

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

(Trenton DBIA – Board of Management)

*Location: Trenton DBIA Office: 6 Dundas St. W. Trenton Ontario*

*Tuesday, March 18, 2025 @ 5:30pm*

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## **AGM Meeting Minutes**

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Trenton DBIA – Board of Management

Location: Trenton DBIA Office: 6 Dundas St. W. Trenton, Ontario

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 – Scheduled for 5:30 pm

### **1. Welcome and Call to Order**

**Time:** 5:32 PM

The Chair, Suzanne Andrews, introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Trenton Downtown Business Improvement Area. She expressed her gratitude to all in attendance for their participation in this important meeting.

The Chair also extended a warm welcome and expressed her appreciation to the DBIA Board of Directors: Councillor Shelley Stedall (Vice Chair), Councillor Zack Card (City Elect), and Abby Hare (Board Member), as well as the DBIA staff: Lisa Kuypers (Executive Director) and Annette Marr (Administrative Assistant). Additionally, she acknowledged and thanked Board Member Krystal Turcotte, who was unable to attend the meeting.

The Chair further noted that the board is small and is always looking for additional Board Members.

The Chair then began the meeting with a land acknowledgment.

### **2. Declarations of conflict of interest**

To officially begin the meeting, the Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest, and none were declared.

### **3. Approval of the AGM Agenda**

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the Agenda, which was posted on the Downtown Trenton Business Improvement Area website on March 7th 2024.

**Motion moved by:** Remco de Gooyer

**Seconded:** Shelley Stedall

**Carried**

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*At this time, the Chair requested that all questions and public input be held until the end of the meeting, when the floor would be opened for discussion. The Chair also noted that the meeting was being audio-recorded for minute-taking purposes.*

## **4. Year in Review**

The Chair began with an overview of some of the things that happened in 2024 and a look at 2025.

We currently have a total of 161 businesses and services in the downtown area.

Over the past year, we bid farewell to several businesses, including:

- The Centre Theatre
- Tasteful Trends
- Medi Gas
- H.D. Rolf the Jeweler
- Studio B
- Rollin' Oats
- Fearless Wellness Centre and the Quinte West Pregnancy Centre, both of which outgrew their downtown locations.

At the same time, we welcomed several new businesses to our downtown community:

- Bark Spot Dog Grooming
- Beats & Sweets Vinyl Café
- Bell Medspa
- Chef Box Plus
- Hot Off the Hanger
- Ink Cative
- K & K Hair Studio
- King St Thrift
- Kiwi Ink Tattoos
- Nuvista Mental Health
- Philosophy Boutique
- Quinte Little Theatre
- Quinte West Women's Collective
- Radiant Flow
- The Tattoo Shop

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We are thrilled to have these businesses choose downtown as their home, and we thank you all for contributing to the vibrancy and growth of our community!

The DBIA Board of Directors has approved the formation of a new Events Committee for 2025. The committee currently consists of Board Member Abby Hare, Angela Wildish (owner of Vivacious), and Amy Clark (co-owner of Ma's Pantry). They are actively seeking additional members to join and contribute to marketing our downtown through event engagement and community involvement.

Last year, the DBIA was asked by retailers to organize a Spring Ladies' Night. Although the event was put together on short notice, the feedback received was mixed. With the establishment of a new Events Committee, it was decided not to continue the event in 2025.

On June 8th, the Magic Moon event returned for its second year and was a resounding success. Both the community and participating vendors shared positive feedback, with many appreciating the opportunity to attend an event focused on spiritual awareness.

Looking ahead, the newly established Events Committee has rebranded the Magic Moon event as "Spring into Summer" to encourage greater participation from downtown businesses and enhance community engagement.

Last year, the Festival on the Bay featured street performances in place of traditional stage performances. This change in format was well received by attendees and was positively noted in feedback from both vendors and DBIA members.

Building on this success, the Events Committee has approved the continuation of street performances for the 2025 Festival on the Bay. Additionally, the DBIA has partnered with Riverside Music and Arts Quinte West, who will host Quinte Has Music Talent on Saturday of the festival. It has also been confirmed that the Dragon Boat Races will take place on Saturday, adding another exciting element to the event.

The Fall Ladies' Night continues to be a successful event for those who participate. Last year, we saw a younger crowd attend alongside many returning attendees from previous years. Notably, businesses that had a successful evening incorporated interactive experiences at their locations, attracting more participants and enhancing engagement.

Although the Events Committee has not yet discussed plans for this year's Fall Ladies' Night, I am confident that you can expect some new ideas and enhancements to be implemented.

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Although the event was not well attended by participants, the newly rebranded Christmas event, featuring a National Lampoon's Christmas theme, became an incredible team-building experience for downtown businesses. In the weeks leading up to the event, we saw businesses come together, fostering collaboration, creativity, and a shared sense of holiday excitement.

Employees and business owners alike embraced the festive spirit, working as teams to decorate, participate, and engage with one another in a way that strengthened relationships and built a stronger sense of community. The event was not just about attracting visitors—it was about creating connections among our downtown merchants, encouraging teamwork, and making the holiday season even more special through collective celebration and fun.

The DBIA Christmas Wagon Rides once again proved to be a huge success, with high attendance and most nights running beyond the scheduled finishing time due to popular demand. This year, the Trent Port Historical Society also stayed open, providing an additional point of interest and enhancing the festive experience for visitors.

At the DBIA, we know that an engaged community is key to attracting visitors and supporting local businesses. Through our social media platforms and our partnership with the Bay of Quinte Marketing Board, we've worked to highlight everything that makes Downtown Trenton a must-visit destination.

We've promoted exciting events, from festivals to special shopping nights, creating buzz and driving foot traffic to businesses. Business spotlights have showcased local entrepreneurs, helping tell their stories and encouraging people to shop, dine, and support local.

Our social media isn't just about promotion—it's about engagement. Through polls, contests, giveaways, and interactive content, we've created a space where people connect and share their experiences downtown. We've also highlighted our local culture, historic landmarks, murals, and hidden gems, inspiring more people to explore.

By making Downtown Trenton more visible and accessible online, we've strengthened our sense of community and brought more people downtown to shop, dine, and experience all it has to offer.

The Trenton Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA) remains committed to strengthening our local business community through strategic advocacy, meaningful

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partnerships, and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders. Our efforts over the past year have focused on fostering collaboration, supporting economic growth, and ensuring our downtown remains a vibrant and thriving hub for businesses and residents alike.

Our collaboration with the City of Quinte West has been instrumental in advancing the Community Improvement Plan, which provides valuable resources and support for the development of our downtown area. Through ongoing discussions and strategic input, we continue to advocate for initiatives that benefit our members and contribute to the overall economic vitality of our city.

To further enhance our marketing and promotional efforts, we have maintained monthly meetings with the Bay of Quinte Marketing Board, ensuring that downtown Trenton remains a focal point in regional tourism and business development strategies. In addition, we have strengthened our engagement with the Chamber of Commerce by attending networking events such as "Get Connected," where we actively introduce our members to other community business leaders, fostering new relationships and opportunities for collaboration.

Recognizing the importance of business development, we have worked closely with realtors at various locations within the downtown to help fill vacant units and revitalize available spaces. We have also met with potential DBIA members, providing them with tours of empty units and discussing opportunities for their businesses to become part of our growing downtown community.

Our involvement in the broader business community has also been a priority. We have proudly attended the Business Achievement Awards, the Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting, and the Chamber's State of the City Luncheon, demonstrating our commitment to staying informed and engaged with the larger economic landscape.

Beyond our local partnerships, we have also worked closely with the Executive Director of the Belleville Downtown District, exchanging insights on the common challenges faced by Business Improvement Areas. At the provincial level, we have actively participated in over 60 online discussions hosted by the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA), engaging in conversations about best practices, policy updates, and strategies for downtown revitalization. Our participation in the OBIAA Annual Conference was particularly meaningful, as we were asked to share how our downtown has managed to maintain lower numbers of vulnerable individuals compared to other BIAs.

As part of our commitment to community well-being, The ED sat on the Quinte West Community Focus Table (QWCFT), a committee dedicated to assisting vulnerable individuals by connecting them with vital support programs and resources. This collaborative effort

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reinforces our belief that a strong, healthy downtown is built on inclusivity and care for all members of our community.

Additionally, the DBIA has remained an active participant in the City of Quinte West's Economic Development and Tourism meetings, where we provide updates on downtown initiatives and advocate for continued investment in our local businesses. Through these efforts, we continue to strengthen our partnerships and reinforce our commitment to a prosperous and dynamic downtown.

An essential part of our role is ensuring that the voices of downtown businesses are heard at all levels of decision-making. We have consistently worked to address concerns raised by our members, including those related to by-laws, parking regulations, and city services. We met monthly with city Director Jaclyn Grimmon to advocate for practical solutions that support local businesses and enhance the downtown experience.

Lastly, the DBIA office successfully secured five different grants through the Digital Main Street Program, which officially concluded last March. Over the span of five years, the DBIA office played a pivotal role in helping businesses obtain a total of \$417,500 in Digital Main Street grants. I would like to express my gratitude to Annette for her outstanding dedication and efforts in making this program a resounding success.

At this time I would like to call on board member Councillor Shelley Stedall to update the membership with last year's financials and this year's budget.

## **5. Treasurers Report**

The Vice Chair, Councillor Shelley Stedall, began by stating that attendees should have received the 2025 Budget upon entering. She invited anyone who had not received a copy to raise their hand so that one could be provided.

The Vice Chair noted that we are currently unable to present the full 2024 Financial Statements, as they are not yet available due to the books not being fully closed. It is important to note that there are still outstanding liabilities from 2024. The City of Quinte West has informed us that these remaining liabilities will bring our financials very close to our 2024 budget projections. If there is any surplus, the board will review and determine how to allocate it.

At this time, the Vice Chair reviewed the 2025 Budget, which you can link to < [HERE](#) >. The Vice Chair also noted that it was posted on the DBIA webpage on March 7, 2025.

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The Vice Chair provided some key updates as follows:

- As the Chair mentioned earlier, the DBIA has formed a new Events Committee, which will play a role in our downtown marketing efforts. Some of the allocated event funds will be used to introduce new initiatives and rebrand existing events.
- With that in mind, we want to reassure everyone that the monies allocated to Festival on the Bay, Ladies' Night, and the Christmas Wagon Rides will remain or will be increased. However, funding for Fraser Park, the Christmas Event, Magic Moon, Halloween, and portions of the advertising budget will vary, allowing the Events Committee greater flexibility in planning and executing these initiatives.
- Additionally, you will notice that the funds previously allocated for the Friday Night Concerts in the Park have been reduced. This adjustment is necessary due to the planned waterline construction in Fraser Park this summer, which will temporarily limit access and impact event logistics.
- During the March 4<sup>th</sup> 2025 DBIA Board meeting, a question was raised regarding the 9.16% budget increase and its impact on DBIA members. During the March 4th DBIA Board meeting, a question was raised regarding the 9.16% budget levy increase and its impact on DBIA members. To clarify, this increase is the total dollars required, however the actual increase is calculated based on assessment which is converted into a tax rate. A copy of the tax rate calculation was provided with the 2025 Budget.
- A copy of the calculated tax rates based on the DBIA assessment was included in the handouts which you can link to < [HERE](#) >.
- The DBIA tax rate results in a .4% increase on the overall tax increase for a property located in the Downtown Business Area. The tax rates applied to an estimated property assessment of 510,000 would result in an annual increase for a combined City and DBIA tax rate of \$906.43. Of this increase the DBIA portion is \$188.99. On a monthly basis the total increase would be \$75.54 which includes the DBIA portion of \$15.75. An example of 100,000 worth of property assessment is also shown which property owners can apply proportionally to the amount of assessment they have on their property taxes. The estimated average property assessment is 510,000.

The Chair then asked Councillor Zack Card to give an update from the City.

## 6. City Update

Councillor Zack Card gave a city update, which you can link to < [HERE](#) >.

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*Before proceeding to the next agenda item, the Chair took a moment to outline the process of becoming a board member and encouraged interested members to apply, as the board is currently seeking additional members. Those interested can connect with a current board member or email the Executive Director.*

## **7. Members Input/ Questions**

**Question:** A question was asked regarding the DBIA budget for salaries and benefits, specifically requesting a breakdown of the jobs included in the total amount presented in the budget.

Additionally, the member expressed concern about DBIA lunch breaks, mentioning that they had heard rumors of two hour lunches being taken and sought clarification on the matter.

**Response:** The Vice Chair explained that the total amount in the budget accounts for all DBIA staff, including the Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, Street Cleaner, and summer students and the amounts provided in the budget are salaries and mandatory benefits. The Chair also addressed the member's concern, assuring them that the rumor they had heard regarding DBIA lunch breaks is not true.

*Before moving forward, the Chair took a moment to thank Brandy from These 4 Walls and Thomas from Kaleidoscope Catering for providing complementary food and invited everyone to enjoy the refreshments.*

## **8. Adjournment**

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion moved by:** Remco de Gooyer

**Seconded:** Carrie Parkhurst

**Carried**

**Time:** 6:07 pm

## **9. Next Board Meeting**

**Date & Time:** Monday, April 7, 2025