



Theatre Advisory Committee Meeting

April 2, 2026 at 1:00pm, at 136 Yonge St., Young at Heart Senior Centre

Present: Chair Councillor Sean Cotton, Wanda Hill, Jillian Peever, Carrie Schiffler, Colin Love (ZOOM), Recording Secretary

Regrets: Mayor Chris Hope

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:08 pm by Chair Councillor S. Cotton
- 2. Disclosure of Interest:** None
- 3. Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes:** March 3, 2026. Moved by W. Hill – Seconded by J. Peever
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Village of Burk's Falls Theatre Advisory Committee approves the minutes of March 3, 2026. Carried

4. Old Business:

a) 2026 Plan of Events

The Committee discussed expanding programming by increasing community involvement and encouraging local organizations to utilize the Theatre, reducing the need for the Municipality to act as the primary coordinator.

The Committee brainstormed potential programming ideas, including:

- Official Bluebird Theatre reopening featuring films from the original era, with potential partnerships with regional heritage societies
- Weekly summer family programming, including Kids Wednesdays (enhanced marketing)
- Monthly weekday matinee in partnership with seniors' groups, the Legion, and other agencies
- Monthly film opportunities in partnership with area youth groups
- Outreach to film students and independent filmmakers
- Increased marketing for private theatre rentals (e.g., parties and events)
- Monthly film club (one weekday evening)
- Teen Night (September 18 or 19) as a back-to-school social event
- Regional Film Festival (October 3), including locally filmed content such as *Running Mates*, aligned with the upcoming election
- Halloween Festival featuring a family matinee and evening double feature
- Christmas Matinee (tentatively December 5, in conjunction with the Santa Claus Parade), with potential partnerships for pre-parade dining options
- Participation in Canadian Film Day (April 2027)
- Environmental Film screening (September 20, 2026) to align with the Fall Equinox

The Committee confirmed that the summer season will proceed as planned through the film broker, featuring nine weeks of family-friendly programming.

The Committee also discussed potential grant funding opportunities (approximately \$5,000) through an affiliate of N.I.C.E., which would require screening a minimum of four Canadian films in 2026.

Opportunities to collaborate with Muskoka-based filmmakers were also identified.

The Committee expressed interest in initiating outreach to both non-profit and for-profit community organizations to build partnerships and expand programming.

The Committee will recommend to Council that staff be directed to develop a Theatre partnership proposal package to support outreach to community organizations and increased third-party programming at the Bluebird Theatre.

b) 2026 Budget

The Committee did not discuss this item as there were no updates to report at this time. The item will remain on a future agenda as required.

c) Logo Update – Jillian Peever

J. Peever did not have an update to share, as revisions to the logo had not yet been completed.

The Committee discussed timing considerations, noting that the logo will need to be presented to Council at the upcoming meeting for approval in order to be used for the Downtown Celebration.

The Committee agreed to review the finalized logo via email and confirm a preferred option for recommendation. The chosen logo for approval is attached.

The Committee will recommend to Council that the selected Bluebird Theatre logo, as confirmed by the Committee via email, be approved.

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d) Downtown Celebration- Planning

The Committee discussed their involvement in the Downtown Celebration and what that would look like. The following items were confirmed:

- Live performances by Councillor S. Cotton from 12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- The Business of the Year Award to follow the second performance, presented by Councillor A. Brandt and Mayor C. Hope
- A tent booth located outside by the alley entrance, staffed by J. Peever for the duration of the event, with support from community volunteers
- A popcorn machine under the tent, with popcorn sold by donation

The Committee also discussed using the tent space as an opportunity to engage with the community. Materials available will include the Summer Season Movie Schedule and the Community Outreach Package.

The Committee discussed the sale of a Summer Season Pass for the nine scheduled summer films. The pass would include a punch system to track usage and prevent sharing.

The Committee also discussed creating a separate Theatre newsletter using the same platform as the Village's The Buzz, with the goal of registering community members during the Downtown Celebration.

The Committee will recommend to Council that a Summer Season Pass be offered for the Bluebird Theatre at a flat rate of \$60, with a nine-punch system to correspond with the summer film schedule.

The Committee will recommend to Council that staff be directed to explore options for a dedicated Theatre newsletter using the Village's existing platform and, if feasible, proceed with implementation.

5. New Business:

a) Information Report 2026-03 - N.I.C.E. Distributor Updates- Booking & Programming Opportunities

The Committee was provided with Information Report 2026-03 by the Recording Secretary prior to the meeting for review. The report outlined key updates and takeaways from the most recent Network of Independent Canadian Exhibitors (N.I.C.E.) Zoom meeting related to booking and programming opportunities. There were no questions or discussion. The report is attached to the minutes.

b) Lobby Painting- Dates

Chair Councillor S. Cotton shared available dates for completion of the lobby painting: April 13, 16, and 17. Multiple Committee members confirmed availability to assist on April 13, but work will commence on all dates provided. The Recording Secretary will confirm scheduling with the CAO/Clerk to proceed.

6. Recommendations to Council: Moved by W. Hill – Seconded by C. Schiffler. Carried

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Village of Burk's Falls Theatre Advisory Committee recommend to Council

- i. Staff be directed to develop a Theatre partnership proposal package to support outreach to community organizations and increased third-party programming at the Bluebird Theatre;
- ii. The selected Bluebird Theatre logo, as confirmed by the Committee via email, be approved;
- iii. A Summer Season Pass be offered for the Bluebird Theatre at a flat rate of \$60, with a nine-punch system to correspond with the summer film schedule; and
- iv. Staff be directed to explore options for a dedicated Theatre newsletter using the Village's existing platform and, if feasible, proceed with implementation.

7. Attachments:

- Information Report 2026-03 – N.I.C.E. Distributor Updates – Booking & Programming Opportunities
- Approved Bluebird Theatre Logo

8. Date of Next Meeting: To be determined.

9. Meeting Adjourned: 2:50pm Moved by J. Peever – Seconded by C. Schiffler. Carried.

Chair Signature



The Municipality of the
VILLAGE OF BURK'S FALLS

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Information Report 2026-03: N.I.C.E. Distributor Updates- Booking & Programming Opportunities

To: Theatre Advisory Committee

From: Tara Schaack

Purpose

To summarize key booking, pricing, and programming information from recent N.I.C.E. distributor presentations relevant to the Bluebird Theatre.

Key Information for Operations

1. Booking Models (Flexible Options Available)

- **Non-theatrical / event bookings (MUBI):**
 - One-night screenings, special events, or educational showings available
 - Good option when full-week runs are not feasible
- **Limited engagement theatrical (NFB & others):**
 - Short booking windows (e.g., specific date ranges or themed releases)
- **Catalogue access:**
 - Older or curated titles available for flexible programming (availability varies in Canada)

What this means for us:

We can fill gaps (shoulder seasons, low film availability weeks) with one-off events instead of committing to full runs.

2. Booking Contacts / Process

- Direct booking contacts are provided (no central broker required for these):
 - NFB bookings and screeners available through named contacts
 - Distributor-specific booking inquiries required (availability varies by region)

Key Note:

Unlike traditional film booking (through brokers), these require direct outreach to distributors.

3. Pricing (What Was / Was Not Provided)

- No fixed pricing listed in decks
- However:
 - NFB references paid elements such as filmmaker Q&As and marketing
 - MUBI indicates non-theatrical/event-based pricing structures (case-by-case)

Expected Reality (based on model):

- Likely:
 - Flat fee OR
 - % of ticket sales OR
 - Event-based negotiated rate

Important:

Pricing will need to be requested per title/event.

4. Added Value (Important for Small Theatres Like The Bluebird)

- Marketing support may include:
 - Digital ads (Google, Meta, YouTube, etc.)
 - Media outreach
 - Posters / promotional materials
 - Giveaway or event support
- Programming enhancements:
 - Pre-recorded or live director Q&As
 - Guest speakers / subject experts
 - Themed outreach (community groups, cultural tie-ins)

What this means for us:

These films can be turned into “events” rather than just screenings, increasing attendance potential.

5. Content Fit for Bluebird Theatre

- Strong focus on:
 - Canadian films
 - Documentaries
 - Festival-recognized titles
- Target audiences:
 - Adults 25–55+
 - Cultural / documentary / independent film audiences

Programming Use:

- Mid-week features
- Special event nights
- Shoulder season content
- Community partnership screenings

6. Notable Opportunities

- **NFB Titles (Spring 2026):**
 - Available with Q&A options and strong Canadian content
 - Streaming windows begin shortly after theatrical (short exclusivity window)
- **MUBI Programming:**
 - One-night or limited screenings
 - Catalogue + newer curated films
 - Some titles returning to theatres (e.g., remastered releases)
- **Les Films du 3 Mars (Canadian Distributor):**
 - French and documentary content
 - Festival-backed films with defined release dates (May–June 2026)

Operational Takeaways

- Use these distributors to fill programming gaps
- Focus on event-style screenings (Q&A, themed nights)
- Expect manual booking (email/contact-based)
- Pricing is not standardized — must be requested
- Strong opportunity to expand into Canadian & documentary programming

Conclusion

The N.I.C.E. distributor updates highlight a shift toward flexible, event-based film programming with built-in support, which aligns well with The Bluebird Theatre’s size and operating model. While pricing is not standardized, the ability to book one-off events and access marketing support presents a strong opportunity to enhance programming without long-term commitments.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tara Schaack

Tara Schaack

Village of Burk’s Falls Theatre Committee, Recording Secretary



Selected logo for voting: Three layout options of the same logo were presented. The Committee voted via email, as noted in the minutes from the April 2, 2026 meeting. The results of the vote and the Committee’s recommendation are outlined below.

Name	Yay	Nay	Rec' Via
Chair Councillor Sean Cotton	S.C.		Email
Mayor Chris Hope		C.H.	In Person
Jillian Peever	J.P.		Email
Wanda Hill	W.H.		Email
Colin Love	C.L.		Email
Carrie Schiffler	C.S.		Email

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Village of Burk’s Falls Theatre Advisory Committee recommend to Council:

- ii. The selected Bluebird Theatre logo, as confirmed by the Committee via email, be approved;

