

Board Meeting Minutes

Date: January 15, 2026

Time Scheduled: 7:30 AM

Location: Salina Downtown Inc. - Board room



SALINA DOWNTOWN

1. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at: 7:31 AM
 - Presiding: Aaron Wedel
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2. Roll Call

Board Members

- Hank Boyer
- Laurel Driskell
- Stephanie Gillig
- John Hendrick
- John Reber
- Eric Montoy
- Jera Richardson
- Aaron Wedel

Matt Pestinger

Kelli Webb

Christi Nuding

Erica Kruckenberg

Austin Walker

Staff / Others Present

Leslie Bishop (Executive Director)

April Rickman (Marketing & Events Coordinator)

Dian Gebhardt (Aesthetic Specialist)

3. Approval of Agenda, Previous Minutes & Financial Report

- Motion: Hendrick
 - Second: All
 - Approved
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4. Old Business

5. Action Items

1. Garage Facade Request - requesting 30k for 2 addresses. Wedel motions to grant 15k now and evaluate at the end of the year what funds remain for the additional 15k. Motion approved unanimously.
 2. Lucaci Facade Request - Leslie to request a new facade request.
 3. Farmers Market Manager applicant. Tayla Naden. She would be a seasonal employee. Leslie to draft contract to have Laurel. 23 markets. 21 days required. 6:30 am to 12. \$3,000 (Discretion for negotiation \$3500 cap) proposed pay for the season. Job Duty required for pay amount. Agreed on evaluating a bonus of some sort at the end of the season or the following year. Wedel moves to vote. Approved.
 4. Salary Benchmarks for Growth document presented and prepared by Leslie.. A scorecard that helps us determine performance and goal based increases at the end of the year for salary or bonus adjustments. Webb motions to approve. Motion Approved.
 5. Arcade lights project. A portion of the funding has been secured (85k) Cost has increased and there is a 30k needed to complete. Determined that this does fall under the facade request definition. They are asking for 15k. Additional funds could be viewed as a safety and security request. Table for next month pending application
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6. Staff Reports

Executive Director Report: Leslie Bishop

- 2025 Wrap-Up: The year concluded successfully. Merchants reported that both 2025 overall and the holiday season were strong for business.
- CID Revenue: The December CID check totaled \$14,803.29, an increase of \$2,153.78 compared to December 2024.
- Operational Planning: Leslie and April have been proactively organizing and preparing materials and workflows to ensure continuity during April's maternity leave.
- Public Art: The 2026 Trash Corral Artist Call will be released this week.
- Budget Planning: It is time to begin early discussions and planning for the 2027 budget.
- Financial Compliance: All required documentation for 2025 taxes has been provided to Woods & Durham.
- Community Engagement: Leslie will attend the Community Marketing Meeting, Salina Tourism meeting, and the Directors Roundtable.
- Chamber Engagement: Dian and Leslie will attend the Chamber Annual Meeting on February 2.

- STS Planning: Planning for 2026 STS is underway. Artist selection for the 2026 show will take place on January 22.
- STS Recognition: The 2025 STS People's Choice Award winner will be announced at the CAD meeting on January 20.
- Staffing Update: A strong interview was held with Tayla Naden for the potential Market Manager position.
- Merchant Engagement: Invitations for the February 10 Merchant Mixer will be sent soon.

Staff Report: April Rickman

- 1. Holiday Festival Attendance & Downtown Foot Traffic
 - Holiday Parade attendance continues to increase year over year:
 - 2022: 7,900 attendees in the CID
 - 2025: 11,200 attendees during parade time
 - Full-day downtown foot traffic: 18,300 visitors, according to Placer data.
- 2. Holiday Gift Certificate Sales
 - Hosted a gift certificate sale weekend on December 13-14.
 - Offered:
 - 25 x \$50 certificates
 - 50 x \$25 certificates
 - All certificates sold out
- 3. Social Media Engagement Efforts
 - Tested new post formats designed to increase commenting and sharing.
 - While results did not fully meet expectations, posts generated engagement.
 - Gift certificates were awarded to individuals who actively promoted
- 4. Downtown CID Revenue Growth (2022-2025)
 - CID revenue increased significantly in 2025, rising from \$158,928 in 2024 to \$175,765 in 2025.
 - Only one month (April) showed a decrease compared to 2024.
 - Overall trend demonstrates strong and consistent growth.
- 5. Jigsaw Jam Event
 - Completely SOLD OUT with 25 teams registered and fully paid.
 - Event is happening today and continues to be a major success.
 - A second Jigsaw Jam is planned for July due to high demand.
- 6. Farmers Market Staffing & 2026 Planning
 - Job posting released for Market Manager; interviews have begun.
 - 2026 rule changes finalized and distributed to all previous vendors.
 - Vendor applications and updated rules will be live on the website by February 1.
- 7. Downtown Promotions: Downtown Dough & Foodie BINGO
 - Downtown Dough (Retail-only, returning) and Foodie BINGO (new) launch on February 2, 2026.
 - All materials are prepared and ready for distribution to businesses.

- Teaser posts generated strong interest, with multiple inquiries about participation.
- 8. Cocoa Crawl Event Update
 - 12 businesses signed up to participate.
 - Nex-Tech is sponsoring hidden gift certificates again this year.
 - Social media engagement for this event has been exceptionally high.
 - Rather than changing the event format for next year, we are considering adding enhancements due to continued enthusiasm and popularity.

Staff Reports: Diane Gebhart

- Removal of Christmas - All trees and ribbon stored along with snowflakes and fencing
- Leaves and trash - prioritizing Santa Fe then cross streets, side streets, gutters
- Trash Corrals - special finds include Chef's knives, mattresses, Christmas decorations ...
- Graffiti -finding and removing as I go. Plans to address this during Spring Spruce up Apr 25
- Vandalism - Dog waste station was pulled apart and will be replaced.
- Cleaning out and organizing storage corral behind Ad Astra, and backstage storage. Move Market supplies to back of stage.
- Make contact with City Parks & Rec to address a plan to clean out planter beds and tree
- Pruning.
- Preplanning- Recipes for planter pots and hanging baskets. Planting will take place late
- May or early June.

7. Adjournment

- Motion: Wedel
Second: Gillig
- Time Adjourned: 8:27 AM

8. Next Meeting

- Date: 2/19/2026
- Time: 7:30 AM
Location: Salina Downtown Inc. - Board Room