p>	<p>Carried</p> <p>Carried</p> <p>Carried</p>

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	<p>d) Business: Coopérative Centre francophone de Thunder Bay / Festival BONJOUR</p> <p>i) Mailing Address: 234 Van Norman Street, Thunder Bay, ON, P7A 4B8</p> <p>ii) Amount: \$2,000</p> <p>iii) Bucks/Advertising: Support with advertising would be essential</p> <p>Recommendation: Met with the BIA Marketing Committee. C. Remus to discuss sponsorship proposal - \$2000-\$2500 for assistance with the event.</p> <p>Discussion focused on a request for cash support for summer event entertainment. While there is interest in supporting the initiative, the preference is to explore alternative, non-cash ways to contribute. There is a desire to build stronger alignment and synergy between the organizations before committing further. Capacity limitations make it difficult to pilot additional support this year, and there is consideration of in-kind contributions and potential associate BIA membership to formalize the relationship moving forward.</p> <p>Move - \$1000 BIA Bucks, in-kind assistance with supporting the BIA Businesses.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-12 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: R. Despins</p> <p>e) Business: Catholic Women's League of Canada -2026</p> <p>i) Mailing Address: 358 Hodder Avenue, Thunder Bay, ON</p> <p>ii) Amount: \$3,000</p> <p>iii) Bucks/Advertising: Yes</p> <p>Recommendation: Awaiting response from the Catholic Women's League of Canada for clarification on the request.</p>	Carried
6.3	<p>Infrastructure/Beautification Committee – John & Tom</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Court St S adjustments – No update 2. Cumberland St is on the 2026 budget – Information session Feb 10 @ Café Ora 3. Mall St. Moving forward – Artwork to be installed in 2026 (no update) 4. Patios – Request to meet with CoTB administration to discuss 2026-2028 Patio seasons. Sent email, awaiting response. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consistency in patios? 	
6.4	<p>Marketing, Events & Promotion Committee – Tom, Connor & Maelyn (public)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Media – from the budget up to \$50/ week will be spent to promote the weekend round-up. 	Information

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Clothing options for Board Members/Staff 3. FestivalBONJOUR 4. See Strat Directions for planning events. 5. Harbourfest/ Brew Ha <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assistance with sponsorship b. Long-term road closure – parking concerns? c. Business social promotions – collaborations & event calendar. 	
6.5	<p>Membership Services Committee – Robyn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CRM – Creating an online form for uploads ((ongoing) no update) 2. New Members – J. Murray & T. Trist update on letter delivery – introduce the BIA to the New Members – to meet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hoito b. WWF 3. Associate Memberships 2025/2026 boundary expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rates for 2026 (Two tiers – Tier 1 \$350, Tier 2 \$700) 4. Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tracking and Engaging with Membership b. Membership Growth and Economic Development c. Value Perception and Member Awareness 5. AGM – Most recent discussions 6. Town Hall – Awaiting CoTB Response for date options (set date options) 7. Tracking and engaging members – develop framework to move forward. 	Information/ Discussion
6.6	<p>Safety & Security – Peter, John & Tom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chamber Chat w. BIAs, BAs and Mall 2. Connect with Chief Fleury & EMS - Action – Following up on reporting concerns. 3. Ambassador Program – CoTB budget dependent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. BIA Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Walk parkades ii. Visit businesses b. Ambassadors program – working on it and great to see it come together. Awaiting next steps. There is a strategy – multiple tiers of the program, by law program, ambassadors’ program, encampment response, and 8 special constables (police). 4. Reporting – Communicate to members that it is needed for stats/funding. 5. Online tutorial for the online reporting. 	Discussion Discussion/ Information
6.8	<p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board Meeting Schedule – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o March 9, 2026 o April 13, 2026 o May 11, 2026 o June 8, 2026 	

Item	Description	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ July 13, 2026 ○ August 10, 2026 ○ September 14, 2026 	
7.0	Correspondence –	
8.0	<p>New Business – Brew Ha information – brought to share with BIA Board member. No action at this time.</p> <p>OBIAA Conference to attend - John Murray & Kara Pratt. In budget for 2026. K. Pratt will update once all is booked. K. Pratt will be part of a panel on construction in the cores and how to work within a limited budget for marketing and last-minute changes/updates.</p> <p>Motion to move into discussion about Labour Relations – move to in camera/ closed session. K. Pratt asked to leave for the duration of the discussion.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-13 Moved by: P. White Seconded by: A. Foulds</p> <p>Motion A. Foulds directed to proceed to move as directed in closed session.</p> <p>Motion: 2026-14 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: C. Remus</p>	<p>Update</p> <p>Information</p> <p>Closed Session</p>
9.0	<p>Next Meeting – March 9, 2026</p> <p>Adjournment – 8:04 pm</p> <p>Motion: 2026- 15 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: C. Remus.</p>	