

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH, 2025
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B

PRESENT: Bill Gambill, Ben Crowley, Jamil Alam, Lindsey Swidorski, Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Deanna Marsh

ABSENT: Kyle Mosher, Tyler Leppanen

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski, Carmen Kott, Sara Herberger, Gordon Heinold

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 9:14AM

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz, second by Ben Crowley, to accept the agenda as presented. Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. None

4. **DDA YEAR IN REVIEW**

- a. 7 new businesses opened downtown in 2025.
- b. \$102,957 in façade restoration grants were reimbursed to local businesses.
- c. \$16,297 invested in downtown beautification, including spring and fall flowers, ice melt, and holiday garland.
- d. The Streetscape Project has advanced significantly, with RightSide Design creating a public-facing slide deck to support communication and messaging.
- e. Through engineering and planning efforts, we secured a \$756,000 RAP Grant, which will help launch the project. Groundbreaking is planned for spring 2026.

5. **DDA BUDGET UPDATE**

- a. The DDA remains on track financially. Two of its largest planned expenditures this year are the Streetscape Project and the Façade Grant Program.
- b. Most DDA revenue is received within the first six months of the fiscal year.
- c. To date, expenses total \$215,365.95, with an additional \$648,287 anticipated for streetscape and façade grant payouts. These expenses are in addition to the DDA's regular monthly operating costs.

- d. The majority of DDA funds are invested in MIClass, which currently earns an interest rate of approximately 4%. At this time, 82% of DDA funds are held in MIClass, while 17% are held with West Shore Bank.

6. **BOARD COMMENT**

- a. Jamil Alam – Shared that Sleighbell had a strong turnout and expressed interest in more events and business collaboration, noting the clear benefits.
- b. Bill Gambill – Reported that the EDA grant is essentially closed out.
- c. Carmen Kott – Highlighted Sleighbell Weekend, recognizing Kelly McColl and the DPW for their work, and Sammie for the successful marketing efforts. The audit is in its final stages.

7. **ADJOURN**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Ben Crowley, second by Deanna Marsh, to adjourn at 9:35AM

Nicole Kaminski

Acting Recording Secretary