

The Waterfront District BIA

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

Monday, October 19, 2026

INVITED:

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

TENTATIVE:

REGRETS:

GUEST(S): Ania Berezowski, CPA, CA, Senior Manager, Assurance and Accounting, MNP

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

Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2781002430?pwd=K2RPSnFqWVdKNityRIB2bTlIdnpWZz09&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 - Disclosures of Interest:	
2.0	Approval of Agenda Recommendation: That the Board approve the Agenda as presented. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	

Item	Description	Action
3.0	Presentations Waterfront District BIA 2025 Audited Financial Statements Ania Berezowski, CPA, CA, Senior Manager, Assurance and Accounting, MNP Motion: THAT the Waterfront District Business Improvement Area Board of Management approve the 2025 Audited Financial Statements as presented. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	
4.0	Approval of Minutes – September 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes Recommendation: That the September 14, 2026 Meeting Minutes be approved as circulated. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	
5.0	Business Arising from Past Minutes 1. Letter Re: Paramount Parking Lot Update: Dilico is open to sharing the parking lot on weekends. Dilico require a few spaces for fleet vehicles parked over the weekend. A suggestion was made that the BIA support/pay for appropriate parking spot signage. 2. Electrical Box Wrap - Update: The ED and Sara Stoppel presented to the Public Art Committee on September 23 and presented the wraps with art provided by the BIA. Awaiting response/approval to place art on public property from the Public Art Committee.	
6.0	Reports	
6.1	Chair's Report – 1. Executive Committee 2. Strategic Plan Priorities Update: At the time of writing this agenda, 22 members have completed the Strategic Survey. Of the 22 responses, only 21 are complete; one is blank. Report Attached.	

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	Motion: THAT the Waterfront District Business Improvement Area Board of Management accept the Waterfront District BIA Strategic Outlook Survey Report as presented and use the findings to inform the development of an action plan for the near future. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	
6.2	ED Report – 1. Canada Summer Jobs Program Update: The Waterfront District BIA is being reimbursed \$22,869 from the Canada Summer Jobs Program. Applications for 2027 open on October 28th – the suggestion is to apply for three summer staff to support Harbourfest. One for overall logistics, the second for stage and activity coordination, and the third for fundraising. One more employee, a high school student, for membership support to update contact information, deliver posters and do general support for Harbourfest. 2. Task Force Growth Update: The next meeting is October 22, 2026. The ED will continue to bring the BIA perspective forward on district growth, activation and support for local businesses and events. 3. Strategic Planning Update: The ED continues 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, to highlight the importance of these areas to the revitalization of a district and the function of a BIA. 4. Neighbourhood Navigator Program (CoTB) Update: The City of Thunder Bay is moving forward with hiring for the Neighbourhood Navigator positions for early winter? The timelines were uncertain as no one has been hired yet. The job has not even been posted. 5. 2027 Budget Update: Presentation to the City's Executive Leadership Team is on October 29, with final approval anticipated in January 2027. 6. Marketing & Data Collection Initiative Update: Connecting more with the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) as their information seemed quite inflated. The Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC) Neighbourhood Marketing and Promotion Initiative will	

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	market and promote the Waterfront District BIA. Deliverables include marketing strategy, photography, promotional templates, advertising and promotion. The offer was made to all BIAs and BAs. The Waterfront District BIA took the opportunity to partner with the CUI data initiative through OBIAA. Administrative Progress Update Key Priorities The immediate priorities are: 1. Complete AGM and Board election preparations. 2. Continue the 2027 budget process with the City. 3. Continue advocacy on construction, parking and downtown infrastructure. 4. Advance discussions around the Neighbourhood Navigator program. 5. Complete planning for Halloween and Christmas programming. 6. Continue 2027 beautification planning. Executive Director's Summary Update: The next month and a half will focus heavily on the Board election and AGM as well as the 2027 budget and planning, City advocacy and preparation for the holiday season. Regular operations and member support will continue alongside these priorities. The ED will continue working with the Board and City departments to keep projects moving forward and identify practical improvements that support the Waterfront District and its businesses. Recommendation: That the Executive Director's Report be received for information. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	
6.3	Finance Committee – Robyn 1. 2027 Budget Submitted to the City of Thunder Bay, presenting the Board Approved 3% increase on October 29th to Executive Leadership Team. 2. Treasurer's Report – for The Waterfront District BIA, For the Period Ending August 31, 2026 INSERT Summary HERE Motion: THAT the Treasurer's Report and financial statements for the period ending August 31, 2026 be received and accepted as presented.	

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	Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: 3. Sponsorship Request Summaries A. Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior Summary: Request for \$250 in BIA Bucks for prizes at its November 6 fundraising dinner, expected to attract 130–150 guests. While no specific sponsorship recognition is outlined, the application notes existing connections with the Waterfront District through past downtown AGM locations and the Lakehead Brewery partnership. Recommendation: Consider providing \$100 in BIA Bucks, recognizing the organization’s existing connection to the Waterfront District, while noting no direct benefit to BIA businesses is identified. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve \$100 in BIA Bucks to Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior for its annual fundraising dinner. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: B. Wiggins Productions Summary: Request for \$500 in BIA Bucks or advertising for the October 24 Ooky Spooky Halloween Drag Show at Black Pirates Pub. Recognition would include promotional materials, stage shout-outs, and a social media thank-you post. Recommendation: Consider providing \$250 in BIA Bucks, or LED Board support, recognizing the promotional exposure offered and the years of hosting events in the BIA. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve \$250 in BIA Bucks OR advertising support to Wiggins Productions for the Ooky Spooky Halloween Drag Show. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: C. Wiggins Productions – The Cover Show XXXIV Encore Summary: Wiggins Productions is requesting \$500 in advertising support, such as a Walleye billboard, for The Cover Show XXXIV Encore happening Saturday, November 14 at Black Pirates Pub. Recognition would include inclusion on promotional materials and posters, as well as a social media thank-you post.	

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	Recommendation: Consider providing \$250 in advertising support to promote a local live music event that brings attendees into the Waterfront District and supports an area business. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve \$250 <i>BIA Bucks OR advertising support</i> to Wiggins Productions for The Cover Show XXXIV Encore. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: D. Wiggins Productions – 13th Annual HoHoHo Drag Show Summary: Wiggins Productions is requesting \$500 in BIA Bucks for giveaways or advertising, such as a Walleye billboard, for the 13th annual HoHoHo Drag Show happening Saturday, December 12 at Black Pirates Pub. Recognition would include promotion on posters and other materials, shout-outs on stage, and a social media thank-you post. Recommendation: Consider providing \$250 in BIA Bucks or advertising support for an established annual event that brings people into the Waterfront District during the holiday season and supports a local entertainment venue. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve \$250 in <i>BIA Bucks OR advertising support</i> to Wiggins Productions for the 13th annual HoHoHo Drag Show. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: E. Sociable (Brook Dallaire) Summary: Sociable is requesting \$500 in BIA Bucks to support a free community “Sociable Search” in late November or early December, featuring 4–5 holiday-themed Grinch rocks with prizes of \$100–\$150 per rock to be spent downtown. The event is intended to encourage people to visit the Waterfront District before Christmas, with promotion through social media and the Sociable website. Recommendation: Consider providing \$500 in BIA Bucks to support a free community event that directly encourages spending within the Waterfront District. Previous years have shown success for this event – it brings a lot of families to the area, and it pairs well with Grinch Photos. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve \$500 in BIA Bucks to Sociable for the Sociable Search holiday event. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	

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	F. Thunder Fastpitch U16 Grey Girls Competitive Softball Team Summary: Thunder Fastpitch U16 Grey is requesting \$500 in BIA Bucks to support fundraising for the 2026–2027 competitive softball season. The BIA Bucks would be used as prizes or incentives during team fundraising initiatives, with the intention of encouraging recipients to visit participating Waterfront District businesses. The team would recognize the BIA through fundraising materials and social media. Recommendation: Do not provide the requested \$500 in BIA Bucks. The BIA Bucks expire on December 31, which significantly limits their usefulness for fundraising activities supporting a season that extends into 2027. Additionally, the Board would need to see a clearer and more direct connection between the sponsorship and benefits to businesses within the Waterfront District. While supporting local youth sport is valuable, the request as presented does not demonstrate a specific benefit to BIA businesses. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: G. The Walleye Magazine – Best of Thunder Bay Readers' Choice Survey Summary: The Walleye Magazine is requesting \$1,000 in BIA Bucks for the 2027 year as sponsorship for its annual Best of Thunder Bay Readers' Choice Survey. The six-week survey runs October 15 to November 30, 2026, with results published in the January 2027 issue. Recognition would include the Waterfront District BIA logo on print and online promotional materials, social media tags and collaborator invitations, the survey webpage, and within the survey itself. The BIA would also be recognized in the January issue alongside the announcement of the prize winner. Many of the businesses, people and events recognized through the survey are located within the Waterfront District. Recommendation: Consider providing \$1,000 in BIA Bucks for the 2027 year. The Best of Thunder Bay survey provides significant exposure for Waterfront District businesses and encourages readers to recognize and engage with local businesses, restaurants, arts and entertainment within the district. The sponsorship also provides direct promotional recognition for the BIA across The Walleye's print, digital and social media platforms. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board approve \$1,000 in BIA Bucks to The Walleye Magazine for the 2026 Best of Thunder Bay Readers' Choice Survey, to be issued for use in 2027. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	
6.4	Infrastructure/Beautification Committee – John	

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	1. Clean, Green & Beautiful Grant and 2027 Hanging Basket Planning Update: The Waterfront District BIA has been awarded \$5,000 through the City of Thunder Bay's Clean, Green & Beautiful Emerging Project Grant for the Hanging Baskets project. The funding can be used toward the BIA's hanging basket program. The project will require planning for both the purchase/installation of the hanging baskets and ongoing watering, as watering is no longer provided by the City of Thunder Bay. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be required for both the hanging baskets and the watering services. Staff will bring the appropriate procurement information and costs forward as planning progresses. As part of the grant requirements, the BIA will also be required to submit a final project report, including before-and-after photographs and a short article outlining the project, its benefits and those involved. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District Business Improvement Area Board of Management accept the \$5,000 Clean, Green & Beautiful Emerging Project Grant awarded by the City of Thunder Bay for the Waterfront District BIA Hanging Baskets project; AND THAT the Board approve the use of the \$5,000 grant toward the BIA's hanging basket program; AND THAT staff be directed to proceed with planning for the 2027 summer hanging basket program, including the preparation and issuance of RFPs for both the supply of hanging baskets and watering services, with the understanding that watering services are no longer provided by the City of Thunder Bay; AND THAT any additional expenditures beyond the approved \$5,000 grant be brought back to the Board for approval. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: 2. Cumberland Street Update: The City has advised that additional Hydro requirements were identified, which will cause delays to the Cumberland Street construction schedule. As a result, the next block will not be opened this year. The current focus will be on completing the two blocks already under construction, including the concrete work and cleanup. The remaining planting will likely be	

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	completed in the spring, as it will be too late in the season to plant once the construction work is finished.	
6.5	Marketing, Events & Promotion Committee – Connor Update: Current priorities include – 1. BrewHa 2.0 2. Development of the CEDC-funded Marketing Plan with Firedog Communications 3. Alignment of future events with Strategic Plan priorities No motions required.	
6.6	Membership Services Committee – Robyn 1. AGM Proposed Agenda • Approval of 2025 AGM Minutes • Election of Board Members for Council Appointment • Presentation of 2025 Audited Financials • Presentation of the 2026 Budget Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: 2. 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. 3. 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.	
6.7	Safety & Security – Peter, John 1. Downtown Core Stabilization Initiative Update: Ended September 1, 2026. CoTB Police requested a letter of support. 2. Neighbourhood Navigator	

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	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. 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 - • November 9, 2026 Board Meeting • November 12, 2026 Annual General Meeting / Board Election 2. Board Nomination Committee Update: Insert meeting schedule here. AGM & Board Election Timeline <table><tr><th>Date</th><th>Key Actions</th></tr><tr><td>~~Aug. 10~~</td><td>~~Nomination Committee struck~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Sept. 14~~</td><td>~~Board Meeting: Confirm AGM, election and nomination process~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Sept. 15~~</td><td>~~Re-send Building Owner/Tenant Information Request~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Sept. 25~~</td><td>~~2027 Preliminary Budget due to City~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Sept. 28~~</td><td>~~Building Owner/Tenant Information due~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Sept. 30~~</td><td>~~Board Applications posted; first deadline: Oct. 9~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Oct. 9~~</td><td>~~AGM Save the Date; First Board Applications due~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Oct. 13–16~~</td><td>~~First Round Applicant Interviews~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Oct. 19~~</td><td>~~Board Meeting: AGM planning / Nomination Committee update~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Oct. 22~~</td><td>~~AGM Notice issued – 3 weeks prior~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Nov. 2~~</td><td>~~Final Board Application/Nomination Deadline – 10 days prior~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Nov. 2–6~~</td><td>~~Second Round Applicant Interviews / Nomination Committee recommendations~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Nov. 6~~</td><td>~~Final AGM & Election Package ready~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Nov. 9~~</td><td>~~Board Meeting: Final AGM & Election Check~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Nov. 10~~</td><td>~~Ballots and AGM materials prepared~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~Nov. 12~~</td><td>~~AGM & 2026–2030 Board Election~~</td></tr><tr><td>~~After AGM~~</td><td>~~Election results submitted to Council for appointment process~~</td></tr></table>	Date	Key Actions	~~Aug. 10~~	~~Nomination Committee struck~~	~~Sept. 14~~	~~Board Meeting: Confirm AGM, election and nomination process~~	~~Sept. 15~~	~~Re-send Building Owner/Tenant Information Request~~	~~Sept. 25~~	~~2027 Preliminary Budget due to City~~	~~Sept. 28~~	~~Building Owner/Tenant Information due~~	~~Sept. 30~~	~~Board Applications posted; first deadline: Oct. 9~~	~~Oct. 9~~	~~AGM Save the Date; First Board Applications due~~	~~Oct. 13–16~~	~~First Round Applicant Interviews~~	~~Oct. 19~~	~~Board Meeting: AGM planning / Nomination Committee update~~	~~Oct. 22~~	~~AGM Notice issued – 3 weeks prior~~	~~Nov. 2~~	~~Final Board Application/Nomination Deadline – 10 days prior~~	~~Nov. 2–6~~	~~Second Round Applicant Interviews / Nomination Committee recommendations~~	~~Nov. 6~~	~~Final AGM & Election Package ready~~	~~Nov. 9~~	~~Board Meeting: Final AGM & Election Check~~	~~Nov. 10~~	~~Ballots and AGM materials prepared~~	~~Nov. 12~~	~~AGM & 2026–2030 Board Election~~	~~After AGM~~	~~Election results submitted to Council for appointment process~~	
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7.0	Correspondence																																					

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	1. Mason Building / 262–268 Red River Road The Board of Trustees for Shuniah Lodge No. 287 provided tenant information for 262–268 Red River Road and raised concerns about the property’s BIA levy and safety. They questioned why the property is within the BIA boundary and expressed concern that two tenants operate primarily by appointment, while another uses approximately half of its space for manufacturing rather than retail. They requested that the BIA charges be reviewed. In response, we provided the 2026 BIA boundary map and original bylaw/map and clarified that BIA levies are based on MPAC assessed property values, not the type of tenancy or how the space is used. We directed them to MPAC regarding their assessment, noting that assessments are currently based on 2016 values. The Trustees also raised safety and security concerns, noting three incidents of vandalism in the past year involving damage to the building’s front doors. They reported approximately \$6,000 in unrecoverable damage because their insurance deductible had increased to \$10,000. We clarified that safety and security is not part of the formal BIA mandate outside Toronto, but highlighted the BIA’s advocacy for Thunder Bay Police Project Support and COR policing, as well as the upcoming Neighbourhood Navigators program. We also noted that the BIA has previously reimbursed businesses for security cameras and lighting, and that a similar program could potentially be considered again. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management receive the correspondence from Shuniah Lodge No. 287 regarding 262–268 Red River Road for information; and THAT the Board receive the response provided by the Executive Director. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by: 2. Cumberland Street South Safety Concerns Bojan Todorov, a property and business owner on Cumberland Street South, submitted correspondence regarding ongoing concerns with suspected drug dealing, loitering, and related activity in the area surrounding his property. He noted that the activity is affecting the safety and experience of his guests, customers, neighbouring businesses, residents, and people working in the area. Bojan advised that he has reported suspected drug activity to the appropriate authorities on numerous occasions but continues to see the issue reoccur. He recognizes that the BIA is not a police or enforcement agency and is requesting a	

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	more coordinated approach between the BIA, Thunder Bay Police Service, the City, property owners, and other agencies. His requested actions include: • Coordinating a meeting with affected businesses/property owners, the BIA, City representatives, and Thunder Bay Police Service. • Exploring measures such as increased police presence, lighting, surveillance, environmental design, and municipal bylaw enforcement. • Developing a reporting and follow-up process to identify recurring patterns. • Discussing measures to discourage drug dealing and loitering around commercial properties and public areas. • Establishing a point of contact to help coordinate communication between affected businesses and authorities. Bojan has offered to provide information and documentation regarding reported incidents, including dates, locations, photographs/video, and other information that may help identify patterns. He emphasized that he supports a balanced approach involving enforcement, social services, prevention, and environmental improvements. Motion: THAT the Waterfront District BIA Board of Management receive the correspondence from Bojan Todorov regarding ongoing safety and security concerns on Cumberland Street South; and THAT the correspondence be forwarded to the Thunder Bay Police Service and the City of Thunder Bay for consideration and follow-up. Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	
8.0	New Business – Message from the ED	
9.0	Next Meeting – November 9, 2026 Adjournment – Motion: 2026- Moved by: Seconded by:	