



Downtown  
Kitchener  
Business  
Improvement  
Area

March 27, 2024  
8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.  
260 King St. W., #300  
Kitchener, Ontario

## Board of Directors - Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Linda Jutzi, Darryl Moore, Phong Tran, Martha Wallace, Councillor Stephanie Stretch, Councillor Debbie Chapman, Jordan Dolson, Julie Phillips, Laird Robertson, Sarah Pearson, Cst. James Mitchell, and Cst. Lee Elliott.

**Guest(s):** Cory Bluhm, Amy Pinto and Rick Farwell.

**Regrets:** Cara Watson, Mayor Berry Vrbanovic, Michael Rederer, and Jessica Toomer.

**Recorder:** Stefanie Golling

The meeting began with Darryl Moore as Chair at 8:30 a.m.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS

*Moved by Sarah Pearson, seconded by Councillor Debbie Chapman*

"That the Board approves the March 27, 2024."

**Carried Unanimously**

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Moved by Julie Phillips, seconded by Jordan Dolson*

"That the Board approves the February 28, 2024, meeting minutes with adjustments."

**Carried Unanimously**

### WATERLOO REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Cst. James Mitchell and Cst. Lee Elliott joined the meeting to share a few updates on behalf of Waterloo Regional Police Service, highlighting:

- The Downtown Safety Ambassador program will launch shortly, with a focus on outreach.
- Victoria Street encampment.
- Street patrol.

**Action item:** Linda Jutzi to provide a preread of the Downtown Safety Ambassador program at the next Board Meeting.

## FINANCIAL AUDIT

Phong Tran shared the process used when engaging with KPMG for the financial audit. Mr. Tran thanked Bookkeeper Diane Pinkerton, Linda Jutzi and the staff for their speed, and upkeep of records with the completion of the financial audit.

*Moved by Laird Robertson, seconded by Jordan Dolson*

"To approve the 2023 Draft Audited Financial Statements prepared by KPMG, as presented by the Finance Committee."

**Carried Unanimously**

## DOWNTOWN HORTICULTURE

Amy Pinto and Rick Farwell from the City of Kitchener joined the meeting. Ms. Pinto provided an overview of Downtown Horticulture, highlighting:

- The City Horticulture team has 28 employees, with 5-7 of them in Downtown.
- Process and responsibilities, including the design, planting, and maintenance.
- Downtown planting areas include granites, raised planters in the east end, black planters along King Street, new Gaukel Street planters, patio planter boxes and City Hall gardens.

Directors discussed the following:

- When the planters were built in 2010, the plan was to have perennials and native plants; however, businesses wanted more colour, and they were challenging to keep litter out of. At the time, the Board decided to go in this direction.
  - Ms. Pinto added that native plants weren't doing well without amended soil and salt from the winter season.
  - Look into the possibility of adding native and perennial plants on Gaukel.
- An investment has been made in improving the granite planters' drainage.
- Mr. Farwell noted that the response to the change in efforts has been very positive, and the hope is to keep the momentum going. However, more funding is needed to increase resources.
- Over the last few years, Downtown Operations has worked hard to declutter the core (e.g. banners, newspaper stands, etc.). Try to find ways to match native plants within existing planters.
- People can see the care and stewardship put into the planters.
- Use marketing efforts to tell a story about green spaces and plantings.
- Would like to see surplus funds put towards more green space—potentially Hans Haus Parkette.

Linda Jutzi thanked Ms. Pinto, Mr. Farwell and their teams for their hard work and efforts downtown.

**Action item:** Directors to email Linda Jutzi if they would like to set up a tour of the greenhouse in the next month or so.

**Action item:** Cory Bluhm to provide an update regarding the Hans Haus garden.

## DTK ART WALK & STROLL WALKING TOURS

Linda Jutzi and Stefanie Golling provided an overview of Stroll Walking Tours and the upcoming installation for the DTK Art Walk. Installation of the new artwork is expected to begin on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and commence before the launch event in May.

Ms. Jutzi noted that the team has applied for grant funding for the DTK Art Walk.

**Action item:** Linda Jutzi to further investigate QR codes surrounding artwork.

## GOSPEL BLUES BREAKFAST

Linda Jutzi shared that she met with the TD Kitchener Blues Festival to review and sign the 2024 agreement. Before proceeding, Ms. Jutzi is looking for Board support to move forward.

Board Directors discussed the following:

- Improvements made to better support the growth and challenges experienced.
- If proceeding with the same format as last year, the need for additional food and ensuring Blues promotes the correct style of breakfast.
- Possibility of outsourcing to a business that can accommodate the scale of the event.
- It is ok to shift and change if the event no longer aligns with our mission.
- It's about the music and togetherness; receiving a free cup of coffee and a muffin is a bonus.
- Possibility of having a service club take over the responsibility.

**Action item:** Linda Jutzi to prepare a breakdown of solutions for the April Board Meeting.

## CHRISTKINDL MARKET DECORATIONS

Linda Jutzi shared that the BIA was invited by the City of Kitchener to visit Classic Displays to look at how to elevate the streetscape design. Staff person Lori Muller will support the Special Events team this year by designing the outdoor portion of the

Christkindl Market. In order to receive a significant discount on décor, a deposit must be made by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Jutzi is looking for Board support to spend unused funds from 2023 for this investment.

Directors discussed:

- Longevity of product(s).
- Support from Operations staff with setup.
- Possibility of repurposing current décor items going into storefronts.

Cory Bluhm shared that the City of Kitchener is building a long-term plan (within the next three years) for Victoria Park.

*Moved by Laird Robertson, seconded by Julie Phillips*

"That the Board approve the spend of \$60,000 to update and replace the Christkindl Market decor."

**(6) approved, (2) opposed. Motion Carried**

## **SUMMER BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE**

Linda Jutzi noted that July and August have been difficult to get the Board together in previous years due to summer vacations. A Doodle Poll will be going out to understand Director availability.

## **SURPLUS FUND**

Linda Jutzi shared that she would like to set up a meeting outside the regular Board schedule to discuss using the Surplus Fund. In preparation for this meeting, Ms. Jutzi is asking Directors to set up a meeting with her to discuss their ideas and allow her the time to do further research. This will allow for a more wholesome discussion and prered.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*Moved by Phong Tran, seconded by Councillor Stephanie Stretch.*

"That the meeting adjourn."

**Carried Unanimously**