

**Village of Baldwin
Downtown Development Authority
February 20, 2025, Minutes
Regular Meeting
(approved)**

CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call: Jane Allison called the Meeting to order at 3:01 PM with board members:

Present: Jane Allison, Debbie Smith-Olson, Josh Johnson, Seth Wenger, Darci Maldonado, Harold Nichols, and Joy Parrott (first meeting filling vacancy)

Absent: Andy Gremel, Tony Gagliardo

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

Acknowledgment of Visitors: Meredith Gremel; Jasmine Hibma with Corewell Health.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. **Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Seth Wenger to approve the agenda, seconded by Jane Allison. Motion carried
- B. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the **January 16, 2025**, regular meeting minutes was made by Jane Allison, supported by Seth Wenger. Motion carried.
- C. **Treasurers' Report and Payment of Bills:** Debbie Smith-Olson presented the Treasurer's report through February 20, 2025, indicating a general fund balance of \$389,818.46, with disbursements totaling \$4,005.64, and total income of \$16.74 in interest.
The following bills were presented for payment:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Consumers Energy | \$ 514.35 (streetlights) |
| Robert Toland Consulting | \$ 1,200.00 (retainer & meeting fee) |
| <u>Village of Baldwin</u> | <u>\$ 655.57 (water bills)</u> |
| Total bills | \$ 2,369.92 |

Expenses of \$534.48 for seasonal decorations were paid from the \$3,500.00 donations for that purpose; a balance of \$2,965.52 remains.

A motion to approve the treasurer's report and pay the bills presented was made by Harold Nichols and supported by Darci Maldonado. Motion unanimously carried by roll call vote.

D. Committee reports:

a. Pure Markette Committee: A report on activities was given by Meredith Gremel:

The Advisory Committee held a meeting on 2/11/25 and set the 2025 Season dates of June 4-August 27, excluding July's Trout-a-rama week. New hours of 3:00-6:00 p.m. Three of the days will be for special recognition of Caregivers, Veterans, and Seniors, as well as planning for potential fall special events.

The website, Puremarkette.org, is coming along, contracting with Taste the Local Difference for development. The full site will go live soon, with a "coming soon" landing page launched on 2/18/25. When the puremarkette@villageofbaldwin.org e-mail goes live, they will begin sending our e-news. A March 3rd work group meeting is scheduled, they expect to complete the Program/Events page.

A SIGMA sub-account from the Village account will be set up to keep the funds separate. Additional farmers/vendors are being recruited, working with Mason-Lake and Newaygo Conservation Districts. Finalizing programming covered by the REACH grant, seeking sponsorships to underwrite programs, and securing banners and other signage all part of the budget. Partnering with Mason-Lake Conservation District's tree sale on April 26th and with the Blessing of the Bike's on May 17 and 18 to promote the Markette. The next Advisory Board meeting will be March 11, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at the Village Offices.

b. Streetscape: In Andy's absence, Meredith reported that the REACH grant (through District 10 Health Dept) of \$5,000.00 was awarded to make the street safer to cross. Andy is reaching out to MDOT and D#10 to get specifics for budgeting. Harold asked if the grant included maintenance costs; "surfaces" is included, so yes, it would pay to repaint the lines, etc.

- E. **Acknowledge Communications:** Jane was told by the Insurance Company that the check was in the mail for the light pole; Debbie has not yet received it. This created a general discussion on the replacement of light poles. Jane will contact Isenhardt Electric and get their opinion on if existing poles/fixtures in storage can be used with new equipment, as well as have them check on some existing lights that appear to be stuck on.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

BOARD COMMENTS: Darci reported that the museum is planning a posthumous birthday celebration in honor of Clarence Vicent's 100th birthday on March 3rd from 1-3. The DDA wants to participate in honoring him.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Trees, Flowerboxes & Irrigation System: Nothing to report.

B. 8th Street Upgrade: Bob has two quotes he averaged together for budget price, although it was noted that the quotes are from September and will need to be updated. The plan is to do the sidewalks on both sides of the street, in the first block off M37; Harold mentioned that the Village has several sidewalk projects planned, and Jane and Seth asked about the DDA piggybacking on these projects with the contractors to keep the costs down.

C. Discussion of Bylaws – membership, semiannual meeting: A motion was made by Debbie Smith-Olson, seconded by Seth Wenger, to adopt the revised by-laws. Motion carried.

D. Ideas for Next Project: As discussed earlier in the meeting, light poles and 8th Street sidewalks are in motion to be completed. Seth mentioned this seems to be a maintenance year, so let's get these maintenance items completed.

Bob has had a conversation with someone looking to start a snowmobile repair shop in Baldwin, and the 904 Michigan Ave/Jim Rock property would be a good fit. Would the DDA have any interest in buying the property and leasing it out. This would allow them to control the property until a final decision on the long-term use could be made. Seth did not like the idea of taking it out of private hands, and off the tax roll. Perhaps if this business owner offered to buy the property it would at least set the market price. Debbie was hesitant to have the DDA get into the landlord business, especially for one specific business/building. Harold thought it was similar to the Village/County plan that they have a grant for a \$2.5 Million dollar project they would hold for 7 years and then sell to the private sector. Harold doesn't really like the government involved in subsidizing the private sector. Meredith brought up the parking issues with that location, and that one of the buildings is in questionable condition.

Considerable discussion was held on the subject, Bob reminded them that the DDA plans include taking the East side of the parking lot by the Pavilion, having already done the West side. It would be difficult to schedule the work around events, but it is in the Vision Plan with green space included. Debbie is concerned about losing valuable parking spaces for green space when there is already a lot of green space, Darci and Harold agreed. Bob suggested the Pavillion could be moved; the Board does not want to move it away from businesses, perhaps it could be in the corner of the same lot. Meredith commented that this brings it all back to the original plans for 902 Michigan property. Jane asked if an RFP should be requested on the parking/pavilion project as it needs to be looked at as a whole (paving and moving the pavilion). This would be a good "shovel-ready" project if the DDA wanted to buy the property; Harold agreed this corner space makes the most sense. It all comes back to the property acquisition price, which is currently too high.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Match on Main program: No applications have yet been received, although two or three are expected. A review meeting will be held from 12-2 on March 4th where two will be selected to push forward to the State of Michigan. The State will determine which projects will win the award statewide. Harold believes at least one local project will win an award, although there is no guarantee.

B. Security/Trail Camera: Joy brought up the possibility of purchasing blink cameras, this was discussed but Harold was concerned about who monitors it. If the DDA piggybacks with the Museum security system, purchasing a camera to look toward the trout sculpture, then there would not be a need for additional monitoring. Darci has not yet gotten an answer from the museum; it was decided to table a decision until then.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was offered by Seth Wenger and supported by Jane Allison. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Meeting Schedule: The next regular DDA meeting will be held March 20, 2025, at the Village office at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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