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Grimsby Downtown BIA Delegations at Board Meetings Policy

Governance Policy 001

1. Introduction

The Grimsby Downtown Business Improvement Area (GDBIA) is committed to transparent, fair, orderly, and efficient Board meetings. This policy establishes a consistent procedure for members of the public, including general GDBIA members who are not members of the Board of Management, to request to speak to the Board as delegations.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify how public participation may occur at GDBIA Board meetings while preserving the Board's ability to conduct its business in accordance with applicable rules of procedure, public conduct, and decorum.

2. Scope and Application

- I. This policy applies to all regular and special meetings of the GDBIA Board of Management, unless otherwise directed by the Board or required by law.
- II. This policy applies to any person or group that is not a member of the GDBIA Board and wishes to speak to the Board about a matter that appears on the agenda or falls within the GDBIA's jurisdiction and mandate.
- III. For the purposes of this policy, GDBIA general members who are not Board members are considered members of the public when requesting to speak at a Board meeting.
- IV. This policy does not apply to Board members speaking during debate, asking questions, raising motions, or bringing forward items under New Business in accordance with the Board's rules of procedure.

3. Authority

This policy is adopted under the Board's authority to regulate delegations and meeting conduct. In accordance with section 3.9(7) of Schedule A to Town of Grimsby By-law 24-31, the Board may hear delegations from members of the public at its discretion and may set limits for speaking time. The Executive Director may also limit the maximum number of delegations on matters not on the agenda, and the Chair may end a delegation if there is disorder or a failure to observe decorum.

Where this policy conflicts with applicable legislation, Town by-laws, or the GDBIA Procedural By-law, the legislation, Town by-law, or Procedural By-law shall prevail.

4. Definitions

Delegation: Any person or group, other than a member of the GDBIA Board, who requests to speak to the Board about an agenda item or a matter within the jurisdiction and mandate of the GDBIA.

Delegate: The person or group approved to speak to the Board as a delegation.



Agenda Item: A matter listed on the agenda for the meeting at which the delegate requests to speak.

Non-Agenda Item: A matter that is not listed on the agenda but is within the jurisdiction and mandate of the GDBIA.

Executive Director: The GDBIA staff member or designate responsible for receiving delegation requests, coordinating agenda administration, and communicating with delegates.

Chair: The presiding officer of the meeting, or the person acting in that capacity.

5. Delegation Requests

- I. A person or group wishing to appear as a delegation shall submit a completed Delegation Request Form, along with any presentation materials, to the Executive Director via the Downtown Grimsby website.
- II. Delegation requests regarding an item listed on a published agenda must be submitted to the Executive Director no later than twenty-four (24) hours before the start of the meeting.
- III. Delegation requests for a new matter not listed on a published agenda but within the jurisdiction and mandate of the GDBIA Board must be submitted at least seven (7) calendar days before the meeting. The Executive Director shall review each request and determine whether the matter relates to a published agenda item or is a new matter.
- IV. Where a request is received after the agenda has been published and the matter is not listed on the agenda, the request will normally be referred to the next regular Board meeting, unless the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director, permits the delegation to proceed.
- V. The Executive Director shall review requests for completeness and may consult with the Chair to determine scheduling, agenda capacity, and compliance with this policy.
- VI. Presentation material received by the applicable deadline may be included in the meeting materials or circulated to the Board. Material submitted after the deadline may not be accepted or circulated.

6. Matters Not Eligible for Delegation

Delegations shall not be permitted on the following matters:

- Any matter that has been decided by the Board within the previous six (6) months, unless the request includes new information that was not previously available;
- Litigation, potential litigation, or matters subject to solicitor-client privilege;
- Matters outside the jurisdiction and mandate of the GDBIA;
- Previous meeting minutes;
- Closed session items or matters properly considered in closed session;
- Integrity Commissioner reports;
- Any matter that has been previously delegated to the Board, unless the delegate provides new information; and
- Any matter that the Chair or Board determines is not appropriate for delegation under the Board's rules of procedure, public conduct requirements, or applicable law.

7. Scheduling and Board Discretion

- I. The Board retains discretion to determine whether a delegation will be heard. Agenda items will generally be accepted where they comply with the policy, but may be refused, limited, consolidated, or deferred where necessary for procedural, legal, timing, decorum, or meeting-management reasons.
- II. The Board may limit the maximum number of delegations on matters that are not on the agenda.
- III. Where multiple delegation requests are received on the same matter, the Chair may encourage delegates to appoint a spokesperson or may otherwise manage the order and timing of delegations to avoid unnecessary repetition.
- IV. The receipt of a delegation request does not require the Board to make an immediate decision on the matter. The Board may receive the delegation for information, refer the matter to staff or a committee, defer the matter, or take any other action available under its procedures.

8. Speaking Time and Meeting Procedure

- I. Each delegation is limited to five (5) minutes.
- II. The Chair may, at the Chair's discretion, extend speaking time by up to an additional five (5) minutes.
- III. A delegation shall speak only once during a meeting.
- IV. After the question period for the delegation has concluded, the delegate shall not speak again unless expressly permitted by the Chair.
- V. Delegates shall address their remarks through the Chair and shall speak only to the subject identified in their delegation request.
- VI. Delegates may not use the delegation process to engage in debate with Board members, staff, other delegates, or members of the public.

9. Rules of Conduct and Decorum

- I. Delegates must comply with the Board's rules of procedure, rules of public conduct, and the Chair's directions.
- II. No delegate shall speak disrespectfully of any person, use offensive language, make inappropriate comments, engage in improper conduct, interrupt the meeting, or speak on a subject other than the subject identified in the delegation request.
- III. The Chair may caution a delegate, interrupt a delegation, end a delegation, or take any other action permitted under the Board's rules of procedure in the event of disorder, improper conduct, or a failure to observe decorum.
- IV. A delegate who does not comply with this policy may be refused permission to continue speaking and may be refused future delegation opportunities on the same matter.

10. Questions from Board Members

- I. Following a delegation, Board members may ask clarifying or fact-gathering questions through the Chair.
- II. Questions shall not be used to debate the delegate or the merits of the matter.
- III. The Chair shall determine when the question period has concluded.

11. Public Comments and New Business

Members of the public may not participate in meeting discussions, ask questions, or provide comments unless they have been approved and recognized as a delegation in accordance with this policy.

The New Business section of a Board meeting agenda is reserved for Board members to raise new matters and share announcements or comments. New Business is not intended for questions, comments, or delegations from members of the public. Members of the public may not make material asks of the Board in New Business, and requests requiring the use of BIA resources must be made through delegation.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management: Approves and amends this policy, determines whether delegations will be heard, and conducts meeting business in accordance with the applicable rules of procedure.

Chair: Administers meeting order, recognizes delegates, manages speaking time, determines when questions have concluded, and enforces decorum.

Executive Director: Receives delegation requests and materials, confirms deadlines and completeness, consults with the Chair where needed, communicates with delegates, and supports agenda administration.

Delegates: Submit complete requests by the applicable deadline, provide presentation materials in advance, speak only to the approved subject, and comply with all rules of conduct and decorum.

13. Enforcement and Amendments

- I. The Chair is responsible for enforcing this policy during meetings, subject to the Board's authority.
- II. The Board may refuse, defer, or terminate a delegation if it does not comply with this policy or applicable meeting procedures.
- III. The Board may revise this policy as needed to align with legislative requirements, Town by-laws, the GDBIA Procedural By-law, or best practices for public participation at Board meetings.

14. Statutory Provisions / Other Relevant Policies

This policy operates in conjunction with applicable legislation, Town by-laws, and GDBIA governance documents, including:

- Municipal Act, 2001, as amended;
- Town of Grimsby By-law 24-31, including Schedule A, Procedure for Boards of Management for Business Improvement Areas;
- GDBIA Procedural By-law, as amended;
- Town of Grimsby Procedural By-law, where applicable; and
- Any applicable GDBIA policies relating to Board conduct, public conduct, agendas, minutes, and meeting administration.



15. Term and Procedural By-law Integration

This policy is intended to apply unless amended or repealed by the Board. For greater certainty, the procedure established by this policy should be added to the GDBIA Procedural By-law the next time the Procedural By-law is reviewed or revised.

16. Revision History

Revision #	Description of Changes	Date Created	Date Revised	Reviewed By	Approved By
001	Creation of document	[Insert Date]	N/A	Executive Team	Board of Management - Pending