



Downtown Oakville BIA Board of Management Meeting

Meeting Date: Wednesday March 5, 2025

Start Time: 6:30pm

Location: 146 Lakeshore (BIA office)

In attendance: Susan Wayland, Darlene Janeiro, Nancy Robertson, Ed Rafih, Erin Pavey-Morra, Chantal Ingram, Janet Haslett-Theall

VIA ZOOM Violet Jameson, Lisa Whittall-Chuang

Agenda Item	Discussion Leader
<p>Part 1-Official Business</p> <p>1.1 Call to order by Susan Wayland at 6:35</p> <p>1.2 Declaration of quorum- declared</p> <p>1.3 Conflict of interest - none declared</p> <p>1.4 Motion to approve agenda: First Nancy, Second Erin, approved</p> <p>1.5 Motion to approve minutes for Feb 8, 2025: First Janet, Second Ed</p> <p>1.6 Motion to approve minutes for March 3: First Erin, Second Nancy</p>	<p>Board Chair</p>
<p>Part 2</p> <p>Board Chair's Update</p> <p>2.1 Meeting of HR/Governance Committee- current job posting, future planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BIA Coordinator search is on going. Obviously, there is some urgency to hiring so we can begin to rebuild • We are in the process of creating a new employee handbook which will be used when onboarding all staff. This is being done to limit the BIA from exposure to risk and to protect our staff • As an organization we want to make sure that when staff are onboarded to a new role health and safety is top of mind and the new binder will include all onboarding materials <p>2.2 Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer nomination and election</p> <p>We currently have three nominated positions vacant. This process is to secure those positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Chair- Susan Wayland nominated Nancy Robertson- Nancy accepted the nomination, no other nominations were put forward • Treasurer- Susan Wayland nominated Ed Rafih, Ed accepted the nomination, no other nominations were put forward • Chair- Chantal Ingram nominated Susan Wayland, Susan accepted the nomination, no other nominations were put forward 	<p>Susan Wayland</p>

<p>There was only one nomination for each of the positions. Pursuant to the BIA constitution Section 10.3 there was no vote and each nominee was acclaimed to their position.</p> <p>The Board of Management Executive are as follows:</p> <p>Chair, Susan Wayland</p> <p>Vice-Chair, Nancy Robertson</p> <p>Treasurer, Ed Rafih</p> <p>Secretary, Chantal Ingram</p> <p>2.3 Tech policy document review and approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DTO-BIA Acceptable Use Policy was provided to the board as a pre-read document. • The policy was developed in consultation with the Town of Oakville to ensure alignment with best practices. • It establishes clear guidelines on acceptable use of technology, including password management, tech use, phone and computer access to protect the organization. • All staff will be required to read and sign off on the policy <p>Motion to approve: Erin Seconded by: Nancy Motion carried.</p> <p>Follow-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janet inquired whether password protection is currently in place. It was confirmed that it is not yet implemented. However, following the adoption of this policy, all passwords will be stored in a password manager, which will be maintained by the Board Secretary. • Staff and board members will have access only to the passwords relevant to their roles (i.e. Treasurer will have read only-access to Sage Accounting) • Janet also let us know that the Town has instructed that passwords must be store digitally and there is to be no 'list' that can be accessed or printed by any staff or board. • Chantal has recommended Bitwarden Password manager which will allow an administrator to have access to all passwords, while staff and Board members will only have access to the passwords they need • Bitwarden will be purchased and implemented in the next few days 	
<p>Part 3</p> <p>Town of Oakville Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janet informed us that the Town is united with the Region in supporting the Federal and Provincial efforts on the Tariff strategy <p>Sign By-Laws & Sponsorship Review:</p>	<p>Councillor Janet Haslett-Theall</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town maintains strict regulations on signage. In the past, the town went to the Supreme Court to uphold these restrictions and prevent excessive signage from being used in Oakville • A by-law review is going to be conducted which could affect the BIA and how we are able to show sponsorship of events on our signage • Right now, sponsors can be acknowledged, but only with a small logo in a tasteful spot on a sign the by-law review is hoping to extend this so that sponsors can be acknowledged in a more significant manner <p>Town Staff Support for the BIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town staff continue to provide extensive support to the BIA • Progress has been made on the website, with updates being brought to Lynette’s attention <p>Street & Sidewalk Cleaning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town’s street sweeping and sidewalk sweeping schedule begins on April 13 • A minor cleanup may take place in the next two weeks. • The BIA remains responsible for day-to-day cleaning. 	
<p>Part 4</p> <p>Executive Director’s Update</p> <p>The Executive Director’s Update was shared with Board Members as a pre-read document. The minutes will reflect discussion items.</p> <p>Finance Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do due Board meetings being held in the first week of the month, it is difficult to create a fulsome picture of the previous month’s financials, we will get a full financial report every two month • Payments have been coming in and out over the past month- these are cheques that were discovered to be over-paid, underpaid, or not paid in a timely fashion <p>Spring flowers are being installed on March 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The holidays post lights have been switched to DTO flags- Lynette recommends that we do this two weeks earlier moving forward as the holiday lighting seemed tired by the end of February <p>Discussion about the MT tree purchased for the Diwali celebration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have been discussing whether the tree can be used/decorated seasonally so that we don’t have to store it, however we have been advised it may deteriorate from UV exposure over time • It can store at Firehall in the meantime • There was a suggestion made to rent the tree to event companies, but this may become too much to manage • It was agreed that the preference is to sell the tree in the coming months to recoup as much as we can from the cost <p>Holiday 2025 and Town Square Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus group needs to be created to discuss the 2025 Holiday season without the town square 	<p>Executive Director</p>

- This should be done soon as there may be permitting and extra planning involved
- Lynette to establish the group and lead conversations

Website Update

- The Town is helping with the Wix website and is still trying to access certain information
- There is a calendar in the member section- powered by google drive- separate to Wix- we do not have access to the google drive but the town is troubleshooting this issue

Environics Data

- Lynette just discovered that Environics had not been paid for the past six months
- She has talked to them, and since it also fell off of their radar, they are allowing us access to data for free until the beginning of April
- There was some discussion around switching to a new data collection program, but it was agreed that staying with Environics for at least six more months is a good idea, and that we should look into maximizing the information we receive from them
- Lynette will talk to them about the possibility of tracking conversion during events
- It was asked if we can we somehow track transactions from payment systems
- After the six month extension we will review other possibilities and decide at the end of that time.
- Janet mentioned that we had previously received data about other shopping centres and districts so we could compare our progress and whether we are inline with traffic in other areas
- It was noted that we want to be better about how we support conversion- understanding if traffic is up or down- especially with the tariffs- we want to see where we stand based on data points- it is valuable information
- Lynette to see if we can we get data on downtown Burlington or Port Credit to do some comparisons

GLO DTO

- Has been installed and people are using it
- We did not get a sponsorship for this installation
- Advertising is in place, we also had coverage on COGECO news
- Total cost is close for the installation is close to \$72,000
- It was noted that it is very important that we get some sponsorships to offset costs of other events in 2025
- Firepits are installed Saturday and removed after

Member Meetings

- In the HIVE there is a member marketing meeting scheduled for April 17, we will keep this in place
- Lynette will hold segment meetings asap and will invite the town's economic development team to speak and answer question of business owners
- There was a discussion around segment meetings and how often they were held in the past, the number of meetings was unclear, but believed to be twice annually

Social Media

- In conversations with several members, Lynette has discovered that many were not happy social media and which businesses were being showcased
- There is still some education to be had with members so that they know to tag DTO rather than using a hashtag
- Erin suggested that once we have a social media calendar in place, businesses could have access alendar so they know when they will be shared and can plan accordingly, this could lead to collaborative posts with businesses
- It was suggested that we create a voice over tutorial on how to properly tag DTO so businesses can better understand

Events

- A calendar of events has been designed and was just printed- it will be distributed to members soon
- This is very important so that members can see what's going on an can plan for their own in-store promotions
- There will be two versions of the calendar- one for stores to use internally that includes social media, and a second that is meant to be customer facing
- Lynette will share the calendar with the Board before it goes out

Capital Reserve Classification:

- The **Capital Reserve** is currently categorized under liabilities which needs to change so that it does not look like a negative balance
- A detailed review of financial statements is needed to ensure accuracy- the board need to pay more attention to details so that nothing goes unnoticed
- The Treasurer should guide the board through financial reports at each meeting to highlight areas where spending is over or under budget.
- The Board had agreed to move \$25K-\$30K for 2024 and we will now move any remaining balance needed available to address deficits
- The Stabilization Reserve (reserve fund) exists to provide support during financial difficulties- fortunately, this reserve remains healthy even after we move funds

Budget & Operating Plan:

- More time needs to be dedicated to financial discussions as a Board
- There has been a lack of clarity in the past about committed funds which led to an incomplete financial picture
- A budget cannot be effectively created without a clear operating plan that accounts for already committed funds.
- The operating plan is presented to the Membership along with the budget in November

Sponsorship & Revenue Recognition:

- Incoming sponsorship funds should be visible in financial planning but should not be recorded as revenue until a commitment is guaranteed.

<p>Challenges with TD Bank & AMEX Contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TD Bank and AMEX sponsorship contracts prohibit concurrent financial sponsorships in their category • Lynette will reach out to both sponsors to explore options, including negotiating a higher contribution from AMEX. • If one sponsor withdraws, discussions will determine if the other is willing to increase their support. • Keeping TD as a sponsor may be the best option, as they have been a long-term partner. • AMEX sponsorship will not be pursued during the summer, as their priorities align with Hometown Holiday • Lakeshore Securities remains a year-round sponsor- is this a conflict? • Negotiation strategy: The BIA should engage in creative conversations with sponsors to explore flexible, seasonally adjusted agreements. 	
<p>Part 5</p> <p>New Business</p> <p>5.1 Meeting cadence and possible date change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working to schedule a Board strategy workshop that will allow result in an overarching strategy document which Lynette can use to create the organizational plan for 2026, and then the staff work plans • We will move the AGM to the beginning of June- date TBD • The operating plan for 2025 was presented to membership in November along with the budget, it does not need to be presented at the AGM • The AGM needs to focus on successes from the past year, and give a previews of highlights to come in 2025- we need something to build confidence and trust in the BIA • Strategy session to be held in May- date TBD 	<p>Susan</p>
<p>Part 6:</p> <p>In Camera Session was opened at 8:00 pm</p> <p>The in discussion centred on the current HR and staffing situation</p> <p>Motion to come out of camera-8:42 pm</p> <p>First Janet</p> <p>Second Susan</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Motion to adjourn at 8:42 pm</p> <p>First Nancy</p> <p>Second Chantal</p> <p>Next Meeting to be held Wednesday April 2, 2025</p>	<p>Board Chair</p>

Here are the **updated action items** with references changed from "Lynette" to "**Executive Director**":

Action Items from Board of Management Meeting – March 5, 2025

Technology & Security

- **Implement Bitwarden Password Manager.**
 - **Assigned to:** Board Secretary
 - **Deadline:** Within the next few days
- **Ensure all staff and board members sign off on the Acceptable Use Policy.**
 - **Assigned to:** Board Chair & Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** Before next meeting

Financials

- **Ensure sponsorship funds are visible in financial reports but not recorded as revenue until guaranteed.**
 - **Assigned to:** Treasurer & Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** Ongoing

Sponsorship & Revenue

- **Negotiate with TD Bank and AMEX regarding sponsorship exclusivity.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** ASAP
- **Investigate potential conflicts with Lakeshore Securities' year-round sponsorship.**
 - **Assigned to:** Sponsorship Committee
 - **Deadline:** Next meeting

Holiday 2025 & Town Square Construction

- **Establish a focus group to discuss holiday events during Town Square construction.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** ASAP

Website & Data Analytics

- **Resolve Wix website access issues with the Town.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director & Town Staff
 - **Deadline:** Ongoing
- **Investigate EnviroNics data tracking, including event conversion tracking and transaction tracking from payment systems.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director

- **Deadline:** Before April
- **Compare foot traffic and shopping trends with Downtown Burlington & Port Credit.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** Before Environics contract renewal

Event Planning & Member Engagement

- **Distribute the new Events Calendar to members and board for review.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** Before next meeting
- **Organize Member Marketing Meeting as per The Hive (April 17).**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** April 17
- **Hold segment meetings for business owners; invite the town's economic development team.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** ASAP

Social Media

- **Create a tutorial on how businesses should tag DTO on social media.**
 - **Assigned to:** Executive Director & Social Media Team
 - **Deadline:** TBD

Strategic Planning & AGM

- **Schedule a Board Strategy Workshop to develop an overarching strategy document for 2026.**
 - **Assigned to:** Board Chair & Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** May (Date TBD)
- **Finalize and confirm the new AGM date for early June.**
 - **Assigned to:** Board Chair
 - **Deadline:** Before next meeting
- **Plan AGM content to focus on past successes and build confidence in the BIA.**
 - **Assigned to:** Board Chair & Executive Director
 - **Deadline:** Before AGM