Village of Baldwin
Downtown Development Authority
July 16, 2026 Minutes
Regular Meeting
(approved)

CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call: Jane Allison called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM with Board Members:

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

Absent: Joy Parrott and two vacancies.

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

Acknowledgement of Visitors: Meredith Gremel, Pure Markette; Jeremy Anderson, Webber Township Fire Chief; and Jake Carter, Newaygo County Emergency Management Director.

GENERAL BUSINESS

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

B. Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the **June 18, 2026** regular meeting minutes was made by Harold Nichols, supported by Andy Gremel; motion carried unanimously.

C. Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills: Debbie Smith-Olson presented the Treasurer's Report and presentation of bills. The report through 7/16/26 indicated a General Fund beginning balance on 6/18/26 of $330,136.83, paying June bills totaling $4,491.29 and adding income of $13.22 for June interest, leaving a General Fund balance of $325,658.76. The CD has a principal balance of $104,546.33, bringing the total fund balance to $430,205.09. The CD rolled over in June and will mature on January 23,2027.

The following bills were presented for payment:

Consumers Energy	$ 240.90
Robert Toland Consulting	$ 1,250.00 (retainer & July meeting fee)
Baldwin Troutarama, Inc.	$ 5,000.00 (grant for porta-johns & Viking fishing village)
Lake County Historical Society	$ 5,000.00 (grant for replacing front porch posts)
Debbie Smith-Olson	$ 1,241.47 (reimbursement for QuickBooks)
Village of Baldwin	$ 1,310.30 (four water bills, service fee and usage)
TOTAL FOR APPROVAL	**$14,042.67**

The payment for QuickBooks is a reimbursement to Debbie as she used her credit card to pay for the renewal. Seth Wenger made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and approve the payment of bills, supported by Harold Nichols. Motion carried following a unanimous roll call vote.

D. Committee Reports:

a. Pure Markette: Meredith Gremel gave a report on the status of the Markette. The account balance is $44,454.56. Upcoming expenditures of reimbursements to vendors for vouchers and tokens are covered by grants and sponsorships. The Markette was cancelled on 6/24 due to weather, but the 7/1 Independence Day celebration had the largest crowd to date, over 620 people, despite a 94 degree day. A special thanks was given for the Pleasant Plains Twp Fire Department running fire hose "sprinklers". The 92 degree temperatures on 7/8, however, did decrease both attendees and vendors, as many vendors found their products did not hold up in the extreme heat. The next advisory board meeting is scheduled for 8/13/26; the final Markette day will be 9/2/26.

b. Traffic Calming: Andy reported that the REACH grant of $5,000.00 was approved.

c. Building Improvement Grant Program: No report on status.

E. Acknowledgement of Communications: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD COMMENT: Harold reported that Karl (Doug) Walls has agreed to join the board, filling one of the vacancies, but was unable to attend this meeting due to a death in the family. Andy noted that the Troutarama sign on the fence looks great.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Trees, Flowerboxes & Irrigation System: Contract has been finalized.

B. Lake County Economic Development: Nothing new to report.

C. DDA/Village Maintenance Agreement: Some minor changes were made to the Agreement and the Village has signed; just need the DDA to sign and it will be complete.

D. Banner Poles: The existing permit remains valid as long as the poles are located on the south side of the RR tracks, making sure they are outside the clearance required for the tracks and crossing arms. Wooden poles are approved per the permit, although they do need to be engineered. Hydaker-Wheatlake is the preferred contractor; MDOT suggested them as they have done projects very similar with good results. Miss Dig will need to be contacted to locate anything buried near the desired locations.

E. Sidewalk Grinding: Harold will investigate a local company, Fresh Coast Foam, LLC, to see if the method of using foam to lift the low portions of the sidewalk rather than grinding would be a better method for the project.

F. RRC – Julia Turnbull: This is on hold pending Planning Commission action.

G. DDA Board Member vacancies: Harold reported that Karl (Doug) Walls has agreed to join the board; all board members encouraged to keep seeking to fill the remaining seat.

H. Tornado Warning Siren: Jeremy Anderson, Webber Twp Fire Chief, and Jake Carter, Newaygo County Emergency Management Director, were available to answer questions. Jake reported that the County has done a population study and determined that the placement of two sirens in Baldwin, with one each in Irons, Idlewild, Luther and Lake Township, would best serve the County, although they are not looking at implementing the placement of any of the sirens themselves. There is only one working siren at this time, in Lake Township, and that one is quite old. The DDA would not spend funds on a siren that is not located within the district; placing two sirens within the district would provide a greater total coverage, but would also have a large area that is served by both. Due to the possibility of a quantity purchase discount, Bob will prepare a letter of support for Jake to reach out to the other four locations to see if there is any interest in joining the project. If there is not, the DDA will purchase one siren to serve the DDA and surrounding areas. Sirens are currently activated by Central Dispatch, but they have no interest in purchasing or maintaining them.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Sounds of the Forest: Darci requested that the DDA consider increasing the grant to $5,000.00, the same amount given to Troutarama and the Historical Museum, from the $1,500.00 previously approved. The DDA will give this consideration after receiving a financial report from Sounds of the Forest, showing where they stand now and where the funds are needed.

B. Homeless encampments: The pavilion and other areas are problem areas for the homeless and the trash they leave, including good food that they don't like from food pantries. Cameras are already in place and trash is picked up as often as possible, people are verbally asked to leave but they just return later. Fencing off the areas are not practical or ideal; the DDA is open to suggestions on how to resolve the issue.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was offered by Seth Wenger and supported by Darci Maldonado; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 PM.

Meeting Schedule: The next regular DDA meeting will be held August 20, 2026, at the Village office at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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