



MOUNT FOREST BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES June 9, 2026 @ 8:00 AM

Auditorium Mount Forest Arena

CALLING TO ORDER – Andrew Coburn, Chair, Mount Forest BIA @8:04 am

PRESENT ATTENDEES

Members: Andrew Coburn, Rachel Whetham, Dwight Benson, Jessica McFarlane, Councillor Sherry Burke, Kyle Dallaire

Staff: Tanya Matthews, Robyn Mulder

Community Members: Penny Renken

ABSENT ATTENDEES - Bill Nelson

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Andrew

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Andrew

Agenda accepted as presented. Kyle motioned and Rachel seconded; carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Light Posts

Andrew

Light posts are now complete, and the BIA is waiting for the 10K payment from the township to settle the matter. Robyn confirmed she will follow up with Laura Rooney for an update.

2. Christmas Tree

Andrew

Andrew was contacted regarding a Christmas tree donation - Dwight confirms that previous trees were donated as well. Dwight and Andrew will reconvene regarding the trees to ensure they are adequate for the use as the official downtown Christmas tree. The last trees were 20ft and Andrew believes these new trees would suffice.

3. Street Cleaning

Dwight

Street cleaning is well underway for this season. Payment was confirmed at \$260 every two weeks. Jamie has been doing a great job and the plan last month to formally thank him for his excellent work via a social media post is underway. Tanya planned to meet with Jamie after the meeting to take his picture.

4. Reimagined Laneway - Pizza Hut

Jessica

Painting of the walls of the laneway is complete, and the result was praised across the committee. A picture of the laneway is attached in Appendix A. Jessica forwarded an ongoing issue with one of the building owners regarding waste collection which does not involve the BIA. Laneway is planned to be completed within the next week or two. Lighting may have to be fluid due to building owner and contractor input.

5. Downtown Safety

Andrew

A break-in occurred on June 7th at Vape Prism - a copy of the Facebook notification from 'What's Happening Mount Forest' is attached on Appendix B for more information. Robyn informs the committee about CIP grant money from the Township, which can be used towards enhanced security. 10K is allocated for both Arthur and Mount Forest and is available as a first come first served basis. The committee advised Robyn that \$1,000 is a fair amount to be allocated individually to those who are interested.

6. Downtown Businesses Ongoing Items

a. Update New/Closed Businesses

All

Old Hound Ice Cream shop has been confirmed as changing ownership, as stated online via the BizBull page on Facebook. Empowerment Studio is now officially closed and Tanya will update the mailing/master list to reflect this change.

i. Newsletter/Marketing - Gift Card Intro

Tanya

Tanya brought recent findings in her research regarding the gift card program presented last month. The summary of findings is in Appendix C. Tanya was advised to contact the Mount Forest Chamber of Commerce regarding the Chamber bucks, Belinda in Minto regarding their gift card program from Miconex, and to follow up with Miconex about any fees required from the BIA to start/maintain the program. Tanya would report back the following month, and also mentioned that the quarterly newsletter will be going out at the end of June.

ii. Halloween Pumpkins with MacAndrews

Tanya

Tanya received some correspondence from a local business owner outside of the downtown area and shared the following email *"My name is Crystal MacDonald. My family and I own the MacAndrews pumpkin farm out on Hwy 89. I know it is a far ways away but we just planted pumpkins so that gets us thinking about the fall. We would like to inquire about how we could get involved with the Halloween haunt on main. Trying to get our name out there and would like to help with donations or however we can get involved . I was checking out your Facebook page and noticed one year there was a pumpkin carving contest. Maybe we can help*

with that. Would like to talk to someone about some ideas or what you would have for ideas. Please call me at 519-313-0997 when it is convenient for u.“

Committee members are open to the idea of having a pumpkin carving table available during this year's Halloween Haunt and advised Tanya to respond to Ms. MacDonald's email confirming the BIA's interest in moving forward.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Next Meeting

8am in the Lower Leisure Room @ Mount Forest Arena, July 14th, 2026

ADJOURNMENT - meeting adjourned by Andrew @9:10am

Appendix A



Appendix B

We are asking for the community's help following a break-in at Vape Prism in Mount Forest.

On June 7, between approximately 3:48 AM and 4:10 AM, an individual broke into the store and stole a large quantity of products, including disposable nicotine/vape devices. If you see anyone selling large amounts of vape products, disposable vapes, or nicotine products under suspicious circumstances, please let us know or contact the OPP, as these items may be stolen.

We are also asking residents and businesses on or near Main Street to check their security cameras for any footage between 3:45 AM and 4:15 AM on June 7. Any

information, no matter how small, could help identify the person responsible.

This is especially concerning because about seven months ago, a series of break-ins began in a similar way and eventually affected many local businesses. We would like to stop this individual before more businesses become victims.

We will be attaching a photo of the suspect. Although the person's face is covered, someone may recognize their clothing, build, or other details. If you think you know who this person might be, please contact us or the OPP.

Thank you to everyone who helps by sharing this post and keeping an eye out. Together, we can help keep our community and local businesses safe.

Appendix C

Here's a quick summary of the key points from the Town & City Gift Cards brochure:

What it is

- *A local gift card program powered by Mastercard, run by Miconex*
- *Cards can only be spent at registered local businesses*

Key Points

- *Minto and Orillia similar size/local communities engaged in the program*
- *Cards are legally required to not expire in Canada*
- *The funds that are collected stay in the account until they are redeemed.*
- *(There is a promotional card program that you can opt to add to your program that extends a 'limited time' option with an expiry date. Those cards can't be sold and you would load them with funds. After the end of the promotional period, we return 75% of the loaded funds on unredeemed cards to the client. Some clients work with sponsors, tourism, grant funding etc. to put those dollars on the card.)*

Why it works for businesses

- *Free for merchants to accept - no extra equipment or training needed*
- *Paid like any normal card transaction*
- *Available as physical and digital cards*

The customer behaviour stats (good ones to quote!)

- *65% spend MORE than the gift card value when redeeming*
- *50% of recipients visit a business for the first time*
- *50% of those become regular customers*
- *There are over 40 individual cities and towns in Canada that offer district or community-specific gift card programs powered by Miconex*
- *Cards are typically spent within 1–3 months*

What's included in setup

- *Technical Mastercard network setup*
- *5,000 physical gift cards + holders*
- *E-commerce storefront on townandcitygiftcards.com*
- *Window stickers + giant prop card for launch*
- *PR support and press release*
- *Merchant onboarding landing page*

Ongoing support

- *Monthly webinars and marketing assets*
- *Fulfilment and customer service handled by Miconex*
- *Balance checking via getmybalance.com*
- *7-days-a-week call centre*