

This meeting of the Heritage Toronto Board was held on June 9, 2025, from 6:00-7:30 pm at Heritage Toronto's offices at 157 King Street East.

PRESENT: Christopher Castellano  
Dilys Chan  
Bradley Evoy  
Councillor Stephen Holyday  
Jeff Junke  
Suzanne Kavanagh  
James Lane  
Melissa Nugegoda  
Harmeet Singh Sandhu  
Hana Syed

REGRETS: Liza Chalaidopoulos (Chair)  
Peter Ignazi  
Councillor Kandavel  
Colin Smillie  
Sarah Watson

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Bain, Executive Director  
Chris Bateman, Plaques Manager  
Laura Carlson, Public Programs Manager  
Lucy Di Pietro, Marketing and Digital Media Manager  
Light Naing, Marketing and Communications Coordinator  
Roshni Nayar, Operations Coordinator (recording)

## **A. OPENING REMARKS, AGENDA, AND MINUTES**

### **1. Call to Order**

James Lane called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

### **2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory**

Mr. Lane made an Indigenous land acknowledgement to start the meeting.

### **3. Introduction and Opening Remarks by Chair**

Mr. Lane welcomed everyone to the meeting noting he would act as Chair in Liza Chalaidopoulos' absence.

#### **4. Approval of Agenda**

**HT 25-08: APPROVAL OF AGENDA** for the June 9, 2025, Board Meeting of Heritage Toronto. **(carried)**

Moved by Hana Syed, seconded by Dilys Chan 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 **(carried)****

**HT 25-09: APPROVAL OF MINUTES** of the meeting of the board of Heritage Toronto held March 20, 2025.

Moved by Jeff Junke, seconded by Bradley Evoy and approved unanimously.

### **B. CONSENT AGENDA**

**HT 25-10: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA **(carried)****

Moved by Bradley Evoy, seconded by Melissa Nugegoda and approved unanimously.

### **C. REPORTS**

#### **1. CHAIR OF THE BOARD**

Given Ms. Chalaidopoulos' absence, there was no report from the Chair.

#### **2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Allison Bain introduced Light Naing, the new full-time Marketing and Communications Coordinator, to the board. This is the first new full-time position at Heritage Toronto in a decade, during which time the agency's programs have tripled in size. Mr. Naing's role will focus on marketing and communicating Heritage Toronto's programs.

The 2025 Tours season is off to a strong start. While the season officially launched on Thursday, June 5, it unofficially began with Doors Open on May 24-25. Over 1,250 visitors were welcomed to the 54<sup>th</sup> floor of the TD Center with the help of staff and volunteers.

Ms. Bain thanked board members for their participation in the State of Heritage report and launch event on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025. She acknowledged Dilys Chan for her speaking remarks and noted that the report has been broadly well received.

The 50th Anniversary Heritage Toronto Awards is set for October 20, 2025, at the Carlu, with a calendar invite sent to all board members. To mark this milestone, Heritage Toronto has also booked the adjacent Round Room for unique programming. Ms. Bain concluded up her report by expressing enthusiasm for the anniversary and emphasizing the Awards as the oldest program of its kind in North America.

### **3. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

In the absence of Sarah Watson, the Chair of the Programs Committee, staff members Chris Bateman and Laura Carlson delivered a joint report.

Chris Bateman announced the upcoming Shoreline project, which will commemorate the city's shoreline as it remained for thousands of years before the changes brought by industrialism. The project, focusing on the area south of Front Street between Yonge Street on the west and Berkeley Street on the east, will bring together several programming elements, including plaques, tours, and digital experiences.

This 1841 shoreline will be marked by 20 unique plaques specially designed for this project and will be flanked by two "mega plaques" at Yonge Street and Berkeley Street. This project provides significant opportunities for scalability, as well as providing self-guided experiences for the public.

The Shoreline project is funded through Section 37 funds from Ward 13, the St. Lawrence Neighborhood Association, and some deferred sponsorships from 2024. The project is set to launch on July 26, 2025, at Berczy Park. Mr. Bateman confirmed to the board that the plaques won't be installed by the time of the launch event, but they will be displayed at the event for participants to engage with.

Councillor Holyday inquired about the inclusion of artifacts in the project and offered his support to further integrate them into the programming. Both Allison Bain and Chris Bateman expressed interest in the offer.

Laura Carlson continued the report, announcing that the 2025 Tours season officially launched with the Canary District: Movement & Migration tour, developed by an Emerging Historian.

Board members received instructions on using Eventbrite to sign up for the tour schedule. Ms. Carlson acknowledged that shifting platforms twice in two years is not ideal but explained that Eventbrite offers the most streamlined process for all volunteers, including the board. This new system also allows volunteers to access complete tour information before registering, a feature that was unavailable on previous platforms.

James Lane clarified that board members are still expected to participate in tours even though they are no longer required to provide opening and closing remarks if they would prefer not to do so. Board members must attend at least three tours during the season. Additionally, Ms. Bain noted that while board members receive free admission to programs, their guests are still required to purchase tickets.

Bradley Evoy pointed out a limitation of the new volunteer platform. Unlike previous systems, it does not show which slots are already filled. This makes it difficult for board members to coordinate their participation and spread out their tour attendance across the season.

In response, Ms. Carlson noted that the agency is less concerned with ensuring an even distribution of board attendance throughout the season than ensuring that board members can select tours according to their preference. This shift to Eventbrite is a step to accommodate board members' schedules.

Dilys Chan sought confirmation on what remarks board members should make at tours, and Ms. Carlson noted that board members may still offer traditional remarks if they are willing. Mr. Lane spoke on his personal experiences giving remarks on tours, and expressed the positive tone and sense of community which results.

#### **4. EXECUTIVE, FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

James Lane presented the Financial Statements. He reported that the budget is on track and quite straightforward, except for a large increase in revenue for the Shoreline project. The expenses and revenues for this project don't appear as one line item but are shared between Plaques, Tours and Special Projects.

Mr. Lane noted the need for board approval allowing the Chair and the Executive Director to file the 2024 Financial Audited Statements and accompanying paperwork with the city.

**HT 25-11: MOTION** for The Board of Directors of Heritage Toronto to

4.2.1 Recommend that City Council receive via Audit Committee, the 2024 Audited Financial Statements, in Attachment 1 of the report (March 20, 2025), the Audit Findings in Attachment 2 of the report (March 20, 2025), and the Management Representation Letter in Attachment 3 of the report (March 20, 2025).

4.2.2 Authorize the Board Chair, on behalf of the Board, to submit the Board's recommendations and materials in Recommendation 1, once approved by the Board at its meeting on (March 20th, 2025), to the Audit Committee Administrator for submission to Audit Committee and City Council.

4.2.3 Direct the Executive Director to provide copies of the board approved 2024 audited financial statement.

**(carried)**

Moved by Bradley Evoy, seconded by Suzanne Kavanagh, and approved unanimously.

#### **5. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

Christopher Castellano delivered an update on the nominations for the 50<sup>th</sup> Heritage Toronto Awards and spoke about the Heritage Toronto Special Achievement Award. The Special Achievement Award, although not awarded every year, is given when a suitable nominee is presented and awarded at the Board's discretion.

**HT 25-12: MOTION** Approval to present a Special Achievement Award at the 2025 Heritage Toronto Awards to the nominated candidate. **(carried)**

Moved by Christopher Castellano, seconded by Dilys Chan, and approved unanimously.

## **6. MARKETING AND DIGITAL MEDIA**

Jeff Junke presented an update on behalf of the Marketing and Communications Committee. The new 2025 Tours Brochures are printed and have been given to each board member to take home. The brochures will also be distributed to Toronto Public Library branches, community centers, and civic centers.

Jeff Junke concluded by noting that the agency and the committee have decided to phase out their use of the platform X, as recent changes have made it increasingly difficult to reach marketing and communications goals.

## **D. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS**

James Lane provided an update on the work to resize and restructure the Board of Directors. The goal of this change is to create more opportunities for in-depth conversations among board members and to minimize bureaucracy.

The Board Composition Task Force successfully met the City's tight deadlines for the required documentation, and the motion to resize Heritage Toronto's Board of Directors will be presented to the City Council. Mr. Lane thanked Councillor Holyday for his support and advice on the motion.

Allison Bain prepared the Agency Report For Action which is recommended for approval by the Board Composition Task Force. The board's initial request to reduce its size to 12 members plus two reserved seats was met with a recommendation from the City Manager's office to set the new size at 11 members to avoid tie votes. The Task Force is satisfied with this result, as it brings the board size closer to a more reasonable range of 8-12 members.

**HT 25-13: MOTION** to approve the Agency Report For Action dated June 19, 2025.

**(carried)**

Moved by Christopher Castellano, seconded by Suzanne Kavanagh, and approved unanimously.

The board discussed challenges with the current nomination process. While members can provide an outline of desired skills, they do not have a direct say in selecting candidates. This requires board members to be proactive in finding, approaching, and supporting the best potential candidates through their application. Acknowledging this, they noted that having 13 members, even with the board being resized, provides a buffer for members who may not have all the desired skills and experience.

With the City Council poised to pass the motion to resize the board, directors will now need to consider new board structures and reconfigure their relationship with staff. Board members and staff were asked to consider how the board can best support the staff. A discussion on potential committee structures is scheduled for the next meeting in September.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.