

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11TH, 2025**  
**8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER**  
**400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B**

PRESENT: Kyle Mosher, Bruce Allen, Ben Crowley, Deanna Marsh, Tyler Leppanen, Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Bill Gambill, Lindsey Swidorski

ABSENT: Karen Goodman

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski, Carmen Kott, Councilmember Grabowski, Jon Hauswirth, Tarah Hernandez, Stephanie Travis, Sara Herberger

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:30 a.m.

2. **PUBLIC HEARING - 2025/2026 DDA BUDGET**

- a. Public Comments
  - i. No public comments
- b. Close of Public Hearing

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*MOTION* by Bruce Allen, second by Ben Crowley, to accept the agenda as presented.  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jon Hauswirth, Stephanie Travis, and Tarah Hernandez - Commented on the Taco Bout It Karaoke Fundraisers in the summer.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MAY 14, 2025 MEETING**

*MOTION* by Ben Crowley, second by Deanna Marsh to approve the minutes from the May 14, 2025, regular meeting.  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

6. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a. **May 2025:**

- i. The total of the unpaid bills was \$20,565.66
- ii. Expenses this month included:
  - 1. Richards & McDougall's monthly fee
  - 2. QuickBooks: monthly fee
  - 3. Manistee Area Chamber: monthly Executive Director fee
  - 4. Enhanced City Service Agreement Quarter 4 Payment
  - 5. Manistee County Cash Collaboration Payment
  - 6. James Pawlowski: his time planting the downtown planters

*MOTION* by Bruce Allen, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz, to accept the May 2025 financials.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

7. **EXECUTIVE REPORTS** – Andrew Stafford

- a. Relocation Activity: Three existing businesses are considering relocation.
- b. Vacancies: 10 vacancies, primarily blighted redevelopment properties.
  - i. Key Developments:
    - 1. Hart Building has changed realtors; Music Vault is now under contract.
- c. Recommendations: Establish OPRA districts for key properties: What Hardware, the former PNC property, and Dairy Jones.

8. **REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a. Facade Grant - Andrew Stafford
  - a. 390 Facade Grant Recommendation
    - i. This is the River Street Marketplace building.
    - ii. Recommended to approve in the amount of \$9,000

*MOTION* by Deanna Marsh, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz, to approve the 390 Facade Grant for \$9,000.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

- b. Streetscape - Andrew Stafford / Bill Gambill
  - a. Brandon Jensen is finalizing the presentation, pending final numbers from Spicer. Once received, the proposal will be shared with community stakeholders. The engineering renderings for the RAP Grant need to be finalized to 90–100% to prepare for a fall bid.
- c. Events - Andrew Stafford / Bill Gambill
  - a. No updates at this time.
- d. Gap Financing - Tyler Leppanen / Andrew Stafford
  - a. No updates at this time.
- e. Target Business - Andrew Stafford
  - a. We did meet this month and reviewed the list of potential businesses. There is limited move-in-ready commercial space currently available downtown.

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Riverwalk - Bill Gambill

- i. Site work is moving forward with crews addressing the punch list. Skirting is being added under the switchback, concrete will be poured on the other side, landscaping is starting soon, and new signage is underway. Painting is delayed due to the weather.
- ii. For the North Riverwalk, three bids were received—one notably lower and under serious consideration. The project excludes the bandshell but includes clearing overgrowth, creating a river pathway with a landing, and adding ADA-accessible routes.
- b. Budget Approval - Kyle Mosher/Andrew Stafford
  - i. The budget was presented in March, the sub-committee reviewed and made some changes, the budget was approved by the City Council, and now awaits DDA Board approval.

MOTION by Bruce Allen second by Bill Gambill, to approve the 2025/2026 Budget  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

- c. DDA Event Application - Andrew Stafford
  - i. TJ's Block Party Event Application - September 13, 2025
    - 1. Lindsey Swidorski recused herself from the vote on the recommendation.

MOTION by Bruce Allen second by Ben Crowley, to make a recommendation of approval of TJ's Block Party to City Council.  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

- ii. Taco 'Bout It Bike Night Karaoke Fundraisers
  - 1. Frequency was changed - every other Thursday, instead of every Thursday.

Ben Crowley, Bill Gambill, and Lindsey Swidorski all emphasized the importance of maintaining the required 5-foot ADA walkway clearance. Bill Gambill also noted past noise complaints as a concern moving forward.

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz second by Tyler Leppanen to make a recommendation of approval of Taco 'Bout It Bike Night Karaoke Fundraisers to City Council  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

- iii. New DDA Event Application
  - 1. Changes have been implemented that, if approved, will shift event approval authority to the DDA rather than serving in a recommendation role.
  - 2. Tyler asked about event limitations and guidance compared to other communities. Bill noted that in some areas, 60% approval from surrounding businesses or neighbors is required.



3. Deanna Marsh raised the question of whether the event coordinator is responsible for cleanup and whether there will be a charge if DPW is required to assist.

MOTION by Bruce Allen second by Deanna Marsh to approve a new DDA event application with the addition of trash clean up plan. Bill Gambill recommends Bruce amend his motion to include that events should be approved by the DDA Board before going to City Council.

MOTION by Bruce Allen second by Deanna Marsh to approve a new DDA event application with the addition of trash clean up plan and recommend the addition that the DDA Board should have the ability to approve/deny applications before City Council.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

d. Social District - Andrew Stafford

- i. The American Legion has decided not to renew for the Social District
- ii. Love Wines LLC "Wine Studio" Social District Application

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz second by Bruce Allen, to recommend approval to City Council in support of Love Wines joining Social District

Voice vote—Motion approved.

iii. 350 River Street Social District Application

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz second by Bruce Allen, to recommend approval to City Council in support of 350 River Street joining Social District

Voice vote—Motion approved.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Manistee Collaboration MOU

- i. A formalized contract between the Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce and the Manistee Downtown Development Authority outlines the scope of the program.

MOTION by Bruce Allen second by Ben Crowley to approve the DDA Board Chair to sign Collaboration MOU.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

b. Updated DDA Bylaws

- i. An error from the 2019 DDA amendment, which changed the language from "Mayor" to "City Manager," was never formally uploaded. As a result, the August 2024 update did not include the 2019 amendment.

MOTION by Bill Gambill second by Bruce Allen to have the DDA Board Chair sign the updated combine bylaws.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Tarah Hernandez reviewed the letter she submitted and apologized for any implication that the DDA Board was opposed to veterans.

12. **BOARD COMMENT**

- a. Ben Crowley - Thanks, Tarah Hernandez, for her attendance at the meeting. Appreciates the DDA Board for being objective.
- b. Lindsey Swidorski - Thanks the DDA Board for support on the second TJ's block party.
- c. Deanna Marsh - Thanks, Tarah Hernandez, for attending the DDA board meeting.
- d. Kyle Mosher - recognizes Karen Goodman for all her years of service on the DDA Board. Recognized that the new board member is Jamil Alam.

13. **ADJOURN**

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

*MOTION* by Ben Crowley, second by Deanna Marsh, to adjourn at 9:16 a.m.

Nicole Kaminski



Acting Recording Secretary