

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 8:15 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:16 AM with Chair Matteo Passalacqua presiding.

A. Roll Call Taken and Quorum Determined

Present: Desiree Dutcher
Katie Forte
Scott Francis
Lucas Gonzalez
Anna Grace
Chris Gross
Shawn Heath-Lee
Matteo Passalacqua
Ashley Poirier
Todd Schaefer
Crystal VanVleck

Absent: Katie Goodwin – *excused*
Uli Laczkovich – *excused*
Brian Zifkin – *excused*

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director
Nate Mack, DDA Executive Director
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Richard Pzeczkowski, DPW Liaison

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Grace moved to approve the Agenda, Schaefer seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2025

Poirier moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 10, 2025, Forte seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Financial Reports for September 2025

Gross reported the audit hasn't been finished yet. She reported year-to-date revenues of @\$459,000 and expenditures of @\$49,000 (nothing out of the ordinary). The ending fund balance after September 2025 was @\$660,000.

Grace moved to receive and approve the Treasurer's Report for September 2025, Poirier seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Budget Amendment for FY 25-26

Mack reported that with property values and subsequently property taxes increasing more than originally projected, TIF revenues for the DDA are anticipated to be @35,000 more than the budget approved for fiscal year 2025/26, requiring the DDA to approve a budget amendment reflecting that. This amended amount will be applied to the DDA property taxes account 248-001-402-001 with the amended total for that account being @\$520,000 for the year 2025-26.

Passalacqua moved to approve the proposed budget amendment, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Application Update

Kapelanski reported that the developer of the Coolidge-Columbia PUD had applied for the PILOT program and that the application will be reviewed by City Council at a work session on October 20. The DDA can make a recommendation on the application but has no decision making power over it.

Passalacqua solicited the Board's input to determine the overall sentiment of Board members in terms of favoring PILOT approval or opposing it. He noted there are pros and cons for both decisions. If the application is approved, the DDA will receive less funds over the term of the agreement than it would with TIF funding, but it is expected that if the project moves forward it will spur downtown development and increase foot traffic and economic activity, especially in that area of the downtown district. The project developer would make a \$40,000.00 contribution to the DDA for the Coolidge road study.

The Board agreed that it supports a 15 year term and was open to revisiting extensions, but was not in favor of a 45-year PILOT.

Dutcher moved to authorize Mack to draft a statement reflecting the DDA's position, Forte seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Frank's Landscaping Winter Barrels

Mack reported that Frank's is quoting a price of \$10,320 to create 48 winter barrel decorations. It is believed that last year's price was \$8,800.00, but that couldn't be confirmed.

Passalacqua moved to counter Frank's \$10,320.00 quote and propose a price of \$8,800.00 for 48 winter barrel decorations, Poirier seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

On a separate note, it was reported that Garden Central was sold and that a landscaping/craft business will take its place.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported that Council met Monday 10/6. They approved plans for the Holiday Parade and other seasonal events, and that the Historical Commission is planning a Rosemont Cemetery tour on October 18. He thanked the volunteers who painted a trail at the Dorothea pocket park.

B. Community Development – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported that the Rite Aid building slated to become a Roxy Entertainment venue will be going before the Planning Commission for a preliminary plan review.

C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner

In Kempner's absence, Kapelanski reported that Mug and Jug's redevelopment plan at 12 Mile and Greenfield will need special land use approval.

D. Public Works – Richard Pzczkowski

Pzczkowski had nothing to report.

E. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad reported that he will continue as the Chamber's DDA liaison. Upcoming events are a Chamber Chat and the State of the City breakfast. The Chamber is focusing on a membership push.

VIII. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Gonzalez reported that Homecoming is coming up, and Francis reported that construction projects around the District's schools are moving along well.

IX. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Art & Design Committee

The committee did not meet.

Oakland County will need to know details of the allocation for the Robina project funds.

1. Subcommittee West 12 Mile

No report.

B. Business Development Committee

No report.

C. Events Committee

Poirier reported BOO!kley activities are ongoing all month with skeleton decorating underway and Ghost Chase coming up. She praised Kempner's overall contributions and noted there is a residential "boneyard" decoration program ongoing in the neighborhoods.

D. Marketing Committee

Grace reported good returns on the survey sent to Board members, noting suggestions about increasing foot traffic downtown and having more social spaces. She thanked everyone who returned surveys.

E. Organization Committee

No report.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

Mack met with the MSOC staff to review the Robina Placemaking Project guidelines; project must be completed by September 2026, and so he will be working on that over the winter.

He attended the Michigan Downtown Association walking tour of the Grand Haven DDA district on 9/25 and brainstormed with DDA attendees from around the state.

He will be attending the national Main Street benchmarking trip with representatives from surrounding metro Detroit communities in Orlando, Florida, scheduled for 11/17-11/19.

MSOC is providing free design expertise to the developers of the Berkley Theatre property.

The DDA web site was temporarily down because of the need to migrate the director's e-mail address from the old host to the City of Berkley.

He's also updating his 90-day plan and working on updates to the TIF plan. The City's new legal team is reviewing the Farmer's Market settlement agreements. The Oakland Press called with questions about the market.

XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

Gross noted that the web site needs information about the Mural and Façade Improvement grants.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The opportunity for public comment was offered. No requests to comment were made at the meeting. Anyone with comments or questions is asked to e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 AM on motion by Poirier and second by Grace.