

**Village of Baldwin
Downtown Development Authority
March 19, 2026 Minutes
Regular Meeting
(approved)**

CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call: Jane Allison called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM with Board Members:

Present: Jane Allison, Debbie Smith-Olson, Darci Maldonado, Harold Nichols, and Joy Parrott.

Absent: Josh Johnson, Tony Gagliardo, Andy Gremel, and Seth Wenger

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

Acknowledgement of Visitors: Jodi Nichols and Grace Knickerbocker

GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Approval of Agenda: A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Harold Nichols and supported by Jane Allison; motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the **January 15, 2026** regular meeting minutes was made by Jane Allison, supported by Darci Maldonado; motion carried unanimously.

C. Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills: Debbie Smith-Olson presented the Treasurer's Report as two separate reports to cover February and March due to February ending the fiscal year. The report through 2/19/26 indicated a General Fund beginning balance on 12/11/25 of \$299,274.34, paying January bills totaling \$11,787.72 and adding income of \$24.28 for December and January interest, leaving a General Fund balance of \$287,510.90. The CD has a principal balance of \$102,362.11 and will mature on 6/23/26, bringing the total fund balance to \$389,873.01.

The report through 3/19/26 indicated a General Fund beginning balance on 2/19/26 of \$287,510.90, paying February bills totaling \$15,067.05 and adding \$10.76 for February interest, leaving a General Fund balance of \$272,454.61. Adding in the CD balance of \$103,303.84 brings the balance to \$375,758.45. The February bills paid included \$124.50 to Fleis & Vandenbrink; it is believed this was for a phone consultation with Harold, he will verify and report back next month. Also included are two payments to the Village; \$3,000 for the DDA portion of the 2025-2026 audit and \$10,000 for the 2025-2026 maintenance agreement. The rest of the bills paid were the monthly water, electric and R. Toland's consulting fee (\$850.00 as there was no February meeting).

The following bills were presented for payment:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Consumers Energy | \$ 337.80 |
| Robert Toland Consulting | \$ 1,650.00 (retainer & March meeting fee) |
| Intuit QuickBooks | \$??? (unsure of exact amount but less than last year) |
| Joni Luce | \$ 120.00 (minutes for BIG committee meeting) |
| Village of Baldwin | \$ 688.35 (water bills, service fee for meters) |
| Bond interest payment | \$ 5,147.75 (scheduled interest payment due 4/1) |

TOTAL FOR APPROVAL \$ 7,943.90, plus approval to renew QuickBooks

Darci Maldonado made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports and approve the payment of bills, supported by Harold Nichols. Motion carried following a unanimous roll call vote.

D. Committee Reports:

a. Pure Markette: Debbie Smith-Olson presented the budget in the absence of Meredith Gremel. The increase in projected revenue is due to both secured and expected grants, as well as in-kind billboard sponsorship. Expenditures are also expected to increase due to a large increase in Pharmacy Rx patients, day tokens, contract labor, REACH grants and paying mileage for 2025 and 2026. Some of these expenses are reimbursable. The projected Net Revenue is \$7,166.08. A motion was made by Jane Allison, seconded by Harold Nichols, to approve the Markette budget. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Traffic Calming: Nothing to report.

c. Building Improvement Grant Program: A discussion on the applicants who did not receive approval for a grant based on their incomplete applications was held. Darci was concerned that these people were denied the grant because they did not understand the requirements and that the committee should have provided more help. The others agreed that it was unfortunate that money was left on the table while applicants were denied, but that help was offered and these are business owners who should be able to follow the directions or know when to ask for help. Concern was expressed that the Board must be held accountable for spending taxpayer money and they could not in good conscience approve grossly incomplete applications. It would also set a bad precedent for possible future grant programs when there may be more applicant requests than could be funded. This was a new program and these disappointments are a learning experience for both the board and the applicants. A motion was made by Debbie Smith-Olson to approve the BIG committee's grant approvals as presented, seconded by Harold Nichols. Motion carried unanimously, with Darci voting yes with reservations.

E. Acknowledgement of Communications: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Trees, Flowerboxes & Irrigation System: Discussed the need to have a list of expectations that need to be met by the gardener; many of the complaints last year were remedied by simply making the expectations clear. Rather than create a committee, all board members are encouraged to submit a list of what they believe should be included and send it to Bob by next Friday. Bob will then compile these into one list to present to Randi Gould, who has been doing a good job the last few years, to give a price for this season based on these expectations. The list can also be used to put out a Request for Proposal on gardening services each year.

B. Match On Main Program: The deadline to submit applications to the State this year is April 20. Vendors were given a deadline for early April to submit their applications to the review committee, who will then choose two applications to submit to the State.

C. Dead Tree Removal: Nothing to report.

D. Lake County Economic Development: Jodi reported that there is a lot going on behind the scenes. She will bring a report next month.

E. Light Pole Replacement near Road Commission: Nothing to report.

F. 2026/2027 Budget: A discussion was held on the proposed budget. The budgeted amount for the banner poles may be much higher than necessary, as it is possible that wooden poles could be used instead, saving a great deal of money. It is also possible that the amount needed for the Traffic Calming island could be fully covered by MDOT, with the board only responsible for the cost of moving and storing the island for the winter. The secretarial services for taking minutes was discussed, with it being unclear whether the DDA or Toland Consulting was responsible for the minutes. Jane Allison made a motion to table the discussion until that could be determined, while agreeing to pay the Recording Secretary for the BIG committee minutes and today's minutes. The motion, seconded by Darci Maldonado, passed unanimously. It was agreed that the budget provided for lots of cushion on several projects, but with the actual costs unknown the budgeted amounts would be left in place for now and reallocated later. A motion to approve the budget as presented was made by Jane Allison, seconded by Darci Maldonado; motion carried unanimously.

G. DDA/Village Maintenance Agreement: A written agreement for public works services between the DDA and the Village of Baldwin was presented. Appendix A contained a list of work items that included some items that the Village/Contractors will not want to provide. Jane Allison made a motion, seconded by Debbie Smith-Olson, to table the Agreement until the details of the expected work items can be resolved. Motion carried unanimously.

H. Banner Poles: This was talked about during the budget discussion. Placement of banner poles may need to be in a new location due to the Railroad's expansion plans.

NEW BUSINESS :

A. Ron Rademacher Podcast Update: A letter was shared regarding the Historic Baldwin Podcast and other communications available from Michigan Backroads.

B. DDA Secretarial Services Agreement: This was tabled under Old Business, Section F, Budget discussion.

C. Sidewalk Grinding: Jane reported that she has talked to the Contractor, and will get them the needed information after the snow melts. They want pictures and direction about what to do with existing tree roots that are creating problems.

D. Legal Fees for Potash Zoning: Harold reported that the Village signed an agreement with Foster Swift regarding legal advice on whether the current zoning is legally defensible. He is expecting it to cost around \$2,500.00 and conveyed this to the law firm. This stems from the Railroads plans to provide an area for loading and unloading Potash from semi-trucks to railroad cars, and whether they will use their back property or land closer to the downtown. It is hoped that zoning will keep them from having the heavy truck traffic in the downtown/residential area. A motion was made by Jane Allison, seconded by Debbie Smith-Olson, to share the cost of the legal opinion with the Village. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Match on Main Committee Meeting: Harold will get with Jodi on her schedule between April 8-10 to set a date for the Committee to select two applications to submit to the State. Applications are due to the DDA by 4/6/26 at 5:00 p.m.; Jodi wanted to meet as a committee by 4/13/26 to have time to properly submit them to the State by the 4/20/26 deadline.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was offered by Joy Parrott and supported by Jane Allison; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 PM.

Meeting Schedule: The next regular DDA meeting will be held April 16, 2026, at the Village office at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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