

**Village of Baldwin  
Downtown Development Authority  
September 19, 2024, Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
(preliminary)**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Roll Call:** Jane Allison called the Meeting to order at 3:03 PM with board members:

**Present:** Jane Allison, Darci Maldonado, Jim Truxton, Josh Johnson, Andy Gremel, Seth Wenger

**Absent:** Debbie Smith-Olson, Tony Gagliardo, vacancy

**Staff:** Robert Toland, DDA Director; Joni Luce, Recording Secretary

**Acknowledgment of Visitors:** Meredith Gremel with the Markette; Sue Parker, downtown business owner; Steve Stone, downtown business owner and friend Dave; Jodi Nichols w/LCEDA

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

- A. **Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Jim Truxton to approve the agenda, supported by Andy Gremel. Motion carried.
- B. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the **August 15, 2024, regular** meeting minutes was made by Jane Allison, and supported by Jim Truxton. Motion carried.
- C. **Treasurers' Report:** Jane Allison presented the Treasurer's report through September 19, 2024, indicating a general fund balance of \$368,458.47, with disbursements totaling \$3,460.00, and total income of \$15.70, all interest.

The following bills were presented for payment:

Consumers Energy	\$ 453.17 (streetlights)
Robert Toland Consulting	\$ 1,200.00 (retainer & meeting fee)
Randi Gould	\$ 5,027.00 (2 <sup>nd</sup> half gardening fees)
Lake Osceola State Bank	\$ 49,431.00 (principle & interest on bonds due 10/1)
Village of Baldwin	\$ 1,404.39 (water bills)
Total bills	\$ 57,515.56

Donations in the amount of \$3,500.00 designated for seasonal decorations are still being held.

Vans Mechanical Contractors is owed for backflow testing but the bill has not yet been received.

A Consumers Energy bill for \$59.97 was received after the Treasurer's Report was printed. It is included in the \$453.17 total above.

A motion to approve the treasurer's report, was made by Seth Wenger and supported by Andy Gremel. Motion carried.

A motion to pay the bills, was made by Seth Wenger and supported by Andy Gremel. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.

**D. Committee reports:** Meredith Gremel reported on the Pure Markette, which has completed its first season, ending with a vendor celebration last night. A 2024 Impact Report was handed out showing the collective impact of the 10-week season. There were 51 vendors who participated, exceeding the 30-50 vendors anticipated. Vendors were mostly satisfied with the Markette; some overjoyed, others would have benefitted from marketing ahead of the season. Downtown businesses reported an increase in business on Markette days. A proposal for a District 10 Health Dept. \$6,000.00 grant for next year will help the at-risk population by paying for cooking programs, gardening skills education and field trips to farms, etc. Also applying for a \$5,000.00 grant through Lake Community Foundation for next year. Senior Day was organized at the last minute this year, would like to expand it next year and also include veterans and service providers. Continuing efforts to accept SNAP and DUFB next year.

Jodi Nichols reported that new legislation requires that every county must have a recycling plan, therefore seeking members to form a Waste Management Committee that requires business representation. Members must live in Lake County. She plans to submit a grant application to the Lake County Community Foundation to form a leadership cohort to serve the community, improve leadership skills, tentatively planned for December – May. Will have speakers on various leadership topics. Will need 10 participants to start – by invitation only. They must commit to mentor each other and stay connected; then mentor the next group. This has developed due to the problem of succession of leadership in the community, hoping to fill a pipeline of people willing to serve in various capacities.

**E. Acknowledge Communications:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Sue Parker, a new downtown business owner, expressed concern that an old cooler left in front of a neighboring business is a hazard to local children, as well as the trash that is in back of the old restaurant. Jim reported that the village is in the process of getting the owner to clean it all up. Also wanted to know who is responsible for clearing snow – the DDA will snow blow the center of the sidewalk, business owners must shovel the doorways and to curb. Steve Stone, also a new downtown business owner, asked about a dumpster location for the businesses that wouldn't take up parking spots in the back. Jim had a conversation with the business owners when the alley was improved, none of them were interested in a communal dumpster at that time; the idea can be revisited but all would have to agree.

**BOARD COMMENTS:** None

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Trees, Flowerboxes & Irrigation System:** Jane Allison will set a date to have the water turned off. Andy Gremel will continue trying to contact Ed to repair the backflow on the irrigation system. Motion carried.

**B. 8<sup>th</sup> Street Upgrade:** Jim Truxton reported that construction is going out to bid 10/1 or 10/2. Bids will be awarded in November for spring construction. Sidewalks are non-participating and would come out of the Village budget. Estimate of \$90,000.00 is too much, will make it a separate bid to see what other funds could be used. Will give go-ahead to H&H now so that the compaction is better.

- C. 8<sup>th</sup> Street Fish Farm and Dam:** Jim Truxton reported that they should be finalizing construction plans. The abutments under the bridge were built in 1909, they will be re-engineered with the desire to do the bridge at the same time as the dam removal to save money long term.
- D. RRC Update:** Bob told Jim it was ready to go, will see if that's correct in a few days. Would like formal recognition at the 10/14/24 Village Council meeting, placing the fee schedule on the website is the only remaining requirement. This makes them more available for grants as the State is looking for this. Baldwin is one of only 79 communities that formed a Redevelopment Ready Community, one of only 20 this size.
- E. By-laws:** A handout with changes in red print was distributed. Concern by Jane regarding the language for Removal from Office in Section 8, that removal would be automatic; Seth said it would not be automatic but gives them grounds for dismissal on an individual basis. It was suggested that "unexcused" be added in front of "absence". Section 2 regarding Election of Officers calls for an annual election of officers, which Bob says is not a State requirement, they could serve longer. Board agreed to keep it annual, with elections at the first fiscal year meeting in March. A motion to approve the language for both was made by Seth Wenger and supported by Andy Gremel; motion carried.
- F. Project Ranking:** The list is the top 20 from the submitted ranking preferences. **#1,3** are related and it is believed **#1** is already done. **#3**, crosswalks, could be repainted to be more visible. Meredith suggested using artwork in the crosswalks, perhaps continuing with the trout theme. It is possible to get funding for crosswalks thru District Health #10. Andy suggested calling MDOT (Dan Lund, local MDOT) to see what they will allow. **#4** paid position was questioned by Jane as to why this was rated highly, no answer. Meredith said the Community Economic Development would pay for an intern but they would have to work under a supervisor. **#5,6** should be combined, but the DDA can only do the first block. **#7** should be removed, just waiting on MDOT at this time. **#9** Seth says is already done and should be removed from the list. **#13** all agreed this is not a DDA issue and its being done already. **#18** discussion on what equates a "quick improvement". Hollister Park is a big blank canvass and can be re-envisioned. Playground equipment is all about 40 years old. **#20** was confusing on what it entails, maybe a PA system for the community gathering goal, technology improvements for it. Jim questioned why 902 wasn't on the list at all when it was the biggest project. The DDA owns 902, the rest is owned by the Village (parking lots, etc.); keeping the parking lot and moving the music venue was preferred over losing parking. Andy questioned why the Vision Plan wasn't used to move forward, knock out the short-term projects and suggested everyone take a topic. He will look into #1,3 and see what it takes to make it happen; MDOT committee of Seth, Andy and Darci. Jim is on #12 committee and will see what legal liability may come with having security tapes. Jane is on #17 committee, says there is a meeting on 9/24 at 7 p.m. about the trail. Bob will revise the list. Jodie says there could be funding for projects such as: sidewalks; website/branding through RAP (Revitalization and Placemaking) which does require a 50% match that could be done through fundraising; a social district, which must have at least two contiguous spaces; a building could be purchased and demolished to form a permanent Marquette space; an EV charging station could be installed.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was offered by Darci Maldonado and supported by Andy Gremel. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Meeting Schedule: The next regular DDA meeting will be held October 17, 2024, at the Village office at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Joni Luce, Recording Secretary  
for  
Deborah Smith-Olson, Secretary/Treasurer