



WATERFRONT DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Waterfront District BIA

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

Monday, March 9, 2026

INVITED: John Murray, Chair
Thomas Trist, Vice Chair
Peter White, Past Chair
Jordan Calonego, Director
Frank Marino, Director
Andrew Foulds, Councillor
Kara Pratt, Recording Secretary

TENTATIVE:

REGRETS: Robyn Despins, Director
Connor Remus, Director

GUEST(S):

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

Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2781002430?pwd=K2RPSnFqWVdKNityRIB2bTlldnpWZz09&omn=86035707500>

Meeting ID: 278 100 2430

Passcode: WDBIA

Item	Description	Action
1.0	Meeting Call to Order and Disclosures of Interest Called to order @ 6:33 (after the Presentation by Cynthia Orr & Rilee Willianen) No disclosures of interest	
2.0	Approval of Agenda Motion: 2026-16 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: J. Calonego	Carried
3.0	Presentations Presentation by Cynthia Orr & Rilee Willianen Re: CoTB Potential Designated Encampment Sites The key themes and considerations heard from the Board:	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about the distance guidelines and guiding criteria used to identify potential sites. Feedback noted on the importance of ensuring the presence of nearby businesses, particularly tourism-oriented businesses in the waterfront area, is considered when evaluating potential locations. • Concerns related to pedestrian safety and driver sightlines in the roundabout area near the Freedom Park site. Feedback that some of the other potential sites (e.g., Current River Park) may provide greater visibility and situational awareness for drivers and surrounding users of the space. • Concerns raised regarding Freedom Park specifically, particularly given the businesses and school in the area, and the level of public investment in the waterfront area, with members noting the potential implications of locating a designated encampment site near the entrance to the downtown and marina. • Safety concerns related to proximity to rail infrastructure and the water. • Questions about how the City would prevent encampment sprawl or expansion into nearby areas, including the McVicar Creek corridor. • Questions about how the City would manage capacity and potential overflow, as well as how encampments located outside of designated areas would be addressed. • Events within the BIA & area with beverages and entertainment in the streets. Unpredictable individuals are a deterrent to members of the public. • Two things are true at once: vulnerable people need help, and businesses need assistance. The City of Thunder Bay must and is looking at both sides. • Questions about the Temporary Village in the Intercity Area. 	
4.0	<p>Approval of Minutes – February 9, 2026 – <i>sent electronically</i></p> <p>Motion: 2026-17 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by:</p>	Carried
5.0	<p>Business Arising from Past Minutes Confidentiality Agreement - Collect any outstanding BIA Board Member Acknowledgement Letters</p>	
6.0	<p>Reports</p>	
6.1	<p>Chair's Report –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committee priorities – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Follow up with each committee, requesting their regular meeting schedule b. Each committee should refer to the Strategic Plan to create their top three priorities for 2026. 2. Minutes from the most recent Executive Meeting (if applicable) 	

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	<p>3. Discussion regarding the composition of the BIA Board – Concerns have been brought forward that there are open positions on the Board, and moving forward with the minimum number. Since the Board has decided, based on the timing of the fall election and staff resources the minimum of eight (8) Board Members be maintained until the election, or a Board Member resigns:</p> <p>The Waterfront District BIA Board of Management is committed to maintaining effective governance and operational continuity; AND WHEREAS the Board currently has no fewer than eight (8) members, meeting the minimum composition required to conduct its business; AND WHEREAS the next Board election is scheduled to take place in the Fall of 2026; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Management will continue to operate with a minimum of eight (8) Board members until the Fall 2026 election; AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT this resolution be forwarded to City Council for its information; AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council may provide input or direction, if deemed necessary; AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT forwarding this resolution supports transparency by ensuring the decision is part of the public record.</p> <p><i>Motion: 2026-18</i> Moved by: P. White Seconded by: J. Calonego</p> <p>4. <i>Strike a Nomination Committee for the 2026 Fall Election of the Board</i></p>	<p>Carried</p> <p>Action</p>
<p>6.2</p>	<p><i>ED Report –</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Canada Summer Jobs – Awaiting Response – Suggest posting jobs with the condition that they are based on funding. b. NOHFC – Connect for possible funding w/ CoTB c. ROD Grant – reach out to CoTB 2. Growth / Strat Planning – reviewed the summary document from Compass and made some suggestions. 3. Ambassador & Safe Streets actions from Elevate & CoTB <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Elevate is on hold b. CoTB, following up to meet for preliminary planning 4. Connaught Square discussion with Waverley Library 5. Cumberland St Redesign – February 10th – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Requested the City start at Pearl and work North to reduce disruption.</i> • <i>Peeling concrete on Red River Road and St. Paul St brought forward - reported through Public Works/Dispatch for Infrastructure & Operations</i> 	<p>Updates</p> <p>Action</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Snow clearing concerns have been significant this year, as there has been a lot of snow. Suggest a new standards evaluation for the Downtown cores – a standard deviation for all of the downtowns.</i> <p>6. Task Force Growth Update – <i>The next step is Hiring Project Managers in the Growth Department.</i></p> <p>7. Panel Presentation at EDCO – February 2-3, 2026</p> <p>8. Panel Presentation at OBIAA Conference – April 22, 2026</p>	Updates
6.2	<p>Finance Committee – Robyn (Deferred due to absence)</p> <p>1) Financial Statements – January 2026</p> <p>2) Audit/Financial Reporting</p> <p>a) MNP invoices a charge of \$1,000.00 for assistance with drafting the financial statements. Bookkeeper 4 You now has an in-house CPA who can draft these statements for a fee of \$700.00, which would then be submitted to the auditors for the year-end. Should the Board approve to proceed, Bookkeeper 4 You will forward a formal proposal for this service.</p> <p>Request that the proposal be sent to R. Despina to present at the April 2026 BIA meeting.</p> <p>Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:</p>	Action
6.3	<p>Infrastructure/Beautification Committee – John & Tom</p> <p>1. Court St S adjustments – No update</p> <p>2. Cumberland St - on CoTB Bid & Tenders Site, BIA office has preliminary drawings available.</p> <p>3. Mall St. Moving forward – Artwork to be installed in 2026 (no update)</p> <p>4. Patios – Request to meet with CoTB administration to discuss 2026-2028 Patio seasons. Sent email, awaiting response.</p>	Information
6.4	<p>Marketing, Events & Promotion Committee – Tom, Connor & Maelyn (public)</p> <p>1. Social Media – from the budget of up to \$50/ week will be spent to promote the weekend round-up.</p> <p>2. Clothing options for Board Members/Staff</p> <p>3. See Strat Directions for planning events – <i>3 Signature events, 6 shoulder season activations, and 4 placemaking pilots over the next 5 years. Questions about the Strategic Plan//Strategic Objectives – K. Pratt to follow up with Options to meet.</i></p> <p>4. Ribfest in the Heart of the Harbour – August 27-30th</p> <p>a. Harbourfest Stage</p>	Action
6.5	<p>Membership Services Committee – Robyn (Deferred due to absence)</p>	

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	<p>Motion to direct administration to investigate the possibility of hosting a beer-centred event in the BIA</p> <p>Motion: 2026-21 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: F. Marino</p>	Carried/Action
9.0	<p>Next Meeting – April 13, 2026</p> <p>Adjournment – 7:32 pm Motion: 2026- 22 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: A. Foulds</p>	Carried