Port Credit Business Improvement Association
Annual General Meeting
November 27, 2024

Minutes

Board Members Present:	John Pappas, Brenda McGarrell, Stephen Dasko, Lucie Zima, Paul Michel, Marlene Baur, James Shipp, Ryan Long

Staff:

Kelly Ralston	Executive Director (via Zoom)
Stacey Oliver	Administration and Community Relations
Shannon Baldwin	Event Coordinator
Peter Manthei	Streetscape Ambassador

Guest:

Melanie Flake	Bookkeeper

General Membership:

Members in Attendance	
Darrin/Sharon Landaw	Louie Manzo
Shay Nammari	Dr/Claudette Edwards
Maureen O'Neill	Linda Pinizzotta
Neil Wilson	Jeff McPhee/Sharon McPhee
Jonathan Giggs	

Call to Order

John Pappas called the meeting to order at 6:42 pm.

Indigenous Land Statement

John Pappas recited the Indigenous Land Statement.

Procedures & Rules of Engagement

- The meeting will be conducted in a professional manner
- Disrespectful behaviour will not be tolerated
- Raise hand to ask question
- One person to speak at a time

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None declared

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

None declared

Introduction of the PCBIA Board of Directors and Staff

John Pappas introduced the Board of Directors and noted that they are board elected volunteers who have the authority to make decisions for the PCBIA under the Mississauga Municipal Act.

Thanked Brenda McGarrell for being the longest serving board member and volunteer for the PCBIA. Brenda noted this is her last term.

Kelly Ralston, Executive Director for the PCBIA, joined via Zoom.

Approval of the Agenda for the November 27, 2024 AGM

Motion By: Louie Manzo
Second By: Jonathan Giggs
Carried

Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes

Motion By: Jonathan Giggs
Second By: Jeff McPhee
Carried

Councillor's Report: Remarks by Ward One Councillor Stephen Dasko

- Policing update: SERT (Strategic Enforcement and Response Team) community policing initiative, originally piloted in Brampton with positive results, is being rolled out in both 11 and 12 Divisions this year. Increased bicycle patrols are expected as part of this initiative.
- A dedicated parking spot for a police cruiser was added by Raw Aura.
- Councillor Dasko is advocating for a full police station in southern end of Mississauga.
- West Marina Park was delayed due to supply issues. Commercial fishing boats are expected to return for the 2025 season. The park will feature a fish cleaning station, as well as ramps for both motorized and non-motorized boats. An official opening date will be announced soon.
- A new gravity sewer trunk line is planned to begin construction in spring. The project experienced some delays but is essential, as the current pipes are at capacity. Instead of traditional trenching that would require cutting open Lakeshore Road, a series of mining shafts will be used to bore under Lakeshore at various locations.
- When the e-scooter and e-bike program was introduced, Councillor Dasko advocated for designated docking stations and opposed the use on sidewalks. Despite initial challenges, e-scooters and e-bikes are no longer permitted on sidewalks. Councillor Dasko continues to push for docking stations. The e-scooter and e-bike program is a three-year pilot, with a report expected to come back to Council soon for an update.
- There is a possibility of introducing bike lanes as part of the Lakeshore Connecting Communities initiative. A working group has been exploring appropriate solutions, and upcoming provincial legislation may influence the approach. An update will be forthcoming.
- The first stage of the Pedestrian Cycling Bridge near the Legion is complete. Lay-by parking has been added in front of the Legion, on land purchased by the City from the Legion. The bridge is anticipated to open in 2026.
- Noise Exemption - live music performance hours have been extended.
- Skate Trail - ice-making is progressing well. Thanks to Visit Mississauga, a 25-foot Christmas tree is lit in the centre. The Light Up the Port event is scheduled for Saturday from 6 to 9 PM.

Discussion:

John Pappas: Acknowledged Councillor Dasko for his commitment and advocacy on behalf of Port Credit businesses.

Linda Pinizzotto: Requested a copy of the financial statements for the skating rink. Councillor Dasko noted that the cost was approximately 1.3 million and that all records are transparent. He requested that Linda send his office an email. John Pappas noted that this is not related to BIA business.

Neil Wilson: When are docking stations coming for the e-scooters? They are frequently left on sidewalks and front lawns. The BIA should have final decision making authority on this issue.

Stephen Dasko: The Active Transportation Group is working on this 3-year pilot project, and he is working with this group to implement docking stations.

Kelly Ralston: Meets often with MicroAbility, and consistently emphasizes that if revenue is generated on the main street, they should be subject to a levy like other businesses. This has been raised several times.

Louie Manzo: Requested details on the extended live music hours. Councillor Dasko noted that noise by-laws previously restricted live performances to 5 PM, which was very limiting. The current permitted hours along the Lakeshore corridor are until 11 PM on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Neil Wilson: Questioned if there are any rules in place prohibiting Uber and Lyft drivers stopping or parking illegally along Lakeshore. Neil suggested that a designated pick-up/drop-off area could be created, or that drivers be directed to use side streets, supported by additional no-stopping signage. Stephen noted he will bring this issue to Peel Regional Police for further discussion. He acknowledged enforcement is challenging due to the quick nature of these stops.

PCBIA Chair Highlights – John Pappas

- John reviewed the year's highlights.
- John thanked Kelly and the staff for their outstanding work over the past year, noting their dedication, extra hours, and efforts in elevating the office into a smooth-running and efficient operation. He commended them for doing an exceptional job.
- It was noted that the new sewer trunk line is a major win for Port Credit. By using trenchless technology instead of traditional open-cut trenching, the project avoids years of road closures and significant disruption to local businesses. This infrastructure upgrade will also support long-term development in the area.
- John thanked the Board of Directors for their valuable contributions. Each member brings diverse expertise and generously volunteers their time out of a strong commitment and passion for Port Credit.
- The core pillars of the PCBIA's mandate serve the greater good, with a focus on keeping the community clean, safe, and beautiful. Executing this vision remains at the heart of all initiatives.
- Branding modifications have been done and will be touched on later in the meeting.
- Efforts continue to keep the main street vibrant and well-maintained, with the goal of attracting more feet to the street.
- There is an ongoing effort to increase engagement with the business community. The office remains open to feedback and consistently strives to incorporate that feedback.
- Historically, opening a business in Port Credit faced challenges due to parking and zoning regulations. The PCBIA has worked closely with Councillor Dasko and advocated with the City to help reduce these barriers. These efforts aim to support new business growth and make it easier for existing businesses to expand.
- John commended Kelly for her outstanding work in building partnerships with community groups, and professional organizations. Her efforts have significantly strengthened the BIA's presence and ensured it remains at the forefront of local initiatives and opportunities.
- There is a continued focus on attracting more tourism to the area, extending beyond the local community. John noted that Port Credit is an established tourist destination.
- The goal is to ensure there is open communication and engagement with businesses.
- John welcomed Brightwater as part of the Port Credit BIA.

Discussion:

Linda Pinizzotto: With the addition of Brightwater businesses, the BIA now represents over 500 businesses. Linda noted that the meeting notifications were sent out only recently, and requested that future notices be distributed 30 days in advance so more businesses can attend. Concern was raised about a communication disconnect and questioned why tonight's meeting is not available on Zoom to increase accessibility.

John Pappas: The notification of the AGM meeting was sent out 3 weeks ago, and everything is uploaded to the website. John agrees that notifying 30 days in advance makes sense. Attendance at AGMs is always a challenge, but ultimately it is up to the businesses to attend the meeting.

Neil Wilson: Noted that his condo board struggled to get attendance at AGMs, particularly post-COVID, and found Zoom to be an effective solution. He suggested that using Zoom for meetings could help improve participation.

Jonathan Giggs: Noted that meetings have been held by Zoom in the past due to the pandemic, and they still were not better attended. Emphasis should be made to make participation easier. Zoom or hybrid is good. Does the BIA have data from the City of all the property owners?

Kelly Ralston: The BIA receives a document from the City of levy paying businesses but it is one year behind. A student walks the street to track new businesses. The ideal would be reports from the City throughout the year.

Johnathan Giggs: Proposed that every property owner receive the agenda, minutes, and meeting notice by mail 30 days in advance. This approach may help improve meeting attendance.

Kelly Ralston: Board meetings are on the last Wednesday of the month. For the AGM, it will always be the last Wednesday of November. The information will be sent out before the end of October.

Motion: Jonathan Giggs moved that the PCBIA provide notice of the AGM, agenda and minutes to all BIA members both by email and hand-delivered 30 days in advance.
Seconded by: Jeff McPhee
Carried

Linda Pinizzotto: Hand delivering won't work well because it might not get to the business owners.

Neil Wilson: Who is the member of the BIA? The business owner or the property owner? John noted that there is 1 vote per member.

Jeff McPhee: Noted his property owner passes the levy fee onto him via his rent.

Claudette Edwards: The Municipal Act determines who gets to vote.

Kelly Ralston: Our distribution list includes both the property owners as well as the business owners. Notice will go out via email, social media and drop offs.

Beautification Committee Highlights – Marlene Baur

- Beautification in Port Credit is a priority.
- Construction has been ongoing on Lakeshore.
- The goal is to continue to make Port Credit as clean a beautiful as possible.
- Some highlights from 2024 include:
    - Power washing was a new initiative this year and it included removing the paint from the curbs.
    - Flowers and plantings were enhanced.
    - Expansion of street ambassador program and two members were hired from Options.
    - Rebranded the Port Credit BIA logo. The grey was changed to marine blue to reflect the fact that Port Credit is a port town.
    - Updated signage, including the entrance and exit signs for Port Credit.
    - Banners were changed to blue.
    - Decorative light poles were given a new coat of paint.
    - Lighting enhancements - the trees have been wrapped with lights. Ongoing tweaking.
- The goal is to keep a consistent, cohesive aesthetic throughout. Plans for 2025 include:
    - Garbage bins - looking at new bins to address the garbage issue while keeping a consistent look.
    - Painting the Lighthouse rails and the bike racks.
    - Additional lighting will be looked at where needed.
    - More flowers and plantings, and removing some flower pots along Port Street.

Discussion:

Neil Wilson: Things look nice. One concern is some flower pots are placed too close to the curbs for visibility. Too many items near the streets can cause accidents. John Pappas noted that the Traffic Department looks at all sight lines at intersections, so if anything is blocking the view it is changed. Neil also mentioned the need for patio consistency. John noted this is in the budget for 2025.

Jonathan Giggs: Has there been improvements to pedestrian lighting? It is still dark. Marlene noted that the trees were just wrapped and that will provide additional lighting.

Jonathan Giggs: Is the BIA spending additional funds for garbage bins rather than the City? Kelly noted that the BIA is working closely with the City on the replacement of dual-stream bins, which will be funded through the City's budget. These City bins must address ongoing garbage overflow issues. The BIA has also requested an increase in waste collection from Peel Region from two to three times per week. The new BIA-provided bins will replace the current plastic blue and black ones but are intended to be supplemental only. The BIA continues to work with the City to ensure accountability for their responsibility in maintaining and servicing City bins.

Louie Manzo: Thanked everyone for their efforts. Will there be any changes to the current lighting of the trees? Marlene noted that more lighting will be turned on over the next week. Louie mentioned it still looks too dark, and it is not warm and inviting. The right lighting can improve the environment. The wrapping of the trees feels incomplete. Overhead lighting is needed, and our timing should be the beginning of November to look festive, safe and inviting. The lights should be installed by a professional tree-light-installer.

Brenda McGarrell: Lakeshore falls under the Highway Act, which is why the overhead lighting poles are so high. Working to add a secondary lower arm to light.

Kelly Ralston: Met with the City's Transportation and Works Department regarding Vision Zero, which aims to eliminate traffic accidents caused by poor lighting. She conducted a walkthrough of Port Credit with a lighting department representative, who will provide a report. Kelly has requested pedestrian-level lighting arms on Lakeshore poles, noting they are removable and compatible with future construction.

Tree lights are currently on where power is available. Full tree wraps are avoided due to safety concerns, as lights in the canopy are often pulled down. Additional power sources are needed in the East end.

Kelly welcomed members to consider making a deputation to Council, emphasizing that Vision Zero should apply to Port Credit. Since it is a City-led mandate, the City should be responsible for bringing Port Credit up to standard at their cost.

Linda Pinizzotto: Would like to volunteer to go to deputation. There have been consistent complaints on lighting. We can't depend on local businesses signage to provide lighting on the streets. The East end needs to be made more of a priority. How does tender go out, what is the process?

Kelly Ralston: For RFPs, the top three vendors are considered. Moving forward, the focus is on achieving economies of scale. As a municipal board, the BIA is working with the City to access vetted vendors and benefit from City-level pricing.

Marketing Committee Highlights – James Shipp

- James noted that he is on the East side and also has no lights currently in front of his restaurant, and confirmed it is a power issue.
- The Beautification and Marketing Committees have been merged. A new Marketing/Social Media staff member is being hired which will strengthen marketing beyond Port Credit, including collaboration with influencers to enhance visibility and engagement.
- The goal is to bring more visitors to Port Credit for increased spending at businesses, while also encouraging residents to shop and dine locally. James supported merging the Beautification and Marketing Committees to ensure that once people arrive, they have a great experience.
- Marketing will be data-driven, with a focus on tracking reach and engagement. Stats will be used to evaluate performance and justify the marketing budget.
- Highlights from 2024 include:
    - Country in the Port - this event attracted a new demographic and was very successful.

    - Farmers Market - it was in a new location this year, and it was organized and very well done.
    - Classic Country Thursdays - brought together classic cars with country music and was well received.
    - Halloween in the Port - well attended and will be tweaked more in 2025.
- The focus for 2025 includes:
    - Increased promotion of Port Credit throughout Mississauga, GTA and beyond with tourism promotional videos.
    - A new, interactive website will be implemented, with the selection narrowed down to three companies. The site will be designed to improve communication with both businesses and tourism.

Discussion:

Neil Wilson: Will the new website have links to all businesses and a shopping/dining portal? James confirmed they will.

Louie Manzo: One of Visit Mississauga's key mandates is to establish Mississauga as a Music City. Port Credit's strongest asset is its festival environment, but there is a need to bring more of that onto the street level. The current retail mix is slanted, with the need to attract more unique businesses. With Port Credit's exceptional walkability, the BIA could encourage business owners to beautify their storefronts for a more engaging streetscape.

Kelly Ralston: Light Up the Port emails that have been sent out encourage businesses to light up their windows.

James Shipp: Making Port Credit more of a music destination will equal increased revenue.

Jeff McPhee: The BIA put a lot of effort into engaging the East end for years, but many businesses closed during events, with only West end businesses staying open.

Kelly Ralston: Power is currently accessed through decorative poles, but this only extends as far as La Villa. She is actively working with the City of Mississauga and the Vision Zero team to implement lower pedestrian-level lighting and explore opportunities to tap into additional light poles beyond that point.

Kelly Ralston: A Taste of Port Credit event is being considered for 2024, with further discussion to follow. Kelly noted ongoing challenges with engagement from East end businesses. A recent Zoom meeting invitation was sent out to East end businesses, but only four people attended. To help improve participation, the formation of an East End Committee is proposed. Kelly requested that Linda and Louie email her tomorrow to confirm their involvement.

Louie Manzo: As someone who is located on the East end, Louie noted that creating an exceptional business will attract customers regardless of location.

Safety & Security – Ryan Long

- There were 2 paid duty police and a cruiser for 2024.
- A lack of incident reports this year made it difficult to assess the effectiveness and value of the program.
- A decision was made to switch to private security. This change will ensure daily reporting, allow for year-round coverage, extend beyond the main core, and provide flexibility to adjust hours and coverage as needed. The program will include dedicated security guards.
- John noted that this program provides 5 times the coverage and ensures accountability directly to the Board. It provides the BIA with more control.

Discussion:

Neil Wilson: This should be the responsibility of the City rather than the BIA.

John Pappas: Many other locations, such as Square One, use private security, which is considered essential for maintaining a safe business environment and preventing issues before they occur. The goal is to support all businesses, both day and night economies, by providing consistent coverage across the board.

Business Recruitment & Expansion Committee – Kelly Ralston

- Efforts are focused on beautifying Port Credit to attract higher-end and more diverse stores, creating a space where people want to visit and spend time.
- There is a need to develop a program aimed at reducing barriers to entry to help attract new businesses to the area.
- Kelly is working with the City and community partners to reduce vacancies. Astra has put in two new businesses, Danish Coffee Roasters and Marry Me Mochi.
- Discussions are ongoing with Astra about the potential creation of a village square, which would be a great gathering spot.
- Working with property managers to attract new businesses that will draw people into the area.
- The goal is to develop a wider selection of retail in Port Credit to encourage people to stay longer.

Sponsorship Committee - Marlene Baur

- Marlene noted the goal to work more closely with sponsor recipients to ensure they provide value to the main street, remain accountable, and actively help drive foot traffic to local businesses.
- Stats are needed on the programs, and some sponsor recipients have already provided data.
- In 2025, we will continue to sponsor the Southside Shuffle, Canada Day, and Buskerfest.
- Brenda noted that Buskerfest faced bad weather last year, but the event consistently provides statistics. It remains an evolving festival. Walk of Fame – this year is a one-time higher funds since new monuments are being installed around the perimeter to create more visibility and provide storytelling.
- The committee continues to explore emerging events and seeks opportunities to fill quieter months.

Discussion:

Neil Wilson: The Farmers Market moved to the west end, and this year Buskerfest was more concentrated west of Hurontario, whereas in the past it extended further down the street. Lucie and Brenda clarified that none of Buskerfest was held in the park in 2024.

Kelly Ralston: Buskerfest is a street festival and should remain on the main street, not in the park. This year, they participated in the Farmers Market as a guest, but all other performances took place on the main street with nothing in the park.

We can explore the possibility of extending the festival further down the street in future years.

Participating groups are required to apply annually and must provide event statistics. We can also request an east side pitch or additional roaming performers going forward.

However, it is essential that east end businesses remain open during the evening hours to support and benefit from the event.

Louie Manzo: Is there a sponsorship process that outlines how to apply? Kelly noted that the application period usually opens in March, but this year it will begin in mid-January to allow more time for vetting.

PCBIA Executive Director Highlights – Kelly Ralston

- Kelly explained that due to ongoing construction this year, the focus shifted toward cleaning up and revitalizing the main street.
- Working with OBIAA to advocate for BIAs, seeking a dedicated Municipal Act to secure improved benefits and considerations from the City.
- Expanding PCBIA staff: Event Coordinator in place, recruitment underway for a new Marketing Coordinator, and plans to grow the Streetscape team.
- The focus for 2025 includes:
    - Looking to build relationships with event producers to bring high-traffic events to the Port. Currently collaborating with Canadian Pet Expo, with a strong focus on engaging the main street.
    - Shifting focus toward attracting events to the Port, rather than the BIA hosting them directly, with an emphasis on tourism-driven initiatives.
    - Focusing on partnerships with property owners.
    - Collaborating with the City on infrastructure improvements and leveraging the Vision Zero strategy, with a focus on ensuring it is fully implemented in Port Credit.
    - Working with Metrolinx to promote Port Credit through social media posts and announcements at Union Station, encouraging visitors to "Go to Port Credit."
    - Business community engagement: aiming to increase participation from the East end to create continuity and boost foot traffic throughout all of Port Credit.
    - Taking advantage of economies of scale, such as getting better pricing through shared resources or bulk purchasing.

Discussion:

John Pappas**:** When the City ordered 50th anniversary banners at bulk pricing, we piggybacked on that order to get our own banners at a reduced cost.

Linda Pinizzotto: If the BIA benefits from discounted pricing through collaboration with the City, similar opportunities should be available to local business owners. John agreed it is a good idea and it is something that is being explored.

Louie Manzo: Liked the idea of running the campaign at Union Station. John noted that the credit goes to Kelly.

2024 – 2025 Budget Comparative – Brenda McGarrell

Motion: Jeff McPhee moved that the 2023 audited financial statements be received into the Minutes as provided.
Seconded by: Dr Edwards
Carried

- Brenda outlined the 2024 budget process: committees prepared forecasts, presented them to the Board, leading to the final budget approval.
- Brenda reviewed the budget and municipal levy, and explained the underlevy.
- Transfer from Reserves: No funds were transferred last year, but this year $70,000 has been allocated from a healthy reserve to support the budget.
- A good return was received, totaling $38,700 in interest income.
- Brenda reviewed income and expenses, noting that staff hiring was deferred last year but positions have since been filled or will be filled in the new year.

Discussion:

Louie Manzo: Is the passive income from interest taxed at 50%? John clarified that not-for-profit organizations are exempt from taxes. The reserves are currently invested in various GICs, yielding a favourable interest rate. Brenda noted that the levy is now distributed as a lump sum at the start of the year. Best practice suggests maintaining 50% of the levy in reserves. Lighting will be a significant upcoming expense, projected to exceed $350k.

Jeff McPhee: Is the $100k grant for the Taste of Port Credit event guaranteed? Kelly clarified that the grant is not guaranteed, but it is the target amount. The event will be adjusted based on the grant received.

Linda Pinizzotto: Why are website hosting and IT costs high? Kelly explained that costs include all software and technical support. The website is separate, and this year's upgrade will feature improved interactivity. James added that rebranding also contributes to the higher expenses.

Neil Wilson: John confirmed that financials are posted on the website monthly. Neil requested that financial statements be circulated prior to the AGM. Kelly noted that several reminder emails were sent regarding the AGM, and the final email titled “Save the Dates” included a link to Membership Info.

Jeff McPhee: Can a column showing Actuals be included with the Budget for easier comparison. It was also suggested that the budget be condensed to a single page for clarity.

Louie Manzo: What is the strategy behind having such a large reserve? John explained that the reserve is intended for emergencies or major capital projects, in line with OBIAA’s guidelines for fiscal responsibility. Claudette Edwards added that the City also recommends maintaining a reserve.

Neil Wilson: Are we able to get an overpass sign going south on Hurontario? Stephen responded that it is not possible, as the sign would be too bright for residents within view of the bridge.

Louie Manzo: Can we consider getting a permanent, indestructible “I ♡ Port Credit” sign that is Instagrammable? Louie mentioned similar signs in Cooksville, Meadowvale, and Malton as examples. Kelly shared that the handyman is looking into a #INThePort sign. The current Lighthouse sign has been repainted but has suffered vandalism. Stephen noted that the Cooksville sign cost approximately $1,000,000.

Closing Comments:

Kelly Ralson: Reminder that there is a QR code on the back of the voting card linking to a survey, and members are encouraged to complete it. So far, there have been only 14 responses from membership regarding feedback on events, so please complete the survey.

Motion to Adjourn, 9:23pm

Motion: Jeff McPhee moved that the 2024 AGM be adjourned.
Seconded: Louie Manzo
Carried