

This meeting of the Heritage Toronto Board was held on September 17, 2024 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at St. Lawrence Hall, 157 King St. East, 3rd floor, Toronto.

PRESENT: Liza Chalaidopoulos (Chair)
Dilys Chan
Martin Green
Peter Ignazi
Jeff Junke
Suzanne Kavanaugh
James Lane
Aaron Sanderson
Harmeet Singh Sandhu
Colin Smillie
Hana Syed
Sarah Watson

REGRETS: Christopher Castellano
Councillor Parthi Kandavel
Gretchen Mangahas
John McAlister
Melissa Nugegoda
Councillor Gord Perks

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Bain, Executive Director
Chris Bateman, Plaques Manager
Laura Carlson, Public Programs Manager
Lucy Di Pietro, Marketing and Communications Manager
Roshni Nayar, Operations Coordinator (recording)
Skye Sommerhalder, Operations Assistant
Meg Sutton, Plaques Coordinator
Andrea Switzer, Development Manager

A. OPENING REMARKS, AGENDA, AND MINUTES

1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

Liza Chalaidopoulos delivered a land acknowledgement to start the meeting.

2. Introduction and Opening Remarks by Chair

Liza Chalaidopoulos welcomed everyone, and invited Hana Syed to introduce herself at her first Heritage Toronto Board meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda

HT 24-16: APPROVAL OF AGENDA for the September 17, 2024 Board Meeting of Heritage Toronto. (carried)

Moved by Aaron Sanderson, seconded by Peter Ignazi, and approved unanimously.

4. Declarations of Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

5. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Board Meeting

HT 24-17: APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the meeting of the board of Heritage Toronto held June 19, 2024. (carried)

Moved by Suzanne Kavanaugh, seconded by Sarah Watson, and approved unanimously.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

HT 24-18: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (carried)

Moved by Harmeet Singh Sandhu, seconded by Colin Smillie, and approved unanimously.

C. REPORTS

1. CHAIR OF THE BOARD

As the 2024 tours season draws to a close, Liza Chalaidopoulos encouraged Board members to register for the remaining tours and thanked them for their participation throughout the season.

The Board was reminded that the 49th Heritage Toronto Awards will be held on October 28th at the Carlu. Board members are strongly encouraged to purchase tickets or a table, with the option to donate their tickets to Emerging Historians if unable to attend.

The Heritage Toronto Awards will include an Ask From the Stage. The Ask will, once again, center on the Emerging Historians program. Ms. Switzer is seeking a Board member to deliver this appeal and invited interested members to contact her. Ms. Switzer reported that previous Asks From the Stage have generated between last year's \$2,500 up to \$10,000 when the Ask had a matching donor. Ms. Chalaidopoulos informed the board that they are actively seeking matching donors and sponsors. She encouraged the Board to leverage their networks for potential opportunities and emphasized that resources are available to assist those conducting outreach.

2. EXECUTIVE REPORT

Allison Bain presented an overview of the report.

The Plaques program is entering its busiest period with revenue and expenses peaking closer to year-end due to the plaque production process. She highlighted two new plaques: a plaque to commemorate The 519 Community Centre and a plaque dedicated to the Hungarian community. Ms. Bain also noted the plaque unveiling for the Hungarian community will take place on September 29th, and the agency is seeking a Board member to give remarks. Peter Ignazi expressed his interest.

Within the tours program, 30% of the tours feature brand-new content, and Heritage Toronto's first food tour was introduced this season. An upcoming bus tour on 'The Sweet History of Toronto' is planned.

There has been a record-breaking number of applications to the Heritage Toronto Awards, the highest in ten years. The host for the 2024 Heritage Toronto Awards has been confirmed as Ify Chiwetelu, host of CBC Radio's "Now or Never."

There are two equity projects underway this fall. The Volunteer Equity is aimed at diversifying Heritage Toronto's volunteer base. The Planning Framework project will establish process and guidelines to improve and increase long-term partnerships with other organizations.

Aaron Sanderson suggested exploring partnerships with community groups passionate about sharing their stories. He then inquired about an analysis on the plaques and asked to see plaque equity information. Chris Bateman noted that

equity and diversity data from the 2023 review will be shared through the Programs committee at either the December 2024 or March 2025 Board meeting.

3. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Sarah Watson welcomed Ms. Syed to the Programs committee. She encouraged the Board to participate in tours and noted that the agency is at 69% of the tours' revenue target.

The plaques program is on track with 39 new plaques already installed in 2024. A plaque unveiling at Hanlan's Point was attended by Mayor Olivia Chow and other dignitaries. Upcoming plaque events include unveilings for Billy Bishop Airport, the No. 2 Construction Battalions, and the Hungarian community.

4. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Liza Chalaidopoulos announced that John McAlister has stepped down as Chair of the Development committee. Ms. Chalaidopoulos will serve as interim Chair. She invited interested Board members to contact her if they wish to be considered for the role of Development Committee Chair.

With the upcoming 50th Heritage Toronto Awards scheduled for 2025, board members were reminded of their responsibility to promote, support, and participate in the event to ensure its success.

End of Year donor calls are approaching. This initiative allows board members to personally thank Heritage Toronto donors for their support. James Lane and Ms. Chalaidopoulos shared their positive experiences making donor calls last year and encouraged all Board members to participate in 2024.

4. MARKETING AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Mr. Smillie announced the appointment of Serena Budhwani as a new external member of the Marketing and Digital Media Committee.

The website development project has been successfully completed. The State of Heritage report is planned to be finalized by the end of the year.

The committee has been discussing the evaluation of tours and the need to better understand the agency's demographic reach. He noted a discrepancy between the demographics of online engagement and tour participation. Mr. Smillie suggested that further analysis is needed to understand Heritage Toronto's audience.

5. FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

James Lane provided an overview of the Financial Statement. Although it is closely following the 2024 budget thus far, he noted that a significant portion of our financial activity occurs in the last quarter of the year due to October's Awards event and end of year plaque production.

The Financial Statement includes the 2025 Draft Operating Budget which was submitted the prior week to meet city deadlines. The final 2025 Budget will be refined and presented to the board at its spring meeting, once the city's financial support is confirmed, for approval.

The agency is currently negotiating its funding request to the city. All divisions and agencies have been directed to submit a zero based budget, however Heritage Toronto has made two new project requests; funding to help cover escalating software costs, and seed funding to explore an online plaque map.

Aaron Sanderson inquired what Ms. Bain would drop if the City provided a 0% increase. Ms. Bain suggested that a planned coordinator position would likely be eliminated.

Dilys Chan raised a question about the TD Equity Fund and plans following the conclusion of the sponsorship. Ms. Bain agreed that, although the successful sponsorship renewal will cover activities throughout 2025/2026, it was very important to identify sustainable programs in future years.

HT 24-19: MOTION to APPROVE the Draft 2025 Operating Budget as submitted to the City of Toronto on September 11, 2024.

(carried)

Moved by Colin Smillie, seconded by Suzanne Kavanaugh, and approved unanimously.

6. JURIES COMMITTEE

HT 24-20: MOTION for the Board to move in camera given the confidentiality of Award recommendations.

(carried)

Moved by Colin Smillie, seconded by James Lane, and approved unanimously.

HT 24-21: APPROVAL of the 2024 Heritage Toronto Winners (carried)

Moved by Peter Ignazi, seconded by Hana Syed, and approved unanimously.

HT 24-22: MOTION for the Board to move out of camera (carried)

Moved by Sarah Watson, seconded by James Lane, and approved unanimously.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

Att. Public Appointments – Letters of Resignation from board members David Ecclestone and Joel Peters.

HT 24-23: MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING (carried)

Moved by L, seconded by Martin Green, and approved unanimously.

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