

**Village of Baldwin  
Downtown Development Authority  
October 17, 2024, Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
(approved)**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Roll Call:** Jane Allison called the Meeting to order at 3:06 PM with board members:

**Present:** Jane Allison, Darci Maldonado, Jim Truxton, Debbie Smith-Olson, Andy Gremel, Seth Wenger

**Absent:** Josh Johnson, Tony Gagliardo, vacancy

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

**Acknowledgment of Visitors:** Meredith Gremel with the Pure Markette; Jodi Nichols w/LCEDA

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

- A. **Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Seth Wenger to approve the agenda, supported by Debbie Smith-Olson. Motion carried.
- B. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the **September 19, 2024, regular** meeting minutes was made by Debbie Smith-Olson, and supported by Seth Wenger. Motion carried.
- C. **Treasurers' Report:** Debbie Smith-Olson presented the Treasurer's report through October 17, 2024, indicating a general fund balance of \$311,017.95, with disbursements totaling \$57,455.59, and total income of \$15.07, all interest. It was noted that the Consumers Energy bills do not all come due together; they were paid \$393.20 last month rather than the approved \$453.17 although all bills are current.

The following bills were presented for payment:

Consumers Energy	\$ 444.12 (streetlights)
Robert Toland Consulting	\$ 1,200.00 (retainer & meeting fee)
H2 Oasis Inc	\$ 500.00 (irrigation system shut down)
UHY LLP	\$ 3,000.00 (DDA portion of Village audit)
Village of Baldwin	\$ 1,664.88 (water bills)
<u>Total bills</u>	<u>\$ 6,809.00</u>

Debbie added that Meredith and Andy Gremel need to be reimbursed for Markette receipts of items purchased prior to the separate account being set up, in the amount of \$1,889.23.

Donations in the amount of \$3,500.00 designated for seasonal decorations are still being held. The total collected and pledged for the Brown Trout Sculpture Project is \$111,375.23.

Vans Mechanical Contractors will be owed for backflow testing but the bill has not yet been received, will likely be done in the spring. Space has been reserved for an ad in the Michigan

Trails magazine, no cost yet.

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

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

- D. Committee reports:** Andy Gremel has received a workbook regarding how to work with MDOT on the Traffic Calming project and has contacted MDOT to start the dialogue. The Roundabout project **on US-10/M-37** has been approved but is not scheduled until 2038. There may be funding available thru DHS for crosswalks. A replacement 'no bicycles on sidewalk' sign has been ordered for the one that is missing. The old Duffy place purchased by Sue Parker is back up for sale, a death in her family has changed her plans. Jim Truxton reported that 880 Michigan Ave has been sold to a New Jersey investor but H&R Block will remain in the building.

Meredith Gremel presented the Pure Markette Financial Report for 2024, asking for reimbursement of \$1,889.23 for supplies purchased prior to bank account setup. She reports that the \$6,000.00 REACH grant from District #10 Health Department has been secured for use in next year's Markette to help the at-risk population by providing for classes in cooking, gardening, field trips, etc. Corewell Health has donated \$205.00. More grants are being written to increase the funding for next year to expand the Markette. Baldwin Community Schools thanked the Markette for helping with their music program. The temporary Markette sign has been removed for storage until next year. Subcommittee members Jim, Debbie, Jane, Seth, Jodi and Meredith will meet 10/24/24 at 3:00 p.m. to discuss next year.

- E. Acknowledge Communications:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Jodi Nichols hopes to have 10 people sign up for the new leadership cohort funded through the Lake County Community Foundation, scheduled to run from January through May, but there are still some openings. It is the hope that the graduates of the program will fill vacancies on various boards and then mentor new candidates for a second training series.

**BOARD COMMENTS:** None

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Trees, Flowerboxes & Irrigation System:** Jane Allison reports that the irrigation system has been shut down for the winter and most of the boxes cleaned up. There are two that have not been done yet, will make sure they haven't been overlooked. Van's will repair the backflow preventer in the spring. The Christmas lights are scheduled to be put up this weekend, with volunteers meeting Saturday at 11:00 and Sunday at noon. Isenhardt Electric quoted replacing 19 receptacles, GFI boxes and covers for \$2,193.00. Motion made by Seth Wenger, seconded by Andy Gremel to accept the bid; motion carried. The work will be done ASAP. They also quoted replacing the damaged light pole and fixture for the insurance company in the amount of \$7,193.00, the quote will be turned over to the insurance company. The fixture is not an exact replacement, original is no longer available, but is very close. A quote to replace more lights and poles was also included; \$115,974.00 for 18 or \$498,284.00 for a quantity of 88. A discussion was held on putting

light fixtures on banner poles that need replacement anyway, Jane will check into cost.

- B. 8<sup>th</sup> Street Upgrade:** H&H will begin the work on the five sewer and water leads this fall.
- C. 8<sup>th</sup> Street Fish Farm and Dam:** Jim Truxton expects to receive the report from the boring samples soon. Boring samples were also taken at the RR bridge, with the federal fisheries paying for the majority of that work, so that the engineering work can be done. If all the work can be contracted out at the same time there would be cost and time line benefits.
- D. RRC Update:** Jane said they received the award of certification at the 10/14/24 Village Council meeting; the first step is complete with resources now available to the community for projects. The Village's printed **Press** release regarding this status was handed out.
- E. By-laws:** A discussion of the by-laws was held. Jane asked members to look over their information as printed on the DDA member listing to correct any errors. There is a lack of records on when official terms began, members were asked to determine when they were appointed to office. Debbie pointed to the language in Article IV, Section 4 of the by-laws that says "that portion of Webber Twp within the Village"; she believes all of Webber Twp has been included in the past, asked for the language in the referenced Consent Agreement of 5/23/2019 be checked. Jim noted that the Consent Agreement expires this December and would make the matter moot. Bob pointed to the next paragraph that deals with staggered terms and recommended that the Council reset the terms due to record keeping insufficiency, creating confusion as to when current members terms expire. Debbie referenced Article IX, Section 2 where it requires two signatures on outgoing funds such as checks; this has not been the practice. Seth suspects the language is necessary for fiduciary insurance coverage. Will begin using two signatures on payments. There was also discussion on the dates of when members are appointed by Village Council as well as when officers are elected. Jane concerned that the semi-annual informational meetings, currently held in April and October, are not mentioned in the by-laws. Bob will clean up the language and bring a rough draft for next month. If the new by-laws take effect in January the language regarding the then-expired Consent Agreement can be removed.
- F. Project Ranking:** General discussion on the projects. It was noted that the 902 Michigan Project is on the Village's Capital Improvement list but is not on the DDA list. The best option for the use of this lot needs to be determined in order to move forward – permanent location for Markette, a music venue, sell for commercial use, etc. Deciding whether to purchase 904 Michigan Ave would also need to be determined as that affects the use of 902. Owners are interested in selling, thinking of asking \$120,000 – 125,000 for the property but may want to gift a portion of it for tax reasons. Jodi highlighted the need to have "shovel-ready" projects for grant applications, which involves having a rough design and projected cost. Jane suggested spending the November meeting on prioritizing the list and the budget.
- G. Exterior Improvement Program:** Bob presented a handout on the Comstock Park DDA that recently increased grant amounts for businesses to improve the exterior of their buildings. He suggested that Baldwin could do something similar, perhaps offering to match 50% up to \$5,000 or \$10,000 with parameters for proximity to the downtown area. Seth says it is mentioned in the Master Plan but hasn't made it to the action item list.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was offered by Seth Wenger and supported by Darci Maldonado. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:25 PM.

Meeting Schedule: The next regular DDA meeting will be held November 21, 2024, at the Village office at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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