

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12TH, 2025
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B**

PRESENT: Kyle Mosher, Bruce Allen, Ben Crowley, Deanna Marsh, Karen Goodman

ABSENT: Lindsey Swidorski, Tyler Leppanen, Bill Gambill, Sammie Lukaskiewicz

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski, Councilmember Grabowski

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:36 a.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Andrew Stafford noted two amendments that need to be added to the agenda under new business: An event form for the TJ's Block Party and a review of the construction parking fees. Accept agenda with changes.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Bruce Allen to accept the changes to the agenda and adopt the amended agenda as presented.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR FEBRUARY 12, 2025 MEETING**

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Deanna Marsh to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2025, regular meeting.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL FEBRUARY 12, 2025 MEETING**

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Ben Crowley to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2025, special meeting.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

6. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a. **February 2025:**

- i. There was a total of \$281,229.61 of unpaid bills that went out the board packet. A last minute invoice was received regarding the Frostbite Festival. The new unpaid bills total is \$281,326.77. Notable items that are

getting paid this month are the WSCC Plaza Agreement, which will drop off the 2025/2026 budget. There was also a RAP Grant payment to Spicer Group for their work on streetscape. Reimbursements for Frostbite Festival occurred this month as well. Frostbite Festival funds come from money raised by Frostbite for Frostbite, these are not DDA funds.

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Deanna Marsh to accept the February 2025 financials. Voice vote—Motion approved.

7. **EXECUTIVE REPORTS** – Andrew Stafford

- a. **Vacancies:** 10 vacant properties on River Street.
- b. **Linnabella Ribbon Cutting:** Scheduled for April 18th.
- c. **Love Wines Opening:** Expected soon, but no confirmed date yet.
- d. **Northern Hotel Property:** Granted a 60-day extension for MEDC funding.
- e. **308 River Street:** Engaging with potential businesses to occupy the space.
- f. **Jones Dairy Building:** Recently toured; identified need for improvements.

8. **REPORTS FROM SUB COMMITTEES**

- a. Facade Grant - Andrew Stafford
 - a. **MEDC Projects:** Four projects remain. Two are currently under construction, while the other two are slated for next fall. All funds must be utilized by March 2026. If a business fails to use the funds, the DDA has the option to reallocate them to another project.
 - b. **Facade Grants:** All contracts for the latest facade grantees are finalized. One project is underway, and three others are expected to begin soon.
- b. Streetscape - Andrew Stafford / Bill Gambill
 - a. The subcommittee met in early February and is awaiting its next meeting to establish a clear direction for the remainder of River Street. Brandon Jensen from Rightside Design is revising renderings to reflect recent changes, while Spicer Group has paused engineering work until the design updates are finalized and consistent.
- c. Gap Financing - Tyler Leppanen / Andrew Stafford
 - a. TIF Amendment Approval
 - i. The TIF Amendment was approved by the City Council on February 18th, 2025. Efforts are underway to refine and finalize the application in collaboration with Ed Bradford from the City of Manistee.
- d. Events
 - a. Tj's Block Party
 - i. Taking place 7pm - 10pm on July 19th, 2025.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Ben Crowley to recommend approval of the street closures required for this event to City Council.

- e. Construction fee of \$10/week for construction trucks downtown
 - a. Is the policy currently enforced, and is there a willingness to enforce it? Who is responsible for collecting the funds? The DDA Board agrees that the fee should be increased and consistently enforced.

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Riverwalk - Bill Gambill
 - i. The project is moving along with decking being replaced.
- b. Social District - Andrew Stafford
 - i. No updates at this time.
- c. Richards & McDougall 3 year contract

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Bruce Allen to approve the contract with Richards & McDougall for three years.

- d. Budget Update - Andrew Stafford
 - i. DDA Board consensus to submit the draft without the RAP Grant, if we are awarded the RAP Grant then make a budget amendment.
- e. Banners - Sammie Lukaskiewicz
 - i. Sammie Lukaskiewicz is working with the City of Manistee to work on getting the banners and wayfinding finalized.

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Spring Flowers Quotes - Nicole Kaminski
 - i. Orchard Market, Our Field of Dreams and Weesie's Brothers were contacted for quotes regarding spring flowers. Due to time constraints only Weesie's Brothers was able to provide a quote. Orchard Market and Our Field of Dreams will prepare quotes for next year.

MOTION by Ben Crowley, second by Karen Goodman to approve the quote from Weesie's Brothers for spring flowers for 2025.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. Councilmember Grabowski - Inquiring about downtown apartments and identifying buildings open to the idea. Seeking an inventory of available spaces, along with a list of properties where owners are interested in development but are facing barriers.

12. BOARD COMMENT

- a. **Bruce Allen:** Emphasized the importance of allocating budget funds to update branding for consistency with the Rising Tide initiative.
- b. **Ben Crowley:** Praised the Gala and expressed appreciation for the information provided on MI Class.
- c. **Karen:** Shared positive feedback on the Gala.
- d. **Deanna:** Also offered compliments on the Gala.

13. ADJOURN

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Deanna Marsh, second by Karen Goodman **to adjourn at 9:28 a.m.**

Nicole Kaminski



Acting Recording Secretary