

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2025
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B

PRESENT: Kyle Mosher, Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Bruce Allen, Bill Gambill, Deanna Marsh, Lindsey Swidorski

ABSENT: Tyler Leppanen, Ben Crowley, Jamil Alam

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski, Krista McDougall, Councilmember Grabowski, Sara Herberger

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:33 am

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Bill Gambill, second by Bruce Allen, to amend the agenda to add the discussion of ice melt under new business and to accept the amended agenda as presented.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR AUGUST 13, 2025, MEETING**

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz, seconded by Deanna Marsh to approve the minutes from the August 13, 2025, regular meeting.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. Annual Compiled Financials - Krista McDougall

- a. Krista McDougall from Richards & McDougall presented on the annual financials for the DDA for fiscal year 24/25.

- i. General Fund

- 1. Checking balance decreased compared to prior year.
 - 2. Prepaid expenses remained the same.
 - 3. Accounts payable increased by \$29,000 due to two large bills at year-end.
 - 4. Fund balance increased by \$80,000 from prior year.

- ii. Statement of Activities

- 1. Revenue up \$31,000 compared to prior year.
 - 2. TIF and delinquent tax collections were higher.
 - 3. Ended with a net loss, which was expected due to the Riverwalk Plaza project.

6. Approval of Financial Reports

a. August 2025:

- i. The total of the unpaid bills was **\$27,227.97**
- ii. Expenses this month included:
 1. Quickbooks: Monthly Fee: This is taken out as an ACH payment. - \$115
 2. Manistee Area Chamber: Monthly Executive Director Fee - \$6,666.67
 3. Richards & McDougall: Monthly Accounting Fee - \$425
 4. Eagle 101.5: August 2025 Downtown Promotion - \$500
 5. City of Manistee: Reimbursement for Pedestrian Signs - \$435.70
 6. Shine: Replacement of Lights - \$970
 7. Urban Vinyl: New Downtown Banners - \$3,515.60
 8. Anderson & Tackman Audit Company: Annual Audit - \$1,100.00
 9. RIGHTside Design Group: Streetscape - \$2,500.00
 10. Riverstreet Marketplace: Facade Reimbursement - \$9,000.00
 11. Ruddiblush: Facade Reimbursement - \$2,000.00

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

Voice vote—Motion approved.

7. EXECUTIVE REPORTS – Andrew Stafford

a. August 2025:

- i. Music Vault has officially closed, it is under new ownership.
- ii. One new business - placed in the Riverstreet Marketplace
- iii. 308 River Street is still working to fill that space.
- iv. 415 River Street connected with the property owner further conversation in supporting them in finding tenants.
- v. 141 Washington Street is moving along nicely and stabilization work is continuing.

8. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

a. Facade Grant - Andrew Stafford

- a. 390 River Street – Riverstreet Marketplace
 - i. The project has been completed and has been paid out at this meeting.
 - ii. Reimbursed \$9,000.
- b. Wellnested
 - i. Project nearly complete; awaiting final receipts.
 - ii. Reimbursement likely at the October meeting.
- c. 319 ½ River Street – Ruddiblush
 - i. Window replacement project completed.
 - ii. Reimbursed \$2,000.
- d. Z's Carts

- i. Work has not yet started.
 - ii. Needs to begin soon to remain within contract timeline requirements.
- b. Streetscape - Andrew Stafford / Bill Gambill
 - a. Meeting scheduled later this week to review design.
 - b. Preparing materials for submission to MEDC to secure a grant agreement.
 - c. Final items have been compiled and will be sent to MEDC.
- c. Events
 - a. The Outsider Car Show Meet-Up
 - i. Request: Extend car shows into October.
 - ii. Parking: Organizers are requesting reserved parking spaces only, not a full street closure.
 - iii. Recommendation: The DDA recommends closing River Street for the event.

Motion by Bruce Allen, second by Lindsey Swidorski to suggest approval with a modification of no event carryover on Water Street.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

b. Tj's Block Party - July 18th, 2026

Motion by Bill Gambill, second by Bruce Allen to recommend approval of the application contingent on the submission of the DDA application piece.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

- d. Target Business Group - Andrew Stafford
 - a. The next meeting is tomorrow morning. Jamil Alam will be onboarded to that committee.
- e. DDA Branding - Andrew Stafford
 - a. Met and walked through goals and objectives of the sub-committee
 - b. The new River Street and Riverwalk banners have arrived, general consensus from the DDA board is to put the banners up now.

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Shine Lights Program - Andrew Stafford
 - i. Shine came out in September to replace light strands by the Marina.
 - ii. Board consensus is to continue the program.
- a. Vacation Mode Promotion Update - Nicole Kaminski
 - i. A total of \$2,726.61 was spent in August 2025.
 - ii. \$545.32 cost per partner.
 - iii. Distribution of cards ending soon as the airport will be going through construction and maintenance updates. However, we will still see reports on this program through December 2025.

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Economic Development Contract - Andrew Stafford

- i. The existing contract expires at the end of this year. Official action is required to be taken on this agenda item.
- ii. Changes included a request by the DDA board to have a seat on the EDC board by either the Board Chair or a designate.

Motion by Bill Gambill second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to approve the economic development contract

Voice vote—Motion approved.

b. Fall Festival Decorations - Andrew Stafford

- i. The Fall Festival committee requests the DDA purchase pumpkins, gourds, and mums to decorate as part of the fall festival. Total was: \$361.97.

Motion by Deanna Marsh, second by Bruce Allen to approve the amount of \$361.97 for fall festival decorations.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

c. Lutz Farms Holiday Garland Quote

Motion by Bill Gambill, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz approve the quote provided by Lutz Farms for Holiday Garland.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

d. Ice Melt

- i. The DDA purchased a pallet of ice melt from uline last winter. Board consensus is that this mixture of ice melt is preferred over regular salt.

Motion by Bruce Allen, second by Bill Gambill to approve expenditure of up to three pallets of ice melt

Voice vote—Motion approved.

Enhance the name of the line item downtown decorations.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

a. None.

12. **BOARD COMMENT**

Bill Gambill: Shade structure delayed 5 weeks due to consumer box issue. Permanent easement not secured; may pursue a restrictive easement near 350 River Street (Music Vault).

Deanna Marsh: Raised the possibility of adding an event coordinator position/role.

13. **ADJOURN**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Deanna Marsh, second by Lindsey Swidorski, to adjourn at 9:25am

Nicole Kaminski

Nicole Kaminski
Acting Recording Secretary