

This meeting of the Heritage Toronto Board was held on March 19, 2024 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at St. Lawrence Hall (157 King St. East, 3rd floor, Toronto).

PRESENT: Liza Chalaidopoulos (Chair) Christopher Castellano
 Dilys Chan Anne Deck
 David Ecclestone Bradley Evoy
 Jeff Junke James Lane
 Gretchen Mangahas John McAlister
 Melissa Nugegoda Aaron Sanderson
 Harmeet Singh Sandhu Colin Smillie
 Sarah Watson

REGRETS: Martin Green
 Peter Ignazi
 Councillor Parthi Kandavel
 Suzanne Kavanagh
 Councillor Gord Perks
 Joel Peters
 Sanah Rizvi
 Hana Syed

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Bain, Executive Director
 Chris Bateman, Plaques Manager
 Laura Carlson, Public Programs Manager
 Lucy Di Pietro, Marketing and Communications Manager
 Selma Elkhazin, Programs Coordinator
 Claire Jansen-Faught, Project Coordinator, State of Heritage
 Heather Kingdon, Operations Coordinator
 Meg Sutton, Plaques Coordinator
 Andrea Switzer, Development Manager

A. OPENING REMARKS, AGENDA, AND MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Liza Chalaidopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

Ms. Chalaidopoulos made an Indigenous land acknowledgement to start the meeting.

3. Introduction and Opening Remarks by Chair

Ms. Chalaidopoulos welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members for making the commute to meet in person. She noted that the board has four new members and welcomed Harmeet Singh Sandhu, Melissa Nugegoda, Councillor Parthi Kandavel, and Hana Syed to the board. Ms. Chalaidopoulos invited the two members present at the meeting, Mr. Singh Sandu and Ms. Nugegoda, to introduce themselves.

4. Approval of Agenda

HT 24-01: APPROVAL OF AGENDA for the March 19, 2024 Board Meeting of Heritage Toronto. (carried)

Moved by Colin Smillie, seconded by Aaron Sanderson, and approved unanimously.

5. Declarations of Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

6. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Board Meeting

HT 24-02 APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the meeting of the board of Heritage Toronto held December 12, 2023. (carried)

Moved by Jeff Junke, seconded by Sarah Watson, and approved unanimously.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

HT 24-03: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (carried)

Moved by Anne Deck, seconded by Colin Smillie, and approved unanimously.

C. REPORTS

1. CHAIR OF THE BOARD – Liza

Ms. Chalaidopoulos noted that the agency has not yet heard back from the city regarding the Executive Compensation Policy review. She mentioned that if she hears any news, she will be sure to reach out to those on the board who offered to assist.

Mr. Sanderson asked if the city gave a deadline for the review. Ms. Bain responded that the city will be drafting up a policy for the agency and the board to review. So, the agency is working on the city's schedule and there is no deadline for the agency.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos announced that Peter Ignazi is stepping down as chair of the Marketing and Digital Media Committee and thanked him for all his work with the committee. He will remain as a committee member and Colin Smillie will be stepping into the role of chair. She encouraged board members to reach out if they are interested in sitting on other committees.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos thanked Sandy Kedey, Lori Davison, and Councillor Paula Fletcher for their work on the board, noting that their terms have ended and they have stepped down from the board.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos reminded the board they are expected to assist with walking tours from May to October, giving the introductions, closing remarks, and encouraging donations. She explained that board members should sign up for a minimum of three tours over the season. This year, a new platform for signing up for tours will be used, which will greatly reduce the administrative load for staff. More information will be circulated in the coming weeks.

2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Bain announced that Selma Elkhazin is now Heritage Toronto's full-time Programs Coordinator. She congratulated Ms. Elkhazin on her new position.

3. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Sarah Watson gave an overview of tour offerings for 2024. She noted the format of the tours brochure has changed and, instead of one brochure, there will be three brochures released throughout the season. This will give the programming team more flexibility and allow them to seize on timely opportunities.

Ms. Watson gave an overview of activities relating to plaques, noting that the plaques program has introduced higher fees for larger organizations. Fees for individuals purchasing plaques will remain the same. Additionally, plaques will introduce a larger plaque format that allows for more historical photos and information to be included. These plaques are more engaging to the public and sell at a higher price point so they offset a greater percentage of costs. These factors will result in a \$60k in increase in revenue in 2024.

4. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

John McAlister gave an update on tours sponsorships, noting that the Development team is still looking for sponsorship opportunities. They have reached 60% of their goal of \$35k.

He explained there is urgency around connecting with additional sponsors. The earlier they join the tours program, the more benefits the agency is able to offer. He encouraged board members to reach out to Andrea Switzer with any leads or ideas.

Mr. McAlister encouraged new board members to consider joining the Development Committee. He suggested they reach out if interested in joining. Ms. Chalaidopoulos explained that all board members have a role to play in securing sponsorships and sponsorship leads. She encouraged board members to give this some thought.

5. MARKETING AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Colin Smillie gave an update on the activities of the Marketing and Digital Media Committee, noting that there will be a focus on including QR codes where possible to encourage registrations and donations.

He provided an update on the website revitalization project. Phase one of the project launched on March 6th. Phase two will launch in April and will include some cosmetic updates as well as a smoother process to move images over from ResourceSpace.

He noted that the donation process is much better than the previous website.

Ms. Bain thanked Mr. Smillie for all his hard work on the website redevelopment project.

Mr. Smillie gave an overview of the State of Heritage Report, a project that Claire Jansen-Faught has been leading, and a trailer was screened. Ms. Jansen-Faught noted that the full version of the State of Heritage video will be available on YouTube.

Mr. McAlister asked if there will be marketing around the State of Heritage Report. Lucy Di Pietro answered that the trailer to be released on social media will promote the full-length, 15-minute version. Committee and staff discussion resulted in the decision to align the full video release to the written report publication, and an event launch. Every effort will be made to maximize allotted resources and earned media interest.

6. FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

James Lane reviewed the financial statements as of Feb 29, 2024.

He explained that the audit process, which resulted in a clean audit, was more difficult this year due to having new auditors. No major concerns were identified.

The decision was made to have the increased cost of the auditors be reflected as a deficit in the financial statements. Ms. Bain explained that, as directed by the city, this will enable Heritage Toronto to make a request that the increased audit fees be covered by the city.

Mr. Lane gave an overview of revenue in 2023, noting that although earned revenue from programs had decreased, there was not a substantial difference from the previous year. Growth in new revenue, he noted, was primarily due to an 11% increase from the City of Toronto. To increase sustainability, private revenue including sponsorship and individual giving, and program earned revenue will need to increase.

Expenses were comparable to the previous year. An item of note is the website revitalization project. This expense will continue into 2024 and is covered by previous operating surpluses as the agency will pull from its reserve to cover costs as previously approved by the board.

Ms. Bain noted the ongoing significance, both in terms of revenue and expenses of the Heritage Equity Project fully by TD Bank. Melissa Nugegoda asked whether TD was the agency's exclusive sponsor and Ms. Bain answered that, although they are our largest sponsor, there is no exclusivity offered.

HT 24-4: MOTION to approve the 2023 draft Audited Financial Statements (carried)

Moved by Bradley Evoy, seconded by Colin Smillie, and approved unanimously.

HT 24-5: MOTION APPROVAL TO UTILIZE \$52,729, SUBJECT TO ANY AUDIT ADJUSTMENT, FROM THE INTERNALLY RESTRICTED HERITAGE INNOVATION FUND FOR THE PURPOSE OF WEBSITE REVITALIZATION

(carried)

Moved by Aaron Sanderson, seconded by Dilys Chan, and approved unanimously.

Mr. Lane reviewed the 2024 budget. He noted the significant increase in projected plaque revenues due to price increases and a focus on larger, enamel plaques. Tour revenues have also been increased as the number of bus tours will be doubled. The agency has projected to sell out the Heritage Toronto Awards and return to pre-COVID attendance levels. On the expense side, the only significant item is the 2023 deferral of Equity Project revenues.

Mr. Lane noted that there were very minor differences between this 2024 budget and the draft 2024 budget which had to be submitted to the city in September 2023. Other than increased plaque and bus tours revenues, the only significant difference is the agency's need to complete projects, such as the website revitalization and the State of Heritage Report, in 2024 which were originally projected to end in 2023.

Mr. Evoy asked about public revenue and whether we have anything budgeted for potential one-off payments from the city. Ms. Bain responded that, given the city's current priorities such as housing, it is highly unlikely the city will be allocating any further revenue to the agency beyond the 11% increase procured.

**HT 24-6: MOTION to approve the Operating Budget dated Feb 29, 2024
(carried)**

Moved by Bradley Evoy, seconded by Aaron Sanderson, and approved unanimously.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

David Ecclestone mentioned to the board that he recently attended an expert-panel meeting with the City of Toronto, to address the city's response to Bill 23—the bill that made amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act.

He noted that the panel was composed of different leaders in the heritage industry and is meant to serve as a technical advisory group. Members of the panel would like to know what Heritage Toronto can do to help the city with the crisis caused by Bill 23. Mr. Ecclestone noted that there might be a place for the charity to support and be a part of this process.

Discussion ensued around whether Heritage Toronto can play a role in the advisory process, and whether this fits within the agency's mandate.

In other news, Ms. Chalaidopoulos noted that the agency will continue with the existing strategic priorities, as they still apply to the agency and its goals.

HT 24-7: MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING (carried)

Moved by Liza Chalaidopoulos, seconded by James Lane, and approved unanimously.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.