

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, 2026
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B

PRESENT: Ben Crowley, Jamil Alam, Lindsey Swidorski,, Deanna Marsh, Kyle Mosher, Bill Gambill

ABSENT: Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Tyler Leppanen

Also Present: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski, Sara Herberger, Gordon Heinold, Kyle Kotecki, Councilmember Grabowski, Jennifer Flynn

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:31AM

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Kyle Mosher noted amending the agenda to include Item 9B under new business: Election of a New Vice Chair.

MOTION by Ben Crowley second by Jamil Alam to amend and accept the agenda as noted by Kyle Mosher.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

a. None.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR JANUARY 14, 2026, MEETING**

MOTION by Deanna Marsh, seconded by Lindsey Swidorski to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2026, regular meeting.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a. January 2026:

- i. MIClass Account: **\$788,080.42**
- ii. The total of the unpaid bills in the packet was **\$55,989.17**
- iii. Expenses this month included:

Recurring:

1. Quickbooks: Monthly Fee: This is taken out as an ACH payment. - \$115.00
2. Manistee Area Chamber: Monthly Executive Director Fee - \$6,666.67
3. Richards & McDougall: Monthly Accounting Fee + 1099 search and file fee- \$525.00

Additional:

1. Spicer Group: Streetscape - \$7,750.00
2. Portage Point Rentals dba The Golden Stag: Facade Reimbursement - \$10,000.00
3. The Manistee Elks Lodge #250: Facade Reimbursement - \$30,932.50

MOTION by Ben Crowley second by Lindsey Swidorski, to accept the January 2026 financials. Voice vote—Motion approved.

6. EXECUTIVE REPORTS – Andrew Stafford

a. January 2026:

i. **Downtown Buildings**

1. **Northern Hotel:** A design change was presented, reducing the number of units from 15 to 12. The revised plan includes slightly larger units and scales the project down by three units to improve ease of construction.

ii. **Streetscape Project:**

1. The RFP was released in January, with bids due back in February. Discussion took place regarding the next steps once bids are received and the overall project timeline.

iii. **MEDC Façade Restoration Program:**

1. The program is nearing completion. Final documentation is being prepared for submission to MEDC. Grants are being paid out upon receipt of invoices, and April will focus on finalizing and submitting all required documentation to MEDC.

7. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

a. Facade Grant - Andrew Stafford

a. Golden Stag Reimbursement

- i. MEDC Facade Grant Program: \$10,000.00 reimbursement
- ii. After reimbursement, certificates of completion are needed to fully close the project out.

b. Elks Lodge Reimbursement

- i. MEDC Facade Grant Program: \$30,932.50 reimbursement
 1. After reimbursement, certificates of completion are needed to fully close the project out.

c. 320 1st Street Application

- i. \$6,250.00 grant request. Recommendation of granting \$3,125.00 due to the non-historical nature of the building.

MOTION by Bill Gambill second by Deanna Marsh to approve the 320 1st Street facade grant application for \$3,125.00.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

b. Streetscape - Andrew Stafford / Bill Gambill

- a. RAP Timeline/Presentation
 - i. Three bids were received and were fairly competitive. Construction agreements are expected to go before City Council in March. The project is anticipated to be fully completed by September 2026. The first milestone must be completed by June 30, with substantial completion required by August 28, 2026.
 - ii. The design originated from the 2023 Fleis & VandenBrink study, which incorporated significant community input. Ongoing communication regarding the project timeline and updates will be prioritized to ensure downtown businesses remain informed throughout the process.
- b. Legislative Directive Spending Request
 - i. A request is being pursued at the State level to earmark funds for the continuation of the project, in partnership with the Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance.
 - ii. The project will continue to follow a phased approach.
- c. Events - Andrew Stafford / Bill Gambill
 - a. The event committee met this week, discussing event processes. More detailed material information at the next meeting.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Jennifer Flynn SEEDS EcoCorps - Riverwalk Beautification
 - i. The first proposal was received in November 2025.
 - ii. The project will utilize collaboration with other community organizations for funding, and it is not recommended that the DDA assume the full financial responsibility.
 - iii. Support is being sought for a \$5,000 match toward a grant application through the Community Foundation. The grant deadline is March 1, marking the close of the spring funding cycle.

MOTION by Bill Gambill second by Jamil Alam, to support a \$5,000.00 match for a grant application to the community foundation

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Match On Main Grant Program
 - i. A \$25,000 reimbursement match grant opportunity is available. Applications must be submitted by a city government or DDA on behalf of businesses. The DDA is permitted to submit applications for up to two

businesses. The grant covers a wide range of eligible activities, including both interior and exterior improvements.

- ii. The State provides a scoring rubric for the DDA to evaluate applications. A targeted business group will review and filter applications before presenting recommendations to the full DDA Board. The program is intended to support small businesses rather than property owners.
 - iii. **Timeline:**
 1. March 1 – 31: Downtown businesses submit applications
 2. April DDA Meeting: Applications reviewed and evaluated
 3. April 20: DDA submission deadline to the State
 - iv. Kyle Mosher, DDA Chair made the designation for the Target Business group to filter applications.
- b. Re-designation of Vice Chairperson
- i. Deanna Marsh nominated Ben Crowley for the position of Vice Chairperson. Ben Crowley accepted the nomination. A voice vote was conducted, all in favor.

10. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. None

11. **BOARD COMMENT**

- a. Bill Gambill commented on satisfaction of the timeline for Streetscape in presenting to the DDA Board and then presenting to the City Council.

12. **ADJOURN**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 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 9:07AM

Nicole Kaminski

Acting Recording Secretary