

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DOWNTOWN GUELPH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION — AMENDED RECORD

Date:	June 24, 2026	Chair:	Chuck Nash
Time:	5:06 PM - 7:30 PM	Minutes Prepared By:	Derrick Rutherford

1. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME & ATTENDANCE

The meeting was officially called to order by the Chair, Chuck Nash, at 5:06 PM once a quorum was established.

Board & Staff Attendance Roll Call:

- **Chuck Nash** (Chair) — Present (In-Person)
- **Derrick Rutherford** (CLC Chair) — Present (In-Person)
- **Richard Overland** (Treasurer) — Present (In-Person)
- **Kristel Manes** — Present (Virtual / Zoom)
- **Carly Klassen** (City Councillor) — Present (Virtual / Zoom)
- **Tom Lammer** — Present (Virtual / Zoom)
- **Fay Yachetti** — Present (In-Person)
- **Iside Dallan** — Present (In-Person)
- **Pina Marfisi** (Attractions Chair) — Present (In-Person)
- **James Goodram** (City Liaison) — Present (In-Person)
- **Tracey Suerich** (City Staff, taking over for Stacey) — Present (In-Person)
- **Bryan Steele** — Absent (Regrets)
- **Cathy Downer** — Absent (Regrets)

Guests: Matt Newby (Guelph Storm / 2027 Host Organizing Committee) — Present (In-Person)

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The board reviewed the proposed amended agenda for the June 24, 2026 meeting.

BOARD MOTION: To approve the meeting agenda as presented.

Moved by: Kristel Manes **Seconded by:** Richard Overland

• **Result:** Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes from the past three board sittings were reviewed individually to allow for specific corrections.

Motion 3.1: Approval of Minutes from Wednesday, April 29, 2026

BOARD MOTION: To approve the Board Meeting Minutes from April 29, 2026, as presented.

Moved by: Pina Marfisi **Seconded by:** Kristel Manes

• **Result:** Motion carried.

Motion 3.2: Approval of Minutes from Monday, May 25, 2026

Corrections Noted: Carly Klassen pointed out an error on page 2, noting her last name was incorrectly listed as Rodriguez. Chuck Nash requested a correction to Item 6 (Street Captains Program) to clarify that Alex had not officially volunteered yet, but was rather slated to be asked to attend the weekly operational sessions. Richard Overland noted for the record that regarding the construction mitigation budget, the full \$1,000,000 has been allocated across line items, meaning any strategic shift in fund usage requires removing funds from another item or requesting new funding from council.

BOARD MOTION: To approve the Board Meeting Minutes from May 25, 2026, subject to the corrections regarding the name correction for Carly Klassen, the Street Captain clarification, and the fully-allocated status of the mitigation budget.

Moved by: Carly Klassen **Seconded by:** Richard Overland

• **Result:** Motion carried.

Motion 3.3: Approval of Minutes from Wednesday, June 10, 2026

BOARD MOTION: To approve the Board Meeting Minutes from June 10, 2026, as presented.

Moved by: Fay Yachetti **Seconded by:** Kristel Manes

• **Result:** Motion carried.

4. DELEGATIONS & GUEST PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Sleeman Centre & 2027 Memorial Cup Update — Matt Newby

Matt Newby, VP of the Guelph Storm, presented the vision for the 2027 Memorial Cup hosting framework on behalf of the Host Organizing Committee. The tournament will run for 11 days starting Thursday, May 20, 2027, overlapping with Guelph's Bicentennial (Guelph 200).

Projections: Anticipating over 100,000 total attendees (45,000 at sold-out games, 50,000+ at community activations) and 30,000+ out-of-town visitors generating roughly 10,000 hotel nights.

Activations: The arrival of the cup will feature a free live concert by *The Trews* at Royal City Park in close connection with the John McCrae House. Activations include "Guelph 200" free family/kid zones at City Hall, street festivals, outdoor movie nights at Carden Street, and a "Drake Away Parade" distributing 1,000 road hockey sticks. Marketing efforts will resume in the fall via social channels to target regions outside of the traditional hockey core demographic.

Regional Passports & Storefronts: The committee is working with RTO4 to develop a regional "Grand Tour Passport" (offering both paper and digital components) to drive traffic into local downtown retail shops and regional partners. A municipal "playbook" is being adapted from Kelowna's host model to help local businesses optimize storefront decorating and introduce themed menu items.

Transit/Parking Logistics: Shuttle fleets (including 36 Nissan partner vehicles and Red Car services) will ferry visitors from hotels to minimize core parking gridlock. James Goodram added that an integrated

city staff team is actively mapping out wayfinding, transit connectivity, and monitoring construction timelines to ensure seamless tourist arrival grids. Tom Lammer was noted as connected virtually to the space during these planning contexts.

5. EXECUTIVE & GOVERNANCE UPDATES

5.1 Chair's Report — Chuck Nash

Construction Operations: The current civil contractor is doing an outstanding job, maintaining clear scheduling speed and high organizational marks.

Construction Dollars: The localized voucher initiative is finalized and scheduled to launch by the first week of July.

Board Vacancy: Following the relocation of Jordan's business out of the downtown core, a vacant seat remains on the board. Chuck Nash noted that the board is legally permitted to appoint an interim member to complete the term instead of forcing an emergency election. Denise Mansur (owner of Mary Mac on Quebec Street) expressed enthusiastic interest in filling Jordan's vacancy.

BOARD MOTION: To formally appoint Denise Mansur to the DGBA Board of Directors for the remainder of the current operational term to fill the vacancy left by Jordan.

Moved by: Kristel Manes **Seconded by:** Pina Marfisi

• **Result:** Motion carried.

5.2 Notice of Motion: Downtown Parking Subsidization Contribution — Carly Klassen

Carly Klassen read the matching funding request resulting from the previous night's city council resolution. The city approved utilizing up to \$25,000 from the construction mitigation budget toward operationally feasible parking relief strategies on Wyndham Street above and beyond existing measures, requesting matching funds of \$25,000 from the DGBA.

Financial Cost Breakdown: To contextualize how far \$50,000 stretches, municipal metrics indicate that offering 2 hours of complimentary parking costs approximately \$10,000/month for the East Parkade, \$13,000/month for the West Parkade, and \$23,500/month for the Market Parkade.

Board Debate: Strong frustration was expressed by several directors (Pina Marfisi, Richard Overland) regarding the city's rollout of 24/7 paid parking parameters during a major construction crisis, noting that the merchant levy shouldn't feel "snowballed" into buying back basic customer access. The Chair and board agreed that despite deep baseline disagreement with municipal parking policy, immediate relief for independent retailers ahead of the fall/holiday season is paramount. The program language is kept intentionally flexible so a joint DGBA-city working group can optimize where to deploy the \$50,000 pool (e.g., targeted holiday parking blitzes or adding an extra free hour).

BOARD MOTION: That the DGBA match the City of Guelph's contribution by allocating \$25,000 toward operationally feasible downtown parking mitigation initiatives for the 2026 construction cycle, with final placement to be determined via collaboration with city staff.

Moved by: Carly Klassen **Seconded by:** Richard Overland

• **Result:** Motion carried.

5.3 Treasurer's Report — Richard Overland

The May financial ledgers were distributed via email. The association's fiscal position tracks entirely normal and within baseline projection thresholds.

Marketing & Advertising Budget Deployment: Following authorized ad allocations, a high-yield program has been brokered with *GuelphToday* yielding an estimated \$3.50 of matching promotional value for every \$1 spent. Additionally, a 26-week promotional radio broadcast sequence running through December 31 has been locked in with *Magic FM*, securing a value-add leverage of \$2.75 for every dollar spent.

Voucher Activations: To generate direct storefront foot traffic, *GuelphToday* and *Magic FM* will host on-air giveaways of the new Downtown Dollars. Winners will be mandated to pick up their physical vouchers from rotating, volunteering independent downtown retail establishments rather than station offices, pulling consumers directly past merchant registers. The total net spend is capped at roughly \$7,000 plus tax.

6. COMMUNITY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL UPDATES

6.1 City of Guelph Strategic Updates — James Goodram & Tracey Suerich

Media Coverage: CBC Kitchener conducted a balanced media report concerning downtown construction impacts, interviewing local merchants and city staff. The feature broadcast highlights that downtown merchants remain open and actively encourages community shopping traffic.

Civil Infrastructure Progress: Wyndham Street south of Carden is scheduled to open mid-to-late July, reverting Carden to a functioning two-way intersection and establishing a temporary one-way lane feeding upward from Wellington to alleviate entry stress. Concurrently, Macdonell Street will experience a full closure cycle to facilitate immediate utility replacements. Under-bridge rail corridor work beneath the Metrolinx bridge remains structurally paused pending overdue final technical permits from Metrolinx.

Wayfinding Audits: City staff completed a perimeter infrastructure walkthrough to rectify layout visibility deficits. Immediate steps are being taken to clear communication blocks, including installing clear, prominent pedestrian signs mapping foot paths around Carden Street to the VIA/GO rail station. Additional wide-scale perimeter signs explicitly clarifying "Downtown is Open" will be deployed.

Digital Integration Strategy: The board held an in-depth operational discussion to simplify the consumer web user experience. To minimize excessive navigating, the board agreed that the DGBA website construction tab should automatically execute a direct hyperlink redirect to the *Diggable Downtown* domain.

Performance Reporting Session: City council has extended an official invitation to the DGBA to present a concise 10-minute briefing highlighting organizational operational successes at a special council session on Wednesday, July 22.

Parkade Signage & Honk App Friction: City staff confirmed that while the HonkMobile application framework cannot be fully removed due to foundational system integration costs, a comprehensive wayfinding and physical signage overhaul is actively being deployed through the West, East, and Market parkades to prevent technical user blocks and surprise infractions. The board formally requested that the city evaluate Green P visual layouts and investigate introducing QR codes to simplify payment flows for seniors.

Wilson Street Encroachment Issue: Board member Denise Mansur raised an issue regarding surprise enforcement notices distributed to Wilson Street merchants ordering the immediate removal of exterior visitor seating/picnic benches due to historical right-of-way policies. Directors strongly agreed that penalizing businesses for providing basic social seating during a severe construction crisis is counterproductive. James Goodram and Tracey Suerich requested the notice be forwarded directly to their desk to look into resolving it immediately.

6.2 Community Liaison Committee (CLC) Report — Derrick Rutherford

Safety & Social Services Alignment: The "Good Neighbour" roundtables have yielded highly productive alignment networks. A major strategy session was completed earlier in the day involving senior directors from local social infrastructure networks, including the Community Health Centre (CHC), Wyndham House, and the county housing oversight committees. All agencies are aligned to execute coordinated joint responses addressing core safety, property care, and business integration patterns.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 Attractions Committee Update — Pina Marfisi

Art on the Street Success: The recent Art on the Street installation achieved phenomenal merchant feedback and record-breaking crowd densities. Sudden municipal water infrastructure blockages at Baker Street forced emergency layout rerouting with less than two weeks' notice. Staff successfully restructured the entire event footprint onto Cork Street and Quebec Street, preserving high sales velocity for emerging artists.

Live Mural Program: Five brand-new completed live-canvas murals are fully finalized and currently being assigned to physical anchor properties across the core, including Lucent Glass. The board received an exploratory request from the Guelph Neighbourhood Coalition to allow the art pieces to complete a brief traveling exhibition across 11 neighborhood centers before final installation. The committee is also actively collaborating local tourism coordinators to design a curated, interactive public "Mural Walk" linking the collection with broader municipal public art assets.

8. NEW BUSINESS & NEXT MEETING DETERMINATION

Due to schedule conflicts during the final week of July and required attendance at the City Council presentation on July 22, the board evaluated alternate timelines to prevent governance gaps.

Next Session: The next regular meeting of the DGBA Board of Directors is officially confirmed for **Monday, July 20, 2026, at 5:00 PM** inside the boardroom.

9. ADJOURNMENT

With all primary agenda orders of business addressed, the Chair called for a motion to conclude the formal session.

BOARD MOTION: To officially adjourn the DGBA Board of Directors meeting at 7:30 PM.

Moved: Unanimous **Result:** Motion carried.

Minutes transcribed, verified, and respectfully submitted for executive approval by Derrick Rutherford, Board Executive & CLC Chair.