

DOWNTOWN GUELPH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date:	Monday, July 20, 2026	Location:	DGBA Boardroom (Hybrid / Online)
Time:	5:00 PM	Status:	Draft for Board Approval

1. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME & ATTENDANCE

1.1 Call to Order: Board Chair Chuck Nash called the meeting to order.

1.2 Attendance & Regrets:

- **Present:** Chuck Nash (Chair), Derrick Rutherford, Richard Overland, Pina Marfisi, Carly Klassen, Denise Mansur, Cathy Downer, Faye Yachetti, Iside Dallan.
- **City Staff & Liaisons:** James Goodram, Tracy Suerich.
- **Regrets:** Kristel Manes, Tom Lammer.

1.3 Approval of Agenda:

Motion: Moved by Richard Overland, seconded by Iside Dallan, to approve the meeting agenda as presented. — **CARRIED.**

1.4 Approval of Minutes:

Motion: To approve the minutes of the previous Board of Directors meeting held on Wednesday, June 24, 2026. — **CARRIED.**

2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & GOVERNANCE UPDATES

2.1 Chair's Report (Chuck Nash):

- **Bright Nights Phase 2:** Contract signed with a new vendor for a trial sampling across four buildings on Carden Street (Hockey Shop, New Bet Coffee, and adjacent storefronts). The previous vendor's quote was approximately \$750,000, whereas the new vendor's quote for the full scope is just over \$100,000. Six additional wooden huts have also been ordered using mitigation funds.

Motion: Moved by Richard Overland, seconded by Cathy Downer, to approve an expenditure of up to **\$150,000** for Phase 2 of the Bright Nights program. — **CARRIED.**

- **City Council Presentation:** Chuck Nash noted an upcoming presentation to City Council on July 22 highlighting DGBA's recent accomplishments.

2.2 New Board Member Introduction: Official introduction and welcome of new Board Member **Denise Mansur**.

2.3 Marketing & Downtown Voucher Updates (Richard Overland):

- Campaigns with *GuelphToday* and *Magic 106* have officially launched, with early positive traction and extra organic mentions.
- The new **Construction Vouchers** (\$25 face value) have arrived. Distribution packages containing store window signage and program rules will be distributed to downtown businesses.
- Merchants will record total transaction values on the back of returned vouchers to track total economic impact and ROI.

3. INTERGOVERNMENTAL, CITY & PARKING MITIGATION UPDATES

3.1 City Construction & Wayfinding Updates (Tracy Suerich & James Goodram):

- **Construction Progress:** Wyndham South and the Carden intersection are open. Macdonell Street is currently undergoing a 20-day closure. Impacted businesses were notified door-to-door and by email regarding an overnight water shutoff scheduled for Tuesday at 11:00 PM.
- **Wayfinding & Signage:** Permanent wayfinding directories are being relocated and reprinted. Perimeter "Downtown Businesses Open" signage is being deployed on surrounding streets (Norfolk, Norwich, etc.). Larger, clearer signage for 2-hour free parking has been installed at the Macdonell Lot.
- **City Mitigation Strategy:** The City plans to issue an RFP for a \$60,000 marketing strategy intended for holiday 2026 through the 2027 Bicentennial. The Board expressed strong preference toward direct social media collaborations and expanding physical voucher programs rather than high-level corporate consulting templates.

3.2 Parking Mitigation Structure & Program Strategy:

- Discussion ensued regarding the \$25,000 City parking mitigation fund.
- The Board evaluated options for free parking in the Market Parkade and Macdonell Lot.
- To balance retail daytime needs and evening/weekend dining traffic, the consensus focused on securing **3 Hours Free Parking** in both the Market Parkade and Macdonell Lot.
- **Delegation of Authority:** The Board agreed to delegate final approval of the specific schedule and rollout parameters (targeted for August through November/December) to a working group consisting of **Chuck Nash, Richard Overland, and Pina Marfisi**, working in coordination with Tracy Suerich.

4. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

4.1 Attractions Committee Update (Pina Marfisi):

- **Downtown Garage Sale:** Highly successful event featuring 78 active vendors and over 50 on the waitlist.
- **Upcoming Events:** Vintage Market (Sept 12), Jazz Festival (Sept 12), Doggy Promenade (Sept 26).
- **Patio Removal Extension Request:** Iside Dallon raised concerns regarding the City's requirement for patio removals scheduled for Friday, September 25, and Saturday, September 26, noting that this directly conflicts with the Doggy Promenade. Iside requested that Tracy Suerich follow up with City staff (Stacy Laughlin) to request an extension so patios can remain open at least through the weekend of the Doggy Promenade (September 26).
- **Classic Car Show Proposal (Richard Overland):** Proposed hiring an expert consultant (\$3,000 fee + 25% vendor booth commission) to organize a major regional car show for spring/summer 2027. The item will be formally built into the 2027 budget proposal.
- **Grassroots Activations & Wayfinding (Carly Klassen):** Presented concepts for grassroots art installations (collaborating with Hillside decor teams/Wyndham Art Supply), an Art Crawl series, and regular street-closure micro-events.**
- **Inter-Agency Event Coordination:** The Board emphasized the need for an emergency Attractions Committee meeting and a formal joint session with City Culture/Tourism/Rec staff to streamline the 40-day/multi-month event permitting process and improve event notifications.

5. NEXT MEETING & ADJOURNMENT

5.1 Next Meeting: Scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 2026, at 5:00 PM in the DGBA Boardroom.

5.2 Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:25 PM.