



Uptown Leamington BIA Board of Management Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 2nd, 2026 at 8:00 AM
5th Floor Boardroom, Central 33 Building
33 Princess St, Leamington

Members Present: Chad Robinson, Chair
Michelle Fortier, Vice Chair/Secretary
Councilor Anthony Abraham

Members Absent: Mayor Hilda McDonald
Faith Monaco
Renee Daudlin-Iacobelli

Others Present: Cassandra Pilotte, Coordinator

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:20 AM.

Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof.

Consent Agenda

Moved by: Anthony Abraham
Seconded by: Michelle Fortier

1. A correction was noted to the event location for the council debate: the debate has been moved to the Roma Club from The Bank Theatre. The consent agenda to be approved as amended;
2. That the Minutes of the BIA Board of Management meeting held May 6th be approved; and
3. That the Report from Community Groups, Leamington District Chamber of Commerce and the Coordinator be received.

Carried

Council Update from Municipal Council Representatives

None

Report from the Treasurer

None

Matters for Consideration

6.1. Remuneration for MSM history walks

The Board discussed remuneration for the facilitator for leading three historical walks during the Mill Street Market events. Two walks were attended by approximately 15–20 people and the other by approximately seven people, with some repeat attendance. The walks were described as detailed and engaging, and preparation materials had been developed for the presentations. Mr. Robinson discussed establishing a reasonable stipend and agreed on the amount of \$500 for the three walks.

Moved by: Michelle Fortier

Seconded by: Anthony Abraham

That the Board of Management remunerate the facilitator for the Mill Street Market history walks in the amount of \$500 to be taken from the Mill Street Market vendor-related budget allocation.

Carried

6.2. Video shoots/photography shoot + quotes

The Board reviewed the 2026 professional photography member benefit, which had five participating businesses, with one business withdrawing due to flooding. Ms. Pilotte noted continued interest from members, including a new business.

The Board reviewed two videography options and preferred the second vendor's social-media-focused package of four 15-second videos for \$850 per business. The Board agreed that the BIA should receive visible sponsorship recognition, preferably through a closing frame or similar notation, because the service is fully funded by the BIA and supports its mandate to promote local businesses.

Moved by: Anthony Abraham

Seconded by: Michelle Fortier

That the Coordinator be authorized to offer member benefits in the form of video and photography, using the second videography vendor at \$850, and to use the

remaining member benefit budget for 2026 as conditions allow.

Carried

6.3. 2027 Proposed Budget

The Board reviewed the proposed 2027 budget, excluding payroll expenses, which were to be discussed in the closed session following this meeting. The proposed budget represents an increase of approximately 2.6%. The Board discussed surplus funds, including amounts associated with member benefits, Christmas advertising, the strategic plan and the website.

Mr. Robinson pointed to the \$1,000 Christmas advertising allocation and asked whether social media advertising could provide better value. Ms. Fortier felt that print advertising continues to reach older residents who may not use social media. The Board agreed that both print and digital approaches have value and therefore will keep both for 2027, as well as the potential for using member-benefit funds for social media boosting to further our reach.

Mr. Robinson also highlighted the Christmas décor expense line, which now reflects our need to replace older large-scale decorations as they have not been replaced in approximately 7 or 8 years, and the Municipality has stated that they are in a state of disrepair.

The Board discussed the BIA's broader digital strategy, including whether to focus on making the BIA website a central hub or instead provide businesses with resources and funding to strengthen their own digital marketing. The Board also decided to let the Driftscape service lapse rather than renew it, given limited demonstrated use and value.

Moved by: Michelle Fortier

Seconded by: Anthony Abraham

That the proposed 2027 budget be approved by the Board and presented at the Annual General Meeting.

Carried

6.4. Board of Directors Officer Vacancy & 6.5 Director Recruitment (discussed together)

The Board of Management discussed the current vacancy situation. Following a recent resignation, the Board of Management now has six members and three vacancies, while the procedural by-law provides for a nine-member Board. Mr. Abraham felt that recruitment should begin now, while formal nomination and appointment timing will align with the municipal cycle, with nominations expected in November and appointments in December for January service. Mr. Robinson emphasized personal outreach by current directors and pointed out the need to recruit individuals who work for or operate businesses/non-profits within the BIA area. A mixer is planned as an educational and networking opportunity to explain the BIA, its mandate and the benefits of volunteering.

Current members will use their personal and professional networks to identify prospective candidates.

6.5. Strategic Plan

The strategic plan item was carried forward with one note of mention - the Board of Management agreed that the BIA's digital direction (as mentioned during the budget discussion) should be incorporated into a future strategic planning discussion, including the BIA's role in digital marketing, member resources and the future use of its website.

6.6. Christmas Décor and Potential Grant

Ms. Pilotte advised that she is investigating an Ontario Rural Economic Development grant that may support projects providing economic benefit, including beautification projects. The proposed approach is to investigate a matching grant for the upcoming Christmas décor purchase. Ms. Pilotte will review available products and circulate information regarding the grant criteria and potential décor options.

Mr. Robinson also requested confirmation of whether décor purchased in October or November could be delivered and put into use for the 2026 holiday season. Ms. Pilotte will inquire.

Closed Session

Mr. Robinson sought a motion to move into closed meeting to discuss remuneration for the Coordinator at 9:22am.

Moved by: Anthony Abraham
Seconded by: Michelle Fortier

Carried

Closed Session - Summary

Motion to increase the Coordinator's wage effective immediately to \$30 per hour, to increase the hours up to 35 hours per week and to review the Coordinator's performance and remuneration in December 2026, based on the approved 2027 budget.

Moved by: Anthony Abraham
Seconded by: Michelle Fortier

Carried

Closed Session - Adjournment

That the Uptown Leamington BIA Board of Management adjourn the closed session and return to the regular meeting at 9:38am.

Moved by: Anthony Abraham
Seconded by: Michelle Fortier

Carried

Adjournment

That the Uptown Leamington BIA Board of Management adjourn at 9:39am until their next meeting held October 7, 2026.

Moved by: Anthony Abraham
Seconded by: Michelle Fortier

Carried

Next Meeting

October 7, 2026, at 8:00 AM, 5th Floor Boardroom, Central 33 Building, 33 Princess St., Leamington