



DOWNTOWN ORILLIA BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Downtown Orillia Business Improvement Area
January 20, 2026

Present: Doug Cooper, In the Chair
Jennie May Banks, Vice Chair
Megan Murray, Secretary
Michael Fredson, Treasurer
Jeff Gilbert, Director
Ruth Howorth, Director
Darcy MacDonell, Director
Jenna French, Director
Councillor David Campbell

Absent:

Also Present: Deron Johnston, DOBIA Executive Director
Tarah Harper, DOBIA Membership Coordinator
Dawn Nita, Owner of DWN Chocolate
Will LaFrance, Economic Development Coordinator at the City of Orillia

Open Session

Chair- To be Determined

Call To order

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Jennie May Banks, seconded by David Campbell.

“THAT, the agenda be approved as distributed.”

Carried.

Disclosure of Interest

None declared.

Deputations

1. Ashley Szakal, The Mom Collective re – The Mom Collective
2. Renee Galloway, President Debits & Credits Accounting & Bookkeeping re – Financial Service

Minutes

Moved by David Campbell, Michael Fredson.

“THAT, the minutes for the Regular Meeting on November 18, 2025, be approved.”

Carried.

Correspondence Information Items-

1. Ruth Howorth, Director, re – Experience Simcoe County Partnership Fund
Moved by Michael Fredson, by Ruth Howorth.

Upon further investigation this grant is not available to us due to the municipality not paying into the Experience Simcoe fund.

“THAT, the communication regarding the Experience Simcoe County Partnership Fund be received.”

Carried

Reports

1. Deron Johnston, Executive Director re – Partnership Organizations
Moved by Jenna French, David Campbell.

Report from Economic Development outlining their 2026 programming. The DTCIP program will run again this year but may not continue beyond it. This program can be used for alleyway improvements. The Fuel Innovation program no longer exists but some programming remains. The Accelerate-her Program will run again this year. The City’s new website will launch in March. The branded window paper will now need to be updated with new website info. The Winter Games opening ceremonies on Feb 19th & 26th

“THAT, the Partnership reports be received.”

Carried.

2. Michael Fredson, Treasurer, re – Financial Report
Moved by Darcy MacDonell, Jennie May Banks.

“THAT, the Financial reports be received.”

Carried

3. Deron Johnston, Executive Director re – Office Report
Moved by Jennie May Banks, seconded by Ruth Howorth.

Discussion about the delivery the no trespass letter after staff experienced in November. Reminders that sanding and shoveling are the responsibility of business owners, current snow removal and sanding are an added service, not the responsibility of the BIA. The library is open to becoming a location for gift card pick-up for the public. Gift card sales have been good through January. Deron Johnston and Doug Cooper attended the first Downtown Revitalization planning meeting. The group discussed a proposed with a three-year surface revitalization.

“THAT, the Office report be received.

AND THAT, an information sheet about BIA’s be created by the Executive Committee to help support city staff knowledge.”

Carried.

4. Deron Johnston, Executive Director re – Assignment of Committees and Working Group Moved by David Campbell, seconded by Ruth Howorth.

“THAT, DOBIA Committees contain the following members from the Board:

Executive Committee:

- Doug Cooper (Chair)
- Jennie May Banks (Vice Chair)
- Megan Murray (Secretary)
- Michael Fredson (Treasurer)

Marketing, Programming and Sponsorship Committee:

- Jennie May Banks (Chair)
- Jenna French
- Ruth Howorth
- Darcy MacDonell

Beautification, Maintenance & Streetscaping Committee:

- Megan Murray (Chair)
- Jeff Gilbert
- Doug
- Fredson

AND THAT, the following DOBIA board members and staff are submitted to sit on municipal and partner boards and working groups:

City of Orillia Transportation and Parking Working Group

- Doug Cooper
- Michael Fredson

City of Orillia Downtown Revitalization Planning Group

- Doug Cooper
- Deron Johnston (DOBIA Executive Director)

Sustainable Orillia

- Deron Johnston (DOBIA Executive Director).”

Carried.

5. Deron Johnston, Executive Director re – Member Survey Results
Moved by Ruth Howorth, seconded by Michael Fredson.

Board members discussed results of the Member Survey. The tone was overall positive. There was discussion around the creation of a member resource and commitment to the role of the DOBIA in support of events as opposed to planning events.

“THAT, the Member Survey reports be received.”

Carried.

6. Deron Johnston, Executive Director re – 2026 DOBIA Objectives
Moved by David Campbell, seconded by Ruth Howorth.

The DOBIA Board discussed and listed the goals for the 2026 year.

“THAT, the DOBIA objective reports be received.

AND THAT, the objectives be the focus for the 2026 year are financial independence launch of the new website, deciding on whether to continue using the CRM, implementation of a new logo, alleyway upgrades and an events directive resource.”

Carried.

7. David Campbell, Council Representative re – City of Orillia Council Report
Moved by Ruth Howorth, seconded by Jennie May Banks.

“THAT, the City of Orillia Council report be received.”

Carried.

8. Megan Murray and Doug Cooper, re –Transportation and Parking Working Group Report
Moved by Michael Fredson, seconded by Jennie May Banks.

The meeting to review the Simcoe County Active Transportation Plan was delayed due to weather. There was discussion around better utilization of parking in the tourism season, including proposing moving the Farmer's Market to the Library Courtyard or on the street.

"THAT, the City of Orillia Transportation and Parking Working Group report be received."

Carried.

9. Standing Committee Reports

- a. Megan Murray, Secretary re – Beautification, Maintenance & Streetscape
Outlined the goals and budget of the BMS Committee for 2026. Got clarification on which committee is responsible for the TODS signs.
- b. Jennie May Banks, Director re – Marketing, Promotions & Sponsorship
Outlined the goals and budget of the MPS Committee for 2026. Discussion was had around spending additional funds on changing the language on the TODS signs.

Moved by Doug Cooper, seconded by Darcy MacDonell.

"THAT, the TODS sign be changed from "Historic Downtown Orillia," to "Sunshine City Downtown Orillia," for a cost of \$3000."

Defeated.

Moved David Campbell, seconded by Ruth Howorth

"THAT, the BMS and MPS report be received."

Carried.

10. Megan Murray, Secretary re – Governance

Moved by David Campbell, seconded by Jennie May Banks.

Discussed the goals of completing the updated Policy Manual and Member Guide. Update was needed in the Reserve Policy to address any potential shortfall from the annual budget.

"THAT the Governance report be received.

AND THAT, the amendment to the Reserve Policy that any budgetary shortfall is to be taken from the Operational Reserve be approved.

Carried.

11. Deron Johnston, Executive Director, re – Budget
Moved by Ruth Howorth, seconded by Jennie May Banks.

“THAT the Budget report be received.”

Carried.

Deputation Motions

Moved by Ruth Howorth, seconded by Michael Fredson.

- a. *Ashley Szakal, The Mom Collective re – The Mom Collective*

The Mom Collective is grassroots, volunteer-run non-profit organization that provides immediate, practical support to mothers and families in crisis in the Simcoe County area, bridging gaps in formal systems by mobilizing donations.

- b. *Renee Galloway, Pres. Debits & Credits Accounting & Bookkeeping re – Financial Services*

Debits & Credits is a full-service, independent accounting firm that specializes in providing bookkeeping and accounting and is experienced in Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) which require specialized financial management.

“THAT, Ashley Szakal, regarding The Mom Collective and Renee Galloway, President Debits & Credits regarding financial services be received

AND THAT, staff be directed to continue to investigate financial services for the DOBIA.

Carried.

Date of Next Meeting

February 17, 2026, 5:30PM in the DOBIA Office.

Adjournment

Moved by Ruth Howorth, seconded by Darcy MacDonell.

“THAT the meeting be adjourned.”

Carried

Meeting adjourned at: 8:57 PM

Doug Cooper, Chair