



## DOBIA MPS MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the DOBIA Marketing, Programming, Sponsorship Committee, March 11, 2026

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**Present:** Jennie May Banks, Vice Chair in the Chair  
Ruth Howorth, DOBIA Director  
Allie Young, Orillia Lake & Country  
Will LaFrance, City of Orillia  
Doug Cooper, DOBIA Chair

**Absent:** Darcy Macdonel, DOBIA Directory  
Melissa Van Dam, The Maker's Circle  
Jenna French, DOBIA Director  
Deron Johnston, DOBIA Executive Director

**Also Present:** Tarah Harper, DOBIA Membership Coordinator

**Chair-** Jennie-May Banks

### Call To order

The meeting was called to order at 10:35am.

### Approval of Agenda

*Moved by R. Howorth, seconded by A. Young.*

“THAT, the MPS Committee approve the agenda from March 12, 2026, meeting with the revisions of next month's meeting date changed to April 15, 2026.

**Carried.**

### Disclosure of Interest

None declared.

### Minutes

#### 1. Regular MPS Meeting, February 11, 2026

*Moved by R. Howorth, seconded by A. Young*

“THAT, the minutes for the February 11, 2026, MPS Meeting be approved.”

**Carried**

### Deputations

**Michael Fredson, DOBIA Treasurer re Street Soccer Fundraiser**



Michael presented a proposal for a street soccer fundraiser event to be held in downtown Orillia. The event would feature a small-sided street soccer tournament, similar in concept to “Take Back the Night,” where teams participate through peer-to-peer fundraising.

The proposed event date is July 18, 2026, aligning with the FIFA World Cup final weekend to encourage increased downtown activity. The event aims to:

1. Raise awareness of street soccer programs that support individuals experiencing homelessness as part of their healing journey.
2. Raise funds for the Canadian team to attend the Homeless World Cup in Mexico; and
3. Generate funding to establish a local homelessness street soccer team.

The tournament would include approximately 20 co-ed teams, organized into five groups of four, followed by tiered playoff rounds resulting in multiple championship divisions. Games would be 14 minutes in length, with teams of up to eight players and continuous substitutions.

The Canadian Street Soccer Association (CSSA) would provide two portable courts to be installed downtown. Event organizers would be responsible for all logistics, including setup, supervision, registration, and required municipal applications. Michael noted he will visit the downtown area to determine a suitable flat location for the courts.

The event is intended to draw participants and spectators to the downtown core, with the expectation that attendees will also support local businesses during World Cup festivities. Organizers will seek sponsorships and partnerships to support prizes, marketing, and fundraising efforts, and may request in-kind contributions such as gift cards. Limited municipal support is anticipated, primarily related to permits and barricades.

## **MOTION**

*Moved by A. Young, seconded by R. Howorth*

“THAT, an Event Planning Guide is to be submitted, but otherwise deputation to be received as information.”

**Carried**

## **Correspondence Information Items**

**None.**

## **Correspondence Action Items**



None.

## ITEMS:

### 1. MiConex/Gift Card Update, T. Harper, Membership Coordinator

Tarah reported that Miconex approval is required for all advertising and media kits related to gift card sales, including both print and social media campaigns. Work is ongoing with Miconex to finalize seasonal media kits; however, approval has been received to proceed with St. Patrick's Day and Easter advertising and promotional activities.

Tarah also advised that she is collaborating with the Orillia Public Library on a partnership initiative to support the sale and promotion of gift cards.

In addition, Tarah and Michael, in coordination with Miconex, are in discussions with the City of Orillia regarding GL codes and account structures. Ongoing financial administration challenges were noted due to the City currently managing the program's finances.

#### **MOTION:**

*Moved by A. Young, seconded by R. Howorth*

"THAT, the Miconex/Gift Card update be received as information"

***Carried***

### 2. Website Update, T. Harper & A. Young

Tarah reported that she, Allie, and JM are participating in a feedback group working with NetGain on the development and design of the new website.

Progress has been slower than anticipated due to the need to source high-resolution imagery and to verify business listings within the BIA footprint. Tarah noted that several businesses have recently closed, relocated, or opened, and that the current website contains outdated and inaccurate information. As a result, the previously anticipated April launch date is no longer feasible.

Will L. has volunteered to investigate whether formal approval from the City of Orillia is required to confirm BIA boundary maps, as conflicting versions have been received. Will indicated his understanding that the BIA defines its boundaries, with the city subsequently adjusting levies accordingly. JM requested clarification on this matter, noting that the current boundary mapping is unclear and appears to exclude some downtown businesses (e.g., Lone Wolf) that are geographically located within the downtown area but fall outside the identified boundary lines.



**MOTION:**

*Moved by A. Young, seconded by D. Cooper*

“THAT, the website update be received as information”

***Carried***

**3. Budget Discussion, D. Johnston, Executive Director**

Due to Deron’s absence, the budget discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

It was noted that committee budgets are standing agenda items at each meeting. JM emphasized the importance of identifying key projects and priorities for the upcoming year in order to prepare and present a draft budget for approval early, particularly as the Board is required to submit a draft budget to the City of Orillia in the summer.

It was also discussed that a dedicated budget line be included for the development of a new logo, as no funding has been allocated for this initiative in the current year’s budget.

**MOTION:**

*Moved by D. Cooper, seconded by A. Young*

“THAT, the MPS Committee budget discussions be deferred to the April 8, 2026 MPS Committee Meeting.”

***Carried***

**4. Rebranding and Logo**

It was noted that although the rebranding exercise was completed last year to support the new website project, a new logo has not yet been developed. The Board previously approved the creation of a simplified logo to improve usability and reduce costs across various platforms and marketing applications.

JM proposed using the existing Gift Card logo as a foundation, as there is general agreement on its design and colour palette. Allie noted that further simplification would still be required and suggested that a third-party designer could refine the concept using the Gift Card logo as a starting point.

JM requested that Tarah contact Miconex to confirm ownership rights of the current logo prior to proceeding with any redesign.



The Board discussed obtaining three quotes for the logo development project from Impression House, NetGain, and John Emmerson (to be confirmed), with the understanding that associated costs will need to be incorporated into the upcoming budget.

**MOTION:**

*Moved by D. Cooper, seconded by A. Young*

*“THAT, staff be directed to obtain clarification on the ownership of the logo, and to obtain 3 quotes for the redevelopment of our logo.”*

***Carried***

**5. Events Submission and Event Planning**

The Committee discussed the role of staff in supporting new event planners and partnerships. It was agreed that staff may provide active support during the first year of a new event—focused on guidance rather than event delivery—to help ensure successful outcomes that benefit the downtown. This support may include attending meetings, providing the Event Planning Guide package and required forms, facilitating contact with the City of Orillia, issuing letters of support, and assisting with emergency planning.

Doug emphasized that all event planners must clearly understand the BIA’s mandate and role, specifically that the BIA does not act as the event planner. Allie suggested establishing defined levels or caps for financial support (e.g., startup funding or sponsorship for promotional items), with the expectation that the BIA’s name/logo be included on any materials supported through funding.

Further discussion will be required to review and refine the Event Planning Guide following the summer season, as the Committee continues to evaluate and improve the system in its second year. Suggested updates include adding the planner’s name and contact information on the first page, clearly outlining the BIA’s mandate and role, including a section for planners to identify how the BIA can assist (i.e., their specific request), and defining sponsorship levels and/or financial caps.

***Delicious Days of Summer***

- The Committee reviewed the submission for *Delicious Days of Summer*, scheduled for the last weekend in June. It was reported that the event continues to grow in success, with over 110 vendor applications received to date. Organizers have also partnered with the Arts District group on Peter Street to expand event activities into that area.



The event has secured a \$15,000 grant to support advertising and marketing initiatives. Organizers have requested \$903.00 from the BIA to assist with printing costs for promotional materials, including swag bags.

The Committee discussed the request and noted that any financial contribution from the BIA should include recognition, specifically that the name “Downtown BIA Orillia” be included on printed materials supported through funding.

### ***Summer Street Sales***

- The Committee noted that the event planner did not complete the required Event Planning Guide, resulting in missing information necessary to properly assess the request. It was further noted that the funding request represents a significant amount, effectively requiring allocation of the full annual event budget.

Additional concern was raised regarding the planner’s request for BIA staff to manage the event, which falls outside the BIA’s mandate.

As a result, the Committee is unable to approve the request as submitted. Ruth will prepare correspondence outlining the Committee’s position and invite the planner to revise and resubmit a scaled-down proposal by the next meeting, in consideration of upcoming deadlines for street closure applications with the City of Orillia.

### ***Pirate Party***

- The Committee was advised that Kayle from Worksite has been confirmed as the new event planner. A preliminary budget of \$6,000 has been submitted; however, no financial support or assistance is being requested from the BIA at this time.

Deron will participate in planning meetings to provide guidance and ensure alignment with the BIA’s mandate, including support related to permits with the City of Orillia and BIA marketing opportunities.

It was noted that the proposed budget appears to be based on the previous year’s event and may require adjustments, as the new planner may choose to take the event in a different direction.

The Committee also noted that this event is not affiliated with or sponsored by the Chamber’s Pirate Event, allowing the planner full flexibility in determining the event’s format and direction.

### **MOTION:**

*Moved by R. Howorth, seconded by A. Young*



*“THAT, the event submission for Delicious Days of Summer be approved, with the BIA providing sponsorship in the amount of \$903.00 toward the cost of merch bags and banners, and that proof of materials including the BIA name be reviewed and approved prior to the release of funds.*

*AND THAT, the Summer Event Sales event submission for multiple street closures and entertainment be declined as presented due to the incomplete Event Planning Guide; and that Ruth be directed to prepare correspondence outline the Committee’s position and inviting the event organizer to resubmit with additional information and clarification.*

*AND THAT, with respect to the Pirate Party event, Deron is directed to communicate the BIA’s mandate and role to the new event organizer and provide guidance to support a successful event; and that any request for financial start-up support be submitted for consideration with appropriate details and clarification.”*

**Carried**

## **6. Safer Spaces – Inclusivity and Diversity Training, April 9, 2026**

Tarah informed the Committee that the BIA, in partnership with Lake Country Pride, Orillia District Chamber of Commerce, and Lake Country Tourism, will be hosting a Diversity and Inclusion event at Creative Nomads Studios on April 9, 2026.

The event will feature both morning and afternoon sessions. Ticket sales are progressing well, with approximately half of the available tickets already sold. It was noted that a significant portion of tickets have been purchased by local businesses and organizations for staff participation.

### **MOTION:**

*Moved by D. Cooper, seconded by R. Howorth*

*“THAT, the information regarding Safer Spaces be received.”*

**Carried**

## **7. Roots North Grant**

The Committee noted that this initiative was previously approved by the Board following a deputation by Kevin G., Executive Director of the Youth Centre.

A funding cap of \$200–\$250 per participating business has been established. Eligibility is limited to businesses located within the BIA boundary, and interested participants are required to apply by submitting a request via email to the BIA office.



**MOTION:**

*Moved by D. Cooper, seconded by R. Howorth*

*“THAT, the information regarding the Roots North Grant program be received.”*

**Carried**

**8. Mariposa Folk Festival Stage**

Further discussion will take place at the next Board meeting, including considerations for potential street closures, business participation, and opportunities to feature local musicians and talent.

It was suggested that a Block Party be held on Thursday evening, as the current Friday afternoon showcase has experienced low attendance and has not effectively driven traffic to downtown businesses. It was noted that attendees often remain at the performance area for free entertainment and leave without patronizing local establishments.

**MOTION:**

*Moved by A. Young, seconded by D. Cooper*

*“THAT, the discussion regarding the Mariposa Stage be deferred to the April 8, 2026 meeting.”*

**Carried**

**9. Busking Auditions – May 8, 2026**

The program is currently planned to take place outdoors near the Opera House and adjacent to the Orillia Public Library. JM inquired about the possibility of reserving an indoor space at the library as a contingency in the event of inclement weather.

Auditions for buskers are scheduled for May 8, with selected performers (including musicians and other creative talent) to be compensated by the BIA for participation in downtown events. JM has volunteered to assist Tarah and Deron with the audition process.

Tarah noted that the program requires a significant investment of time and effort; however, it was acknowledged that high-quality performers can enhance the downtown atmosphere, contribute to a positive visitor experience, and encourage repeat visitation.



The Committee agreed that the busker program will be reviewed and evaluated at the end of the summer season and in the meantime, a survey would go out to our members requesting their thoughts regarding the impact of the program, to be reviewed at the next MPS meeting.

**MOTION:**

*Moved by D. Cooper, seconded by R. Howorth*

*“THAT, the information regarding the busking auditions be received, and that staff be directed to send a survey to BIA members requesting their input regarding the busking program.”*

**Carried**

**10. Open**

**Date of Next Meeting**

April 8, 2026, at 1:00pm in the DOBIA Boardroom, DOBIA Office.

**Adjournment**

*Moved by R. Howorth, seconded by D. Cooper*

*“THAT, the meeting be adjourned.”*

**Carried**

Meeting adjourned at: 12:17pm

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Jennie-May Banks, Chair