

**IMLAY CITY
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**March 10, 2025 Regular Meeting
MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held on Monday, March 10, 2025, at the Imlay City Municipal Offices, 150 N. Main Street, Imlay City MI 48444.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Walt Bargaen called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL** – Director Malzahn called the roll.

Present: Justin Shattuck, Stu Davis, Steve Robbins, Joi Kempf, Neil Docherty, John Genord, Mayor Barbara Yockey, Chairman Walter Bargaen

Absent: Kim Jorgensen

Quorum Present

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

MOTION by Davis, supported by Docherty to approve the consent agenda items as amended.

Consent agenda items include:

- a. Meeting Agenda – revised to add Board Member Genord Resignation
- b. Meeting Minutes - February 10th Regular Meeting
- c. Financial Reports – Ending February 28, 2025
 - DDA Expenditure Report = \$ 28,811.88
 - Check Register Report = \$ 20,897.73
 - Credit Statement – January 2025
 - Ending Fund Balance Sheet = \$ 388,064.48

All in Favor 8 / Nays 0 - MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. **CORRESPONDENCE** – none

6. **COMMITTEE REPORTS** - none

7. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – none

8. **ADDED AGENDA ITEMS: Board Member Resignation**

Board Member John Genord notified Director Malzahn and Board Chair Bargaen that he was resigning from the Board effective Friday, March 7, 2025.

MOTION by Yockey, supported by Docherty to accept the resignation of John Genord from the Board effective immediately.

All in Favor 8 Ayes/Nays 0

MOTION CARRIED 8/0

Genord left the dais and joined the audience.

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Social District Branding Materials

The Board reviewed the revised estimates from The Print Shop for district logo labels, enter/exit signs, and sidewalk decals. Board member Davis inquired about the material used for the signage. Director Malzahn noted that an inventory had been conducted for existing sign poles, stating that

nothing could be affixed to stop signs, but other posts, utility posts, trees, etc would be utilized to reduce sign clutter where possible. The DDA will purchase 1500 each of the four color designs for the beverage holders. 1000 of one color will be provided to each of the license holders to help in identifying where purchases are being made. White logo stickers with “special event” wording will be used for one-time events only.

MOTION by Robbins, supported by Shattuck to approve the purchase of Social District branding materials in an amount not to exceed \$3000

Roll Call: AYES – Davis, Robbins, Jorgensen, Kempf, Shattuck, Yockey, Bargaen

NAYS – none

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

B. Façade Grant Application Review

Board member Davis requested in February, that a review of the façade grant app be conducted. Director Malzahn recommended to the Board that security cameras be allowed as an eligible expense noting that the device would have to be compliant with the current police monitoring system. Camera installation in the business district is being recommended by city leadership to alleviate any concerns that may arise from social district. Malzahn’s second recommendation was that the Façade grant program be facilitated through the Imlay City Façade Corp. The switch would allow for compliance to DDA goals and objections mandating esthetics as well as additional grant funding opportunities to existing and functioning non-profit façade corps. Discussion was held regarding how similar programs were facilitated in other communities and more information was requested.

The Board **MOTION** by Yockey, supported by Docherty to table this item until further information can be brought back from other community programs.

Roll Call: AYES

NAYS – none

All in Favor 7 Ayes/Nays 0

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. 3rd Qtr Budget Amendments

The Board reviewed the budget amendment form as completed by Director Malzahn and clarification was provided for expenses under the following categories: Misc. Repairs & maintenance = electronic message board and the wayfinding signage replacements; Miscellaneous = DTE LED lamp conversions in downtown; Capital Outlay = bike racks .

MOTION by Yockey, supported by Robbins to approve the budget amendments for both revenues and expenditures as presented.

Roll Call: AYES – Yockey, Robbins, Shattuck, Davis, Kempf, Docherty, Bargaen

NAYS – none

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

B. I AM Imlay City Project Reveal

The Board heard a recap of the project to date and plans for a “big reveal” thank you event being planned for Monday April 7th at the Performing Arts Center. This project was funded by a \$25,000 1st place prize won in the Consumers Energy Put Your Town On The Map pitch competition presented by Director Malzahn, and to date expenses total \$6500.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Shattuck to authorize a budget expenditure not to exceed \$5,000 for the I AM Imlay reveal event.

Roll Call: AYES – Davis, Shattuck, Docherty, Kempf, Robbins, Yockey, Bargaen

NAYS – none

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

C. Credit Card Processing Equipment

Market Manager Bishop informed the Board that the current Clover card processing equipment is no longer supported or PCI compliant. Bishop presented options for the Board to consider and recommended that a square card reader, tablet and T-Mobile hotspot be purchased to replace the outdated unit.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Robbins to approve the purchase of a Square card reader, Tablet, and T-Mobile Hot Spot in the amount of \$167.47 + \$20 per month for wi-fi service.

Roll Call: AYES – Davis, Robbins, Shattuck, Docherty, Kempf, Yockey, Bargaen

NAYS – none

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

D. FY 2025-26 Proposed Budget

Director Malzahn presented the Board with a balanced draft budget for review. A detailed breakdown was provided as follows:

Revenues

Anticipated fiscal year revenues: \$330,000

Tax Revenue includes the capture from the City of Imlay City and Lapeer County but does not include “OPT Out funding for the special Lapeer County Mileages. Those additional revenues have been added as separate line items for tracking purposes.

Grant Revenue: \$10,000 (new budget allocation)

WinterFest revenues decreased to \$1000 to match last years budget. This revenue is made up from vendors fees at the Kringle Market.

Local Community Stabilization: \$20,000 (same as prior year)

Fund Balance interest has been added on line item 665. Monthly earnings will be deposited into that line item as earned on fund balance in the city’s general checking account at current market rate from Choice One Bank.

Community Promotion Reimbursement: \$5600 (revenues are generated from sponsorships)

Farmers Market and Concert Revenues same as prior year

Expenses

Dues/memberships: \$1500 (which aligns with the last two years expenses). This item includes paid memberships to the Imlay City Rotary Club, Lapeer Economic Club, Chamber of Commerce

Lliability insurance: \$1000 which is an increase due to audited allocations from the city

Billboard: \$10,000 has been added as its own line item for ease in tracking moving forward, these funds have been moved from community promotions.

DDA Concert: \$12,000 (same as prior year)

Façade Grants: \$20,000 (same as prior year)

Season Décor: \$12,000 this is a new separate line item for expenses reducing the streetscape maintenance budget for transparency.

WinterFest: \$2,000 reduce from last year.

Rotary Park: \$4000 for improvements needed, and as partial grant match

Contributions: four line items added to show the return of actual funds received to the locally operating agencies for the special voted millages.

Wages and Salaries: \$65,000 increased to meet average median income from similar communities.

Hourly Wages: \$15,000 increased to meet new state law allowing for 1-hour of PTO per every 30 hours worked.

Office supplies, postage and operating supplies: all the same as prior year.

Advertising: \$5,000 (budget reduction)

Consulting Fees: \$4000 (budget reduction)

Legal services: \$1000 (same as prior year)

Telephone and Transportation: increased to match actual expenses from prior years.

Community promotion: \$3,000(budget reduction)

Electricity: \$35,000

Streetscape: \$60,000 (budget increase for additional projects) . Current contract with Fineline

approved for \$48,285, leaving \$12,000 for beautification efforts at the DPW garage, along Depot Drive, the former Farmers market area or in the pocket parks downtown.

Admin/Transfer: \$35,000 (based on the city-services negotiating and new MOU)

Development Costs- Unallocated: were moved to the new Façade Grants line item, but the amount of \$20,000 remains the same.

DDA workshop expenses: \$500 (holding at least one workshop annually would cover any board training requirement for RRC)

Leases: \$2,500 (CN Railroad lease for the railroad crossing downtown and the depot drive lease that the DDA agreed to pay for with the city)

Lapeer Development Corp: \$6,500

Farmers Market: \$7300 (budget reduction)

Capital Outlay: \$12,000 (proposed projects/goals include Pocket Park Development or used to add amenities, such as tables, chairs, sound system or string lighting to downtown)

Mayor Yockey commented that she was concerned about the increases in administrative expenses when the amounts used to pay for programs has decreased, especially in the previous fiscal year.

Director Malzahn noted that the increase was due to the capture of special voted millages and anticipated grant monies, but the funds are being returned to similar entities operating here in Imlay City and therefore “restricted funds”. Mayor Yockey further commented on the increased salary allocation of 13.5% for the Director’s salary, which is well in excess of what any other city employee has received, and that she would like to see \$4000 of that salary line item used for façade grants.

MOTION by Yockey, supported by Davis to amend the FY 25-26 budget moving \$4,000 from salaries to façade grants.

Roll Call: AYES – Yockey, Davis, Robbins, Docherty, Kempf, Bargaen

NAYS – Shattuck

MOTION CARRIED 6/1

MOTION by Yockey, supported by Robbins to send the budget as revised to the city commission for approval.

Roll Call: AYES – Yockey, Davis, Robbins, Docherty, Shattuck, Kempf, Bargaen

NAYS –

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

E. Board Member Resignation

Jessica Montoya notified Director Malzahn via text on March 3, 2025 that her schedule no longer provides the time needed to attend regular meetings and that she will be stepping down effective immediately.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Shattuck to accept the resignation of Jessica Montoya from the Board effective March 3, 2025.

All in Favor 7 Ayes/Nays 0

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

F. Social District Pavilion

The Board reviewed a draft grant narrative as written by Director Malzahn requesting funds from the Lapeer County Community Foundation. The DDA would be seeking \$15,000 to help pay the construction of a modest pavilion structure on the Farmers market corner. Director Malzahn noted that past attempts to secure funding to build a structure with attractive amenities like restrooms has failed to come to fruition. This new proposed structure would be consistent to the one built at Old School park, and would support the downtown area new businesses and social district by providing a relaxing place to sit, play games or enjoy a cultural event such as the DDA concerts. The proposed project cost is \$65,000 with funding provided by the DDA minus grant monies received.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Docherty to send out a bid notice for the construction of a new pavilion to be installed in the former Farmers Market area and to support the submission of a \$15,000 grant request to help fund the project to the Lapeer County Community Foundation.

Roll Call: AYES – Davis, Docherty, Robbins, Shattuck, Kempf, Yockey, Bargaen

NAYS – none

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

G. Historic Downtown Marketing

This agenda item was requested by Board member Genord, who resigned at the beginning of the meeting. Following former board member Genord's resignation, Director Malzahn recapped the pricing options that Genord sent to her for marketing outside of the circulation of the local Tri-City Times in an attempt to attract new investors in downtown Imlay City.

The Board agreed that expanding our reach to areas like Macomb County, and Crains Detroit subscribers should be investigated. The Board would like Director Malzahn to move forward with marketing and develop an action plan.

NO BOARD ACTION TAKEN

H. Ground Floor Residential Zoning

This agenda item was requested by Board member Genord. Following his resignation, Director Malzahn recapped the discussion from the DDA Workshop meeting held on March 3rd. Board Member Kempf stated that in certain buildings with adequate sq. footage this may be an appropriate use, and that there are several buildings where ground floor residential is already permitted.

The Board would like Director Malzahn to report back on status of the zoning revisions as progress is made by the Planning Commission since that would be their area of governance.

NO BOARD ACTION TAKEN

I. Business Recruitment Subcommittee

This agenda item was requested by Board member Genord. Following his resignation, Director Malzahn spoke to the possibility of sub-committee formation to develop a strategy plan specific to the desired types of businesses needed downtown. Robbins mentioned a friend and possible other volunteers that could also participate.

A standing subcommittee was created to assist in the development of business recruitment activities. Members include Robbins, Shattuck, Kempf and community volunteers that step forward.

NO BOARD ACTION TAKEN

J. Business District Blight Ordinance

This agenda item was requested by Board member Genord. Following his resignation, Malzahn recapped discussion from the workshop meeting, and further reported the enforcement/compliance activities of the Police Chief and Code Enforcement officer. Malzahn hosted a meeting to engage stakeholders and find solutions that would bring the policing powers needed to gain compliance from several property owners who are holding the downtown hostage by not activating their commercial buildings. A comprehensive blight ordinance for B2 is needed. The Board would like to invite Police Chief Brett Selby to present a report of current steps being taken to address downtown blight and vacancies and to discuss his needs for more policing powers in future ordinance revisions.

NO BOARD ACTION TAKEN

K. Board Member Qualifications

This agenda item was requested by Board member Genord. Following his resignation, Director Malzahn recapped discussion from the workshop meeting. Former Mayor Kempf cited the language from

MCL - Act 57 of 2018 Section 125.4204(1) and the DDA Bylaws, with emphasis on the language "not less than a majority of the board". The current Board makeup has 8 seated members, and 5 members have an interest in a specific business/property located in the TIF district making the majority and thus the Board makeup can allow for up to 3 members with general interest in the

DDA to be appointed. Mayor Yockey concurred and noted that the board makeup is compliant with MCL 125.4204(1) and the DDA Bylaws.

MOTION by Bergen supported by Davis requesting that Chair Bergen and Board Member Davis be allowed to abstain from voting on this agenda item since they may be personally affected:-

Roll Call: AYES – Bergen, Davis, Docherty, Robbins, Shattuck, Kempf, Yockey

NAYS – none

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

MOTION by Yockey supported by Robbins declaring that all current member eligibility requirements have been satisfied.

Roll Call: AYES – Yockey, Robbins, Docherty, Shattuck, Kempf

NAYS – none

ABSTAIN – Bergen, Davis

MOTION CARRIED 5/0/2

L. Funding Request – Blueberry Festival

The Board reviewed a funding request from Gjon Marku to assist in supporting his team's plans to bring back a Blueberry Festival to Imlay City. Gjon Marku b was unable to attend the meeting in person. Chris Bishop attended the first event planning meetings and reported on activities currently being developed. Yockey stated concerns because the application was promoted by a single person or business and not a non-profit entity or community group. There are concerns over the DDA's ability to fund such a request from an individual. Malzahn stated that Mr. Marku was a stakeholder and paid the TIF tax through his rent and therefore the sponsorship does qualify as a reasonable expenditure from the DDA, and furthermore, the event is being held in the DDA District.

MOTION by Davis to approve the funding request as presented. Motion fails for lack of support.

The Board encouraged the applicant to work with a non-profit entity and bring the request back to the Board with more details or reapply. Docherty may be a viable partner and is in support of the festival.

11. EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Director Malzahn provided her written report in the meeting packet for February 2025. One additional item mentioned is the invitation to the DDA Board to attend a joint consortium meeting with the Planning Commission and City Commission on April 9th @ 6:00pm to discuss plans for the Neighborhood Improvements Authority initiative.

12. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

13. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS – none

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Davis, supported by Yockey to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 pm

All in Favor 7 Ayes/Nays 0

MOTION CARRIED 7/0

Next Regular DDA Board meeting date: Monday, April 14, 2025, at 5:35 PM

Respectfully submitted by: _____
Christine Malzahn, DDA Executive Director

DDA APPROVED: 4/14/2025

CITY COMMISSION APPROVED: