

The Waterfront District BIA

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

Monday, August 10, 2026

INVITED:

Jim Comuzzi, Chair
 Jordan Calonego, Vice Chair
 Robyn Despina, Treasurer
 Peter White, Past Chair
 John Murray, Director
 Connor Remus, Director
 Nikos Mantis, Director
 Andrew Foulds, Councillor
 Kara Pratt, Recording Secretary

TENTATIVE:

REGRETS:

Sarah Boyechko, Director
 Frank Marino, 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=84651952044>

Meeting ID: 278 100 2430

Passcode: WDBIA

Item	Description	Action
1.0	Meeting Call to Order and Disclosures of Interest Called to order – 5:32 pm Disclosures of Interest: None Board Chair and Vice Chair Update A resignation has been received from Board Chair John Murray, who has indicated his intention to remain on the Board of Management. As a result, the Board will need to address the Chair position at the beginning of the meeting and, in accordance with the BIA's Operating	

Item	Description	Action
	Procedures, open nominations and elect a new Chair before proceeding with the regular meeting business. The Board will also address the vacant Vice Chair position at the same time. Nominations will be opened for Vice Chair and the Board will elect a Vice Chair to serve for the remainder of the current Board term. These leadership changes will also allow the Executive Committee to begin succession planning in advance of the fall Board election, recognizing that the composition of the Executive may change following the election. Motion: That the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management accept the resignation of John Murray as Chair of the Board, effective upon the election of a new Chair, in support of succession planning and a smooth leadership transition in advance of the 2026 Board election, and that John Murray continue to serve as a member of the Board of Management for the remainder of his appointed term. Motion: 2026-53 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: A. Foulds Chair Motion: That nominations be opened for the position of Chair of the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management. Motion: That nominations for Chair be closed and that Jim Comuzzi be appointed as Chair of the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management, effective August 10, 2026, for the remainder of the current Board term. Motion: 2026-54 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: A. Foulds Vice Chair Motion: That nominations be opened for the position of Vice Chair of the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management. Motion: That nominations for Vice Chair be closed and that Jordan Calonego be appointed as Vice Chair of the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management, effective August 10, 2026, for the remainder of the current Board term. Motion: 2026-55 Moved by: P. White Seconded by: J. Comuzzi	Carried Carried Carried
2.0	Approval of Agenda	

Item	Description	Action
	Motion: That the Board approve the Agenda as amended by removing Strategic Plan Priorities from the Chair's Report and retaining Strategic Plan Priorities under Business Arising from Past Minutes. Motion: 2026-56 Moved by: J. Murray Seconded by: R. Despins	Carried
3.0	Presentations	
4.0	Approval of Minutes – June 29, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes Recommendation: That the June 29, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes be approved as circulated. Motion: 2026-57 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: J. Murray July 12, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes Recommendation: That the July 12, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes be approved as circulated. Motion: 2026-58 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: C. Remus	Carried Carried
5.0	Business Arising from Past Minutes 1. Strategic Plan Priorities Update: Board members were asked to review the Strategic Objectives prepared by Compass Leadership and provide feedback at the August meeting. Motion: That the Board adopt the Strategic Plan as it was prepared by Compass Leadership. Motion: 2026-59 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: C. Remus 2. Update from Councillor Andrew Foulds Update: Councillor Foulds to provide an update regarding discussions with City Manager John Collin. Unable to connect with City Manager Collin but was able to connect with the Acting City Manager. Discussion over who has jurisdiction for what and the CoTB workload. CoTB has offered to send a representative to the next Waterfront District BIA meeting. 3. Red River Road Delivery Access, Parking & Business Feedback	Carried Update

Item	Description	Action
	Update: The draft business survey has been circulated to the Board for review. The Board is asked to establish a timeline for distribution and completion. Once finalized, survey results will be compiled and presented to the City of Thunder Bay to support discussions on practical solutions to improve business access, deliveries, parking, and traffic flow within the Waterfront District. Recommendation: That the Board approve the survey for distribution and authorize staff to compile the results and arrange a meeting with the City upon completion. Motion: 2026-60 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: N. Mantis Discussion: A physical survey is not realistic; a letter is more realistic. Add a QR code to the bottom of the letter to link to the survey. For those unable to use the QR code, take down their email and send the survey. Provide a paper survey to those who request it. 4. Saturday Parking Availability Update: Discussion regarding the Paramount Parking Lot, which is currently leased by Dilico six days per week, and the impact on customer parking. A draft letter has been prepared requesting consideration of free public parking on Saturdays to better support Waterfront District businesses. Motion: That the Board approve the letter to Dilico requesting consideration of Saturday public parking access. Motion: 2026-61 Moved by: N. Mantis Seconded by: A. Foulds 5. Remaining Budget Allocations & Potential Projects Remaining budget allocations include: \$5,000 – North Core Business Assistance Program Safety & Security Budget Potential beautification project: Decorative electrical box wrap on Mall Street Potential sponsorship opportunity with Nadin Contracting City approval will be required before installation. Recommendation: That the Board provide direction regarding the use of the remaining budget allocations and proposed beautification project.	Carried Carried

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	Discussion: Wrapping boxes reduces low level crime/ graffiti in the area and beautifies the BIA. Cannot commit to doing the wraps until Harbourfest expenses are reconciled. The budget will be reviewed this fall and dollars redistributed, if needed. Bring this forward to the September meeting. *No motion required.	Discussion
6.0	Reports	
6.1	Chair's Report – 1. Executive Committee Recommendation Receive the Executive's comparison of the July 13, 2026 <i>"Additional Information – Motions for Consideration"</i> against the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures for information. Confirm that future governance recommendations will continue to be evaluated against the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures, the <i>Municipal Act</i>, the City of Thunder Bay Code of Conduct, Procurement Policy, and other applicable legislation and policies before implementation. Recommended Motion That the Board receive the Executive's comparison of the July 13, 2026 <i>"Additional Information – Motions for Consideration"</i> against the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures for information. Further That, the Board reaffirm that governance decisions shall be made in accordance with the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures, the <i>Municipal Act</i>, applicable City of Thunder Bay policies, and approved Board procedures. Further That, where the Board wishes to adopt governance practices beyond the current requirements of the Operating Procedures or applicable legislation, staff be directed to bring forward proposed amendments to the appropriate policies or procedures for the Board's consideration. Motion: 2026-62 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: J. Murray Discussion: If a Board Member requests work or an item that falls outside the Executive Director's regular day-to-day duties, priorities need to be decided collectively by the Board of Management. Regular duties are part of the normal course of business. Anything outside of those duties should be directed through a Board or Executive resolution. Individual opinions should not determine priorities.	Carried

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	The new Executive Committee should meet with the Executive Director to review the current workload and determine what should be added, removed, or reprioritized. 2. Strategic Plan Priorities (see Business Arising from Past Minutes Strategic Plan Priorities)	
6.2	ED Report – 1. Canada Summer Jobs Program Update: Summer staff continue to make strong progress across several priority initiatives. Attached reports have been submitted by the Events Coordinator, Mural Coordinator, and Grant Coordinator outlining current projects and accomplishments. 2. Task Force Growth Update: No update at this time. 3. Strategic Planning Update: The revised Strategic Plan prepared by Compass Leadership has been redistributed to the Board for review. Staff continue to recommend that the Board consider engaging an external facilitator to lead a one-and-a-half-day workshop focused on district revitalization, activation strategies, and implementation priorities. 4. Neighbourhood Navigator Program (CoTB) Update: A preliminary meeting has been held with the Fort William BIA and the City of Thunder Bay to discuss the proposed Neighbourhood Navigator program. Additional information is expected from the City as the initiative develops. Administrative Progress Update Completed • Strategic Plan redistributed to the Board. • OBIAA Board Election Toolkit redistributed. • Summer staff onboarding and project assignments completed. In Progress • Member priorities survey. • Harbourfest planning. • BrewHa support. • Fall Board Election preparation, including voter eligibility lists, AGM planning, Board applications, and election materials. • Letter regarding weekend public use of the Paramount Parking Lot. • Cigarette butt receptacle project and related security solutions. • Tracking groundskeeper maintenance hours and district repairs.	Update

Item	Description	Action
	Upcoming • Member Town Hall planning. • 2027 budget preparation. • Preliminary holiday campaign planning. • 2027 flower RFP preparation. • Funding applications and approvals for 2027 initiatives. Board Direction & Administrative Updates 2027 Budget Update: The City of Thunder Bay has requested preliminary 2027 budgets by September 25, 2026. Presentations to the City's Executive Leadership Team are expected between October 19 and November 6, with final approval anticipated in January 2027. A draft Waterfront District BIA budget will be presented to the Board at the September meeting. Marketing & Data Collection Initiative Update: Discussions continue regarding the proposed \$2,500 marketing and data collection initiative. Staff are exploring opportunities to align this work with a potential Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC) project and are awaiting further information. Executive Director's Summary Update: Summer operations continue to be exceptionally active. Current priorities include supervision of five (now four) Canada Summer Jobs staff, coordination with construction stakeholders, Harbourfest planning, 2027 budget preparation, funding applications, holiday planning, procurement for seasonal beautification, and ongoing support to businesses affected by construction. Recommendation: That the Executive Director's Report be received for information. Motion: 2026-63 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: A. Foulds	Carried
6.3	Finance Committee – Robyn 1. Agenda Terminology Update: To better reflect the current reporting structure, it is recommended that the agenda heading be updated from Finance Committee to Treasurer's Report. Motion: That the Board approve the change to the agenda heading. Motion: 2026-64 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: J. Calonego	Carried

Item	Description	Action
	2. Financial Information Requests & Governance. Update: The City Clerk's Office has advised that any request to provide historical financial information to a Board member requires Board approval. The Clerk's Office also advised that providing historical general ledger information is not considered a governance best practice, as the Board's role is to provide strategic oversight while operational records remain the responsibility of staff. It has also been identified that members have approached individual Board members with financial questions. To ensure consistent, accurate, and transparent communication, member inquiries should be brought forward to the Board through the normal correspondence process before responses are provided. Motion: To release two years of financial information to anyone who requests it – Board or Membership. Motion: 2026- Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: None Not carried/Struck down Motion: That the Board establish a consistent process for responding to member inquiries and determine what historical information, if any, should be released via the Board Chair. Motion: 2026-65 Moved by: A. Foulds Seconded by: P. White Discussion: Requests must come in writing to the Board of Management. Formal request of the Board. Bring forward to the Board via a motion to do, then the Board votes.	Not Carried Carried
	3. CoTB - 2027 Budget Request from the City Manager Update: Letter from City Manager Collin sent to BIA Board with details of the request. Budget is due September 25th to the Senior Management Team with the CoTB. A draft budget will be brought to the September 14, 2026 Board Meeting.	Update
	4. Treasurer's Report – for The Waterfront District BIA, For the Period Ending June 30, 2026 As of June 30, 2026, The Waterfront District BIA continues to maintain a stable financial position. Total assets at month-end were \$127,113.17, total	

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	liabilities were \$101,958.72, and net assets/equity were \$25,154.45. Year-to-date net income was \$17,383.44. Cash and near-cash balances totaled \$104,373.64 at month-end, consisting of the operating bank account of \$98,396.96, GIC holdings of \$5,225.42, petty cash of \$151.26, and \$600.00 awaiting deposit. The June 30 bank statement balance was \$98,396.96. The Scotiabank Visa was reconciled through June 14, 2026, with no adjustment required. Accounts receivable totaled \$7,341.21, consisting primarily of \$3,569.56 due from the Canada Revenue Agency, \$1,962.87 from the Prince Arthur Waterfront Hotel, \$1,400.00 from Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, and \$408.78 from the City of Thunder Bay - CEDC. Accounts payable totaled \$27,113.17 and relates mainly to \$13,831.20 owing to 1928020 Ontario Ltd. and \$7,823.78 owing to Creekside Nursery & Garden Centre. Current liabilities also include \$44,440.00 in gift certificate accruals, \$21,870.00 in BIA Buck accruals, and a \$6,500.00 strategic plan accrual. These balances represent funds committed to specific programs or obligations. Year-to-date operating revenue was \$122,234.54. Total cost of goods sold was \$28,939.28, and total operating expenses were \$75,675.59, including payroll of \$52,785.07 and general and administrative expenses of \$21,570.52. Strategic plan expense exceeded the annual budget allocation by \$6,955.42, seasonal beautification exceeded budget by \$2,045.56, and travel, meetings and conferences exceeded budget by \$2,021.24. Several other program, event, marketing and beautification budget allocations remain available for the balance of the year. Canada Summer Jobs Payroll Note: Payroll costs will increase in the coming reporting periods due to the students hired under the Canada Summer Jobs program. The related funding request will be submitted for fund transfer after August 28, 2026. Accordingly, the payroll expense will be reflected in the financial statements before the corresponding funding is received. Overall, the BIA remains in a favourable financial position at the halfway point of the fiscal year, with sufficient cash resources to meet current obligations and planned activities. Motion: That the Treasurer's Report and financial statements for the period ending June 30, 2026 be received and accepted as presented. Motion: 2026-66 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: J. Calonego	Carried

Item	Description	Action
	1) Sponsorship Requests • Applicant: Magnus Theatre (Alexis Rowlinson) • Request: \$800 in BIA Bucks Recommendation: That the Waterfront District BIA Board approve the request from Magnus Theatre for \$800 in BIA Bucks to be provided to approximately 80 visiting artists as part of their seasonal welcome packages. This initiative supports the BIA's goal of encouraging visitors to explore and spend within the Waterfront District, while Magnus Theatre provides in-kind program advertising and promotional opportunities for BIA members. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve providing \$800 in BIA Bucks to Magnus Theatre to support their visiting artist welcome package initiative, with recognition provided through in-kind program advertising and promotional opportunities. Motion: 2026-67 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: J. Calonego • Applicant: Lucky Paranormal / Lake Superior Paracon (Gail Willis) • Request: \$700 in BIA Bucks and \$500 advertising sponsorship Recommendation: That the Waterfront District BIA Board approve the request from Lake Superior Paracon for \$500 in BIA Bucks to support the 2026 event. The sponsorship will promote Waterfront District businesses through door prizes, event recognition, and marketing opportunities while encouraging attendees to visit local businesses during the convention. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve providing \$500 in BIA Bucks to Lake Superior Paracon in support of their October 2026 event, with recognition provided through event marketing, sponsor acknowledgements, and promotion of Waterfront District businesses. Amended Motion THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve providing \$500 in BIA Bucks to Lake Superior Paracon in support of their October 2026 event, with the BIA Bucks to be used to purchase Gift Certificates from Waterfront District BIA member businesses for use as door prizes, with recognition provided through event marketing, sponsor acknowledgements, and promotion of Waterfront District businesses. Motion: 2026-67 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: J. Murray • Applicant: Wiggins Productions (Jimmy Wiggins) • Request: \$500 advertising sponsorship	Carried Carried

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	Recommendation: That the Waterfront District BIA Board approve the request from Wiggins Productions for \$500 in advertising sponsorship for the ThunderCon Drag Show. The event supports local artists, contributes to an inclusive downtown experience, and encourages attendees to visit Waterfront District businesses. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve providing \$500 in advertising sponsorship to Wiggins Productions for the ThunderCon Drag Show taking place during ThunderCon 2026, with recognition provided through promotional materials, social media, and event acknowledgements. Motion: 2026-68 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: J. Murray	Carried
6.4	Infrastructure/Beautification Committee – John 1. Court Street South Update: The contractor continues to await direction from the City of Thunder Bay regarding the next phase of work on Court Street South. 2. Construction & Streetscape Update Update: • The City has advised that the concrete deterioration observed within portions of the new streetscape is a systemic issue rather than an isolated defect. The affected areas will be addressed through the project's warranty process as deficiencies are identified and corrected. • Traffic signals at Red River Road and Court Street have been installed. • The Mall Street planter is anticipated to be substantially complete, with the evergreen tree to be installed once available from the supplier. 3. Cumberland Street Update: Construction continues, with staff maintaining regular communication with contractors and the City regarding business access (as needed) and project updates to general membership. 4. Bench Maintenance Update: BIA Groundskeeper has spent 4 days on a small section of the benches to treat them with Teak Oil. The weather has not been ideal for additional treatments. Also, the BIA is awaiting instruction as to who holds the responsibility for the maintenance of the benches.	Updates
6.5	Marketing, Events & Promotion Committee – Connor Update: Current priorities include –	

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	1. Harbourfest planning Motion: To have the City of Thunder Bay provide clarification on what defines a stage and what requires certification. Motion: 2026-69 Moved by: C. Remus Seconded by: R. Despins 2. BrewHa 2.0 Update: Brew Ha! 2.0 We would like to officially lock on Friday September 25th for Brew Ha! 2.0. I know that gives us a pretty quick turnaround, but I really think we can make it work if the committee can divide and conquer. There's lots to do, but we'll keep you all posted on ways you might be able to help. Our immediate committee to-do list includes: 1. Sponsorships – Get sponsorship packages out and start following up with potential sponsors. 2. Printing & Glassware – Source pricing/options and get these moving as soon as possible. 3. Posters & Social Media – Get promotional materials finalized and start pushing the event across our channels. 4. Participating Venues – Start reaching out and confirming who would like to participate. Motion: Put forward a budget of \$5,000 for BrewHa 2.0. Motion: 2026-70 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: J. Murray 3. Board and staff apparel options Deferred to the 2026-2030 Board of Management. Ensure there is some budget for the design and purchase of apparel for Board Members to wear to events. 4. Development of the 2026–2027 Integrated Marketing Communications Plan 5. Alignment of future events with Strategic Plan priorities No motions required.	Carried Carried
6.6	Membership Services Committee – Robyn 1. Member Town Hall – September 16, 2026 Update: Proposed Member Town Hall to be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, from 4:00–7:00 p.m., pending venue confirmation. Event to be	

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	hosted at a local venue where attendees may purchase their own food and beverages. Staff are confirming an appropriate location and event logistics. Recommendation: That the Board approve the proposed Town Hall date and authorize staff to finalize the venue and event details. That the Board support inviting City representatives to participate in the Town Hall and endorse the event as an opportunity for member engagement and education. The Waterfront District BIA Board directs staff to invite appropriate City of Thunder Bay representatives to participate in the September 16, 2026, Member Town Hall to provide information and respond to member questions regarding City projects, services, and initiatives affecting the Waterfront District, and to provide information on the upcoming BIA Board election. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve hosting a Member Town Hall on September 16, 2026, from 4:00–7:00 p.m., and authorize staff to finalize the venue and event logistics (pending venue confirmation). Motion: 2026-71 Moved by: R. Despins Seconded by: J. Calonego 2. Member Town Hall – Election Information & City Engagement Covered in the motion above. 3. New Business Outreach Update: Welcome letters have been delivered to new businesses within the Waterfront District. Staff will continue outreach to new businesses as they open within the district. 4. AGM & Board Election Planning Update: Planning continues for the Annual General Meeting and 2026 Board Election, including preparation of election materials, audited financial statements, member communications, and Board recruitment initiatives.	Carried Updates
6.7	Safety & Security – Peter, John 1. Downtown Core Stabilization Initiative Update: Project Support has been extended through September. Staff will continue monitoring the program and sharing updates as they become available. 2. Neighbourhood Navigator Update: Initial discussions have been held with the City of Thunder Bay and the Fort William BIA. Additional information is anticipated as the program develops. Direction: BIA ED to reach out to the appropriate department for an update, if any.	Updates

Item	Description	Action
	3. Incident Reporting Update: Businesses continue to be encouraged to report incidents to the appropriate agencies. Consistent reporting helps support funding requests, resource allocation, and informed decision-making by partner organizations.	
6.8	Administration 1. Board Meeting Schedule Update: Upcoming Board meetings - - September 14, 2026 - October 12, 2026 (Adjust due to Thanksgiving) - November 2026 Annual General Meeting / Board Election Update: The regularly scheduled October Board meeting falls on Monday, October 12, 2026, which is the Thanksgiving Day statutory holiday. The Board is asked to consider rescheduling the meeting to either Monday, October 5, 2026 or Monday, October 19, 2026. Recommendation: That the Board select an alternate date for the October 2026 Board meeting. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board reschedule the October 12, 2026, Board of Management meeting due to the Thanksgiving Day statutory holiday, and that the meeting instead be held on, October 19, 2026. Motion: 2026-72 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: A. Foulds 2. Board Election Committee Update: Preparation for the 2026 Board Election is underway. The OBIAA Board Election Toolkit has been circulated to the Board for reference, and staff will continue coordinating the election process in accordance with the Municipal Act, the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures, and the City of Thunder Bay's requirements. In accordance with the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures, a Nominating Committee is required to support the Board election process. The committee will assist with promoting Board opportunities, encouraging nominations, and supporting a fair and transparent election process. Recommendation: That the Board establish a Nominating Committee for the 2026 Board Election and appoint committee members. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board Chair create a Nominating Committee for the 2026 Board Election between 3-5 people	Carried

Item	Description	Action
	in accordance with the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures and present to the Board a slate of who they recommend for the BIA Board. Motion: 2026- Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: Not Carried/Struck down. Motion: That the Waterfront District BIA Board creates a nominating committee with J. Comuzzi, J. Calonego, J. Murray and up to two (2) others in accordance with the Waterfront District BIA Operating Procedures. Motion: 2026- 73 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: J. Murray	Not Carried Carried
7.0	Correspondence Board Communication Process Update: Board members are occasionally approached directly by BIA members with questions, concerns, or requests. To ensure member inquiries are addressed consistently, transparently, and with the benefit of Board discussion, it is recommended that these matters be brought forward through the Board's correspondence process. This provides the Board with the opportunity to understand the nature of the inquiry, discuss it collectively where appropriate, and determine the most accurate and consistent response. Recommendation: That the Board establish a consistent process whereby member questions and concerns received by individual Board members are brought forward as correspondence for Board awareness and discussion before a response is provided, where appropriate. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board adopt the practice that questions, concerns, or requests received by individual Board members from BIA members be brought forward under Correspondence for Board awareness and discussion, where appropriate, to support consistent communication and informed decision-making on matters affecting the Waterfront District. Covered in Financial Information Requests & Governance.	
8.0	New Business –	
9.0	Next Meeting – September 14, 2026 Adjournment – 7:34 Motion: 2026- 74 Moved by: J. Calonego Seconded by: A. Foulds	Carried