

This meeting of the Heritage Toronto Board was held on June 21, 2023 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. via Zoom video call.

PRESENT:

Liza Chalaidopoulos (Chair)	Christopher Castellano
Lori Davison	Anne Deck
Bradley Evoy	Martin Green
Peter Ignazi	Jeff Junke
Sandy Kedey	James Lane
Gretchen Mangahas	John McAlister
Joel Peters	Sarah Watson

REGRETS:

Dilys Chan  
David Ecclestone  
Suzanne Kavanagh  
James Lane  
Councillor Josh Matlow  
Councillor Gord Perks  
Sanah Rizvi  
Aaron Sanderson  
Colin Smillie

ALSO PRESENT:

Allison Bain, Executive Director  
Chris Bateman, Manager, Plaques  
Laura Carlson, Manager, Public Programs  
Mira Celper, Development Coordinator  
Lucy Di Pietro, Manager, Marketing and Communications  
Selma Elkhazin, Programs Assistant  
Claire Jansen-Faught, Project Coordinator  
Heather Kingdon, Operations Coordinator  
Nadia Sule, Programs Assistant  
Jingshu Yao, Programs Coordinator

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

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

Liza Chalaidopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

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

Bradley Evoy made an Indigenous land acknowledgement to start the meeting.

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

Ms. Chalaidopoulos welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Mr. Evoy to speak. Mr. Evoy discussed land acknowledgements as they pertain to Heritage Toronto's walking tours and noted the correct pronunciations of Indigenous names. Ms. Chalaidopoulos encouraged board members to practice these before assisting with tours.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos thanked Mr. Evoy. She announced Aaron Sanderson as a new member of the Finance and Audit Committee.

She noted that programs are in full swing and thanked board members for signing up to help with tours and encouraged board members to participate on at least three tours. She mentioned that it was board members' responsibility to find their replacement for a tour if they are no longer able to attend. She reminded the board that any guest that wishes to accompany a board member on a tour must purchase a ticket.

Regarding donations, Ms. Chalaidopoulos encouraged board members to become monthly donors if they are not already as it is a great way to provide steady and predictable support to the charity.

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

##### **HT 23-06: APPROVAL OF AGENDA for the June 21, 2023 Board Meeting of Heritage Toronto. (carried)**

Moved by Bradley Evoy, seconded by Joel Peters, 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 23-07: APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the Board Meeting of Heritage Toronto held March 21, 2023. (carried)**

Moved by Martin Green, seconded by Anne Deck, and approved unanimously.

#### **B. CONSENT AGENDA**

##### **HT 23-08: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (carried)**

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

## **C. REPORTS**

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

Ms. Chalaidopoulos noted that she is looking forward to seeing everyone out on tours.

### **2. EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Allison Bain highlighted some notable events thus far, including Doors Open and the Little Jamaica treasure hunt. At Doors Open, Heritage Toronto hosted 1,300 people on the TD Centre's 54<sup>th</sup> floor. Attendance at the Little Jamaica event was lower than anticipated. Despite the low attendance, the project, which was the first event produced through Equity Heritage Initiative, provided valuable job training to Victoria Atteh, who was the project lead. It also fostered new partnerships with the Black Business Professionals Association (BBPA) and the Yonge and Eglinton BIA. Going forward, audience development needs to be improved. The team is looking into the areas that needed more attention to improve turnout at future similar events. Jingshu Yao and Claire Jansen-Faught, two other Emerging Historians that are part of the Equity Heritage Initiative, will be attending numerous other community events this summer as part of their own projects.

Heritage Toronto's newest colleagues are Selma Elkhazin and Nadia Sule. Ms. Bain welcomed them to introduce themselves.

Ms. Bain announced Candice McCavitt's resignation as Development Manager, noting that the Heritage Toronto team is sad to see her leave. The new Development Manager, Andrea Switzer, will be starting on July 10, 2023, and staff are excited to work with her.

### **3. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

Sarah Watson gave a Program Committee update. She explained that, while it is early in the season, there has been no noticeable impacts on tour registrations with the new fee model. There is an average of 23 participants per tour, which is on target for the tours season goal. However, donations are lower than expected and sitting at just over one dollar per tour attendee, much lower than the goal of three dollars. With regard to the new community events model, the number of individuals engaging with the Heritage Toronto tent is good, but the number of people staying to go on a walking tour at these events has been relatively low. The Programs Committee is looking into ways to improve this.

Ms. Watson updated the board on plaques, noting that eight out of 32 plaques have been completed, with three plaque unveilings planned. The first event is taking place this Friday, June 23, with the Jackie Shane plaque unveiling. A main priority for 2023 is rolling out the new pricing schedule for plaques. The updated pricing can be found in the board package.

Mr. Ignazi asked for clarification on the revenue per tour and whether this was trending downwards. Although it is very early in the season, Laura Carlson did note that revenue from ticket fees is on track but, as donation revenues are trending below target, overall revenues may not achieve budget. Ms. Bain echoed Ms. Carlson's statement that it is too soon to trend but noted there is a cushion built into the budget should revenue be lower than expected within the new model. John McAlister asked if it was possible for a follow-up email asking for donations to be sent out to attendees later in the season.

Ms. Bain answered yes as all contact information is captured in our registration database. Ms. Carlson noted that when someone registers for a tour, they are prompted to donate right away at registration as well as in the post-tour email that is sent to all attendees. A push for donations later in the year is also possible.

Joel Peters asked if attendees are prompted to sign up for our e-newsletter. Ms. Carlson responded that all attendees are prompted at registration to sign up for the e-newsletter.

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

James Lane gave a finance update and reviewed the financial statements dated May 31, 2023. He noted the agency is on track financially, however, most of the agency's revenue and expenses come in the latter half of the year.

Mr. Lane explained that the Finance and Audit Committee is keeping an eye on tour revenue. However, if the revenue from tours does fall short, it isn't mission critical. The shortfall would not impact the financial standing of the organization and it comes down to adjusting for 2024.

Mr. Lane explained that the Finance and Audit Committee has recently been looking at the agency's investment of funds. There is about one year of operating expenses set aside, which is relatively high. The optimal level of reserve needs to be determined. The committee is looking at how to invest these funds and has spoken with advisors. A proposal is expected to be tabled at the upcoming board meeting in September.

#### **5. JURIES COMMITTEE**

Christopher Castellano gave an update on Awards submissions and noted that all juries are set and ready for adjudication. Although it is very early, submissions thus far are comprised of: Book - 7; Public History - 2; and Built Heritage - 0.

The Juries Committee hopes to get another three submissions in the Public History category. As for the Built Heritage category, it is not surprising that there have not been any submissions given how complex the requirements are for nominations. The committee is going to discuss how to attract nominations and what outreach can be done. Mr. Castellano noted that Ms. Carlson may have some leads but encouraged board members to reach out to their networks to secure further leads.

The soft-close deadline is June 30, but this depends on the number of submissions received by this date. Certain category deadlines will be extended if needed.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos asked whether there was a risk of not receiving any submissions and what happens if there is only one submission. Mr. Castellano answered that there were a few options available. The committee can reach out to encourage submissions, broaden the eligibility requirements and open the application to projects that fall outside of the set years, or open the application to projects that have somewhat applied in the past (for example, projects that only nominated a portion of their work).

Ms. Chalaidopoulos asked if the agency would ask applicants who applied in the past to resubmit their application. Mr. Castellano responded that it is likely they would not need to resubmit an application, but it would depend on the nature of the previous submission. This would be a last-case scenario.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos asked whether the complexity of requirements for the Built Heritage category was causing the lack of submissions. Mr. Castellano explained that there are many supporting documents that need to be provided with the Built Heritage submissions to be properly adjudicated. In recent years, the guidelines surrounding these submissions have been refined, allowing them to be streamlined as much as possible. It is just the nature of Built Heritage that means the submission process is more extensive.

## **6. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

John McAlister updated the board on the Monthly Donor and Awards Sponsorship campaigns. He thanked Mira Celper for all her work and for leading the Monthly Donor campaign. The agency now has 26 monthly donors, four of which are board members. The Development Committee is hoping to grow this number by year end. He welcomed the board's feedback on how to achieve this.

As for the Awards Sponsorship campaign, Mr. McAlister explained that appeals are currently in progress. The goal this year is \$74k, which is a 23% increase from last year but in line with the goal that was set in 2019. He encouraged the board to reach out if they have any leads on support for this campaign. He also encouraged board members to purchase Awards tickets when the time comes.

Mr. McAlister reminded the board that it helps to foster donations if staff can say that they have the full support of the board. He encouraged board members to donate and to buy Awards tickets to show their support for the agency.

Mr. McAlister pointed out that there are currently only three members on the Development Committee. He would love to see more members join and recommended that anyone interested reach out. Jeff Junke asked whether the Development Committee is searching for someone with a certain skill set and if there was room for collaboration between the Development Committee and the Marketing and Digital Media Committee. Mr. McAlister expressed his enthusiasm as

he believes there is a large opportunity to leverage digital platforms and the expertise of the Marketing and Digital Media Committee would be very valuable.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos asked if the monthly donor angle as opposed to the membership angle (used in previous years) is working to bring in more support. Ms. Bain noted that, with only 26 monthly donors, the agency will clearly not meet the original target of 100 monthly donors.

Mr. McAlister expanded on the development targets and noted that annual giving encompasses monthly donations, donation on tours, and one-time giving. However, monthly giving is preferred because it gives the agency a chance to plan based on an expected amount coming in each month. However, there is still opportunity to explore and grow the one-time giving revenue stream. He suggested that having a matching donor is a good opportunity to garnish support, or possibly having the board matching donations up to a certain amount. These are opportunities that we can consider in future years.

Ms. Davison asked whether the Monthly Donor campaign has been promoted on social media yet. If not, this could contribute to the lack of awareness for the program. Another opportunity might be to leverage a partnership with restaurants, organizations, or local businesses. She noted that she would be happy to talk about some of the strategies used at Sick Kids Hospital with the Development Committee.

Mr. McAlister commented that there are more possibilities out there for potential donors and sponsors, and the agency has been too narrow in its search. Gretchen Mangahas also noted the importance of using data to communicate and solicit increased support from existing donors.

## **7. MARKETING AND DIGITAL MEDIA**

Peter Ignazi noted the current push to promote 2023 programs on social media platforms to help the tours program achieve its revenue and participation targets. The latter half of 2023 will focus on the website update and the development of the State of Heritage Report.

Mr. Junke updated the board on the State of Heritage Task Force on which he and Dilys Chan sit. The Task Force is a fantastic group of diverse individuals that are representative of the city. Their meeting was lively and encouraging, with everyone excited to discuss Heritage Toronto's role and how the team can make an impact on inclusivity and community building.

Mr. Junke explained that this State of Heritage Report will be different than previous years, with the focus being on themes from equity-deserving communities and community engagement. There will be significant upcoming discussions on how the Task Force is going to engage with people during the consultation and the launch of the Report. The immediate priority of the committee is to form a project plan and finalize the budget in the next few weeks.

#### **D. OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Chalaidopoulos noted that some board members' terms are finishing in July. She explained that, if the City has not appointed a replacement for a board member whose term has expired, that member is expected to serve on the board until a replacement is found.

Ms. Chalaidopoulos concluded that the next board meeting will take place in person at St. Lawrence Hall, with a social gathering afterwards. More information will be provided later.

Mr. Evoy drew the board's attention to publicly available resources for National Indigenous Peoples Day and National Indigenous Peoples Month—notably the resources available through [NVision Insight Group](#).

Mr. Peters asked whether there are alternate plans for September's meeting given the issues in hearing people's remarks at the last in-person board meeting. Ms. Bain noted that the next meeting will be held in a different, smaller room and masks will not be mandatory. Ms. Chalaidopoulos encouraged board members to reach out to her if there are concerns around COVID-19 at the next board meeting, but noted she is looking forward to seeing everyone in person.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 7:19.