

This meeting of the Heritage Toronto Board was held on March 20, 2025 from 6:00-7:30 pm at Heritage Toronto's offices at 157 King Street East.

PRESENT: Liza Chalaidopoulos (Chair)  
Dilys Chan  
Bradley Evoy  
Councillor Stephen Holyday  
Peter Ignazi  
Jeff Junke  
Suzanne Kavanagh  
James Lane  
Melissa Nugegoda  
Colin Smillie  
Hana Syed  
Sarah Watson

REGRETS: Christopher Castellano  
Councillor Kandavel  
Harmeet Singh Sandhu

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

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

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

Liza Chalaidopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:02 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.

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

**HT 25-01: APPROVAL OF AGENDA** for the March 20, 2025, Board Meeting of Heritage Toronto. **(carried)**

Moved by Sarah Watson, seconded by Bradley Evoy 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 25-02: APPROVAL OF MINUTES** of the meeting of the board of Heritage Toronto held December 11, 2024.

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

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

**HT 25-03: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA **(carried)****

Moved by Bradley Evoy, seconded by Peter Ignazi and approved unanimously.

#### **C. REPORTS**

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

The Chair opened the meeting with an update on the 2025 tour season, highlighting the return of popular tours and the introduction of several new tours. Board members were reminded of their obligation to attend at least three tours during the season. Ms. Chalaidopoulos informed the Board that a new format for tour sign-ups will be implemented.

The Chair advised that Board members are no longer required to deliver opening and closing remarks on tours, as this responsibility will be taken on by Community Program Assistants. However, Board members may still offer personal remarks at the conclusion of tours if they wish.

The State of Heritage launch event is scheduled for Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup> and all board members are encouraged to attend. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Heritage Toronto Awards will take place on October 20<sup>th</sup>, with members encouraged to purchase either a table or individual tickets.

Finally, the Chair announced that this will be her final year on the Board, with Ms. Chalaidopoulos' term concluding in February 2026. Board members interested in assuming the role of Chair are invited to reach out to her directly.

## **2. FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

James Lane provided an update to the Board on the organization's financial performance, reporting a successful year and a positive audit outcome.

He noted that the auditors raised two points for attention. First, there was a departure from standard financial statement presentation to protect confidential wage information. Second, the auditors recommended further segregation of duties in processing cash and cheque donations. As a result, all mail containing cheques will now be opened in the presence of two individuals. While the auditors also suggested periodic review of the administration log to monitor administrative access, the Board decided not to implement this recommendation after being informed about the discussion of the recommendation with the auditors.

Mr. Lane reviewed the Financial Statements, indicating that results are tracking as expected. Operating funding from the City of Toronto has increased and nearly \$30,000 has been awarded to two projects within IT and a plaques short term contract.

In development, the 2024 year-end ask, which is deferred into 2025 to pay for Emerging Historian contracts, is lower than the previous year. However, we are projecting to sell out the Carlu for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Awards.

Mr. Lane also reported Heritage Toronto monies are now invested although, given the downturn in the markets, it is difficult to predict year end results.

Mr. Lane then presented the 2024 draft Audited Financial Statements. Christopher Castellano and Harmeet Singh Sandhu, who were unable to attend the meeting, gave James Lane their proxy vote.

### **HT 25-04: APPROVAL OF 2024 DRAFT AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**(carried)**

Moved by Brad Evoy, seconded by James Lane, and approved unanimously.

### **HT 25-05: APPROVAL OF 2025 OPERATING BUDGET DATED JANUARY 31, 2025**

**(carried)**

Moved by Suzanne Kavanagh, seconded by Melissa Nugegoda, and approved unanimously.

### **3. EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Allison Bain informed the Board that renovations are well underway at St. Lawrence Hall. Heritage Toronto may need to relocate from its third-floor offices to the second floor. She emphasized the agency's intent to remain in the building.

Regarding staffing, Heritage Toronto expects to fill two Program Assistant positions funded through Canada Summer Jobs and hire an Equity Heritage Coordinator on a one-year contract. Furthermore, the agency will grow as it looks to add a ninth full-time staff member as Marketing and Communications Coordinator.

Ms. Bain highlighted positive developments in sponsorships, noting that tour revenue is ahead of budget. However, sponsors are still being sought for the Being Black on King tour, which is both popular and equity focused.

Suzanne Kavanagh requested that board members share contacts for potential sponsors for both Tours and Awards and encouraged broader outreach efforts. She will follow up with board members individually.

The sponsorship target for the 2025 Heritage Toronto Awards is set at \$95,000.

### **4. PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

The Program Committee did not meet and therefore had no updates to report.

### **5. MARKETING AND DIGITAL MEDIA**

Colin Smillie provided an update on the participant evaluation project, noting the use of the Mentimeter platform for this pilot. This initiative was developed in response to findings that current surveying methods do not effectively capture participant information.

The State of Heritage Report launch event is scheduled for Monday, March 31st, at the NIA Centre for the Arts. Colin Smillie and Dilys Can commended Lucy Di Pietro, Claire Jansen-Faught, and Jeff Junke for their significant contributions to the State of Heritage Report.

## **D. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. BOARD COMPOSITION TASK FORCE**

James Lane provided an update on behalf of the Board Composition Task Force which was established to address the need to restructure and resize the Board. The Task Force considered several factors in developing their recommendations, including staff requirements, for the Board.

The Task Force and the Executive Director met with Vicki Long from the Public Appointments office and Karen Jones from the City Manager's Office. The public servants provided an overview of what would be required in a request to city council to resize the board. If a recommendation to change board composition was received by the city in June, city council would be able to make a decision at its July meeting.

The Task Force is also reviewing potential new committee structures to align with a downsized Board. With Board members no longer required to attend every tour and donation requests now being handled by Community Program Assistants, the Board can shift focus toward program delivery. The proposed structure would include two or three committees, aiming to reduce staff workload and provide more opportunities for in-depth Board discussions.

Councillor Stephen Holyday confirmed the timing and inquired about the rationale for the current size of 24 members. Ms. Bain suggested that the current large Board size is a legacy of amalgamation. Councillor Holyday expressed his support for a smaller, more efficient board composition.

The Board discussed the possibility of non-Board members participating in committees as a pathway to Board membership, and whether volunteers would remain interested in committee work without the associated prestige of being a Board member. However, the Board affirmed that they remain open to having non-Board participation in committees.

Members also considered whether a smaller Board would increase engagement, with Mr. Lane expressing that resizing would likely lead to greater involvement.

**HT 25-06: MOTION for the Board to move in camera (carried)**

Moved by James Lane, seconded by Brad Evoy, and approved unanimously.

**HT 25-07: MOTION for the Board to move out of in camera (carried)**

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