

**Village of Baldwin
Downtown Development Authority
May 15, 2025, Minutes
Regular Meeting
(approved)**

CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call: Jane Allison called the Meeting to order at 3:02 PM with board members:

Present: Jane Allison, Debbie Smith-Olson, Andy Gremel, Darci Maldonado, Harold Nichols, and Seth Wenger

Absent: Josh Johnson, Tony Gagliardo, and Joy Parrott

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

Acknowledgment of Visitors: Meredith Gremel, Jodi Nichols and Quran Griffin

GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. **Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Darci Maldonado to approve the agenda, seconded by Seth Wenger. Motion carried
- B. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion to approve the **April 17, 2025** regular meeting minutes was made by Jane Allison, supported by Debbie Smith-Olson. Motion carried.
- C. **Treasurers' Report and Payment of Bills:** Debbie Smith-Olson presented the Treasurer's report through May 15, 2025, indicating a general fund balance of \$455,289.26 (including the \$100,000.00 CD), with disbursements totaling \$121,328.42 (including a \$100,000.00 transfer into a CD), and total income of \$7,183.14.
The following bills were presented for payment:

Consumers Energy	\$ 345.08 (streetlights)
Robert Toland Consulting	\$ 1,200.00 (retainer & meeting fee)
H2Oasis	\$ 1,891.94 (start-up and some repairs)
Van's Mechanical Contractors	\$ 5,750.00 (replaced 3 pressure vacuum breakers)
Isenhardt Electric	\$38,784.00 (replaced 85 Satco lamps on light poles)
Wenger Pavilion donation	\$ 1,500.00 (matching 2024 donation)
Village of Baldwin	\$ 771.65 (water bills)
Total bills	\$50,242.67

The Board had a discussion on the Wenger Pavilion donation, noting that it used to be \$1,000.00 but was raised to \$1,500.00 last year. Jane Allison made a motion, seconded by Seth Wenger, to make a \$1,500.00 donation. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The Board held a discussion regarding paying dues to be a member of the Michigan Downtown Association. Dues have gone up from \$100.00 to around \$400.00; it was determined that there are not enough benefits to justify the expense as non-members can still take advantage of the classes offered. A motion was made by Andy Gremel, seconded by

Seth Wenger, to allow any interested Board member to attend MDA's classes/meetings and be reimbursed the registration fee and mileage to attend.

A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report with amendments and pay the bills presented was made by Andy Gremel and supported by Harold Nichols.

D. Committee reports:

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

The Markette is very thankful for the support and help provided by Lake Osceola State Bank. The DISCOVER LOCAL. SUPPORT LOCAL. brochure is ready for distribution and contains a map to 31 participating businesses, listing their Wednesday special and how to enter a drawing at the Markette for up to \$1,000.00 in gift cards. There is also a flyer for businesses to hand out during the Blessing of the Bikes to encourage attendees of this event to return over the summer.

The Family Health Care Program has had 22 people sign up in the first week, the amount of people will be capped at 50. Participants attend the Markette's programs and earn \$10.00 in Markette "cash", up to a maximum of \$120.00, which can be used to purchase fruit and vegetables at the Markette. The program has the ability to track how they do and the impact of the program on participants. A similar program through the Rotary, "Power of Produce for Kids", is funded by Lake Osceola State Bank and allows kids to earn "cash" for fruits and vegetables at the Markette.

The banner at 902 went up last night, promotions are ramping up and they are ready for the season. There are 32 committed vendors right now, but vendors often drop out and others add on from week to week. Harold noted that they now have a full complement of volunteers to set up and tear down the Markette each week. Meredith reported that the SNAP application has been submitted; this program has brought in \$500-\$1,000 to vendors in similar size markets.

b. Streetscape: Andy reports that everything is moving along, but they are holding back a little due to the Blessing of the Bikes.

E. Acknowledge Communications: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD COMMENTS: None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Trees, Flowerboxes & Irrigation System: Jane reported that the water was turned on last Monday, but to her understanding was turned back off during the Blessing of the Bikes weekend. Harold said the water was not turned off, but that the timer was repaired; everyone agreed that if the timer was working there was no need for the water to be turned off.

A packet of the quotes from 2005-2008 was handed out for review. Jane had spoken with Randi and asked for everything to be weeded and cleaned-up prior to the Blessing of the Bikes, but it is not done. Andy reported that the area around the trout sculpture is not done either. Jane suggested making a plan each fall for spring expectations, spelling out who is responsible for the different tasks/areas. A discussion followed regarding this and the

merchants not keeping their store fronts clean and in good repair, possibly a need to hire someone to do the sidewalks so the entire area looks good. Harold agreed, the Village is talking about cleaning up the back parking lots this year just to get it done. MDOT has limitations on what can be done on M37 and they have ended the practice of water trucks doing the street sweeping and now just use dry sweeping and shovels, creating a dust bowl that increases the problem with the store fronts. MDOT is aware of the issue but due to cost do not intend to change. Harold wondered about the possibility of having the store owners take over caring for the flower boxes in front of their stores, but Seth and Andy have both talked to store owners who don't want the boxes in front of their stores in the first place and would not be willing.

Harold spoke with the irrigation company about remedies for the lack of irrigation beyond 7th Street; there are some but they are expensive and perhaps undesirable. Tree roots have been crushing the conduit as the trees grow and it will continue to affect other pipes and push up the sidewalk as well. Trees and sidewalks could be removed to avoid having to cut off more piping; Jane noted that the trees were just now becoming large enough to provide shade. Harold said that directional boring would solve the issue but is expensive. A decision will need to be made on what piping to fix and what piping should just be cut off and abandoned.

- B. 8th Street Upgrade:** This is on hold until after the Blessing of the Bikes.
- C. Ideas for the next project:** Continuing with the maintenance projects as determined last month. Harold was contacted by both the Pleasant Plains and Webber Township Fire Departments and they would like the siren put back in working order. They are exploring grants and other funding to pay for it and are hoping the DDA would contribute. Harold asked them to come to Board when they have more information on other funding.
- D. Match on Main program:** The State should make a decision on 6/26/25.
- E. Security/Trail Camera/Sound System/Museum:** Seth went over the three camera systems he researched; it would be a stand-alone system attached to a light pole facing the trout sculpture. Harold is concerned about who would be responsible for keeping the recordings as they would be subject to FOIA requests and would need to be kept available. Discussion on whether the museum or an individual, not subject to FOIA, would be interested in operating the security system if the DDA donated the equipment. Bob will talk with someone at the museum to see if they have any interest.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A.** Samantha Mariuz with Fleis and Vandenbrink attended [via](#) ZOOM and gave a presentation on her qualifications and how they could help. She suggested doing an analysis on the Baldwin DDA and put together a package, speak with the downtown merchants, and make sure everyone is on the same page. They would look at where the DDA has been, where they could go for growth and help prioritize how money is used in regards to best practices. Andy asked her to confirm that they work with smaller communities, she affirmed this and mentioned several, including Reed City and Marion. Harold is interested in pursuing grant programs, Samantha confirmed that they help with writing grants, it's one of the things that makes their company unique. [A motion was made by Andy Gremel to approve the proposal, seconded by Jane Allison. Motion carried](#)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was offered by Seth Wenger and supported by Andy Gremel. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 4:09 PM.

Meeting Schedule: The next regular DDA meeting will be held June 19, 2025, at the Village office at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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