

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday, August 13, 2025, 8:15 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:15 AM with Vice-Chair Desiree Dutcher presiding.

A. Roll Call Taken and Quorum Determined

Present: Desiree Dutcher
Katie Forte
Scott Francis
Anna Grace
Chris Gross
Shawn Heath-Lee
Uli Laczkovich
Ashley Poirier
Todd Schaefer
Crystal VanVleck
Brian Zifkin

Absent: Matteo Passalacqua – *excused*
Lucas Gonzalez – *excused*
Katie Goodwin – *excused*

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Janine Braun, Artsy Umbrella
Jennifer Finney, Interim DDA Executive Director
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director
Lisa Kempner, Planning Commission Liaison
Richard Pzczkowski, DPW
Jessica Stover, Director, Human Resources, City of Berkley

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

VanVleck moved to approve the Agenda, Forte seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting Minutes of July 9, 2025

Poirier moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 9, 2025, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Financial Reports for July 2025

Gross reported revisions to previously reported totals (year-end adjustments) resulting in net revenues available for use of @\$32,000 and an ending fund balance of @\$241,000. For July 2025, she reported not much happened with no revenues reported yet and expenditures of @\$16,000.00 (benefits, salaries, flowers, and marketing). The ending fund balance after July 2025 was @\$225,000.

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

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. 12 Mile Road and Coolidge Highway Brick Work Quote

Finney reported that at the June meeting, she presented the one quote she had received for the brick work repair at the 12 Mile/Coolidge shopping strip, probably damaged by a vehicle entering or leaving the adjacent parking lot. The Board wanted to see additional quotes, and she was able to obtain quotes from two additional contractors, which she included in the Board's information packet.

City insurance covers the repair, with a \$10,000.00 deductible. The City's Facilities Manager worked with Finney reviewing the quotes and visiting the site. The Board has the option to merely repair the wall or rebuild it completely and should consider ongoing maintenance.

There was discussion about which option the insurance company would cover and whether Berkley should hire a public adjuster to make the decision about what "needs" to be done.

Zifkin moved to discuss the brick repair further once the DDA hears back from the insurance company, Laczkovich seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Farmers Market Coordinator Settlement

Finney reported she met with the Organization Committee and City Manager, and they recommended to directly pay back the vendors who had paid to register for the 2025 markets, and to allow Braun, the former market coordinator, to keep the funds she's collected. They also recommended that the DDA purchase the marketing materials already produced from Braun, for a total of \$5,844.57.

The City Attorney approved the settlement and will produce a release for all parties to sign.

Zifkin moved to approve a payment of \$5,844.57 to resolve former Farmers Market Coordinator Janine Braun's claims, VanVleck seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Robina Placemaking Project Plan

Finney reported that the Board had previously indicated that it was in favor of the Robina design concept (funded in part by an Oakland County grant), and she had been tasked with obtaining quotes for some of the design elements: concrete striping, landscaping, mural update (where paint is peeling), and lighting. DPW, Community Development, and the Art & Design Committee reviewed the concept again and the quotations.

Finney suggested the next step is to fine tune the plan with Mack, the new director, and then present the plan to the new Rite Aid building owners so that all involved are working together.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported that Council's meeting on 8/4/25 was brief. Staff is undergoing training on their new software. Council interviewed four law firms and found them impressive. The City is looking forward to the annual 12 Mile Cruise Fest of classic cars on 8/15. On behalf of the City he thanked Finney for her work filling in as Interim DDA Director while the permanent Director search was underway.

B. Community Development – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported that Roxy Entertainment has an agreement to purchase the old Rite Aid building that housed the Berkley Theatre. They have another venue in Rochester with a bar and restaurant,

and offer regular live entertainment (bands/concerts). They plan a similar venue for the Berkley location and will need special land use approval. There's municipal parking adjacent to the building and they will work with Berkley First about their adjoining lot when church is not in session. The new owners are enthusiastic about the theatre marquee section of the property and making improvements to the entryway/ticket office.

C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner

Kempner reported there was no meeting.

D. Public Works – Richard Pzeczowski

Pzeczowski had nothing to report.

E. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Absent – no report.

VIII. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Absent – no reports. Francis reported athletes had returned to campus, and there would be a staff meeting on 8/19.

IX. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Art & Design Committee

Finney reported the committee met and discussed the Robina North project. There was also a review of the brick work repair needed at 12 and Coolidge.

1. Subcommittee West 12 Mile

Zifkin reported speaking with the realtor working on the Alco sale.

B. Business Development Committee

No report.

C. Events Committee

The trolley ran for Ladies Night Out, and several ladies reported how much they enjoyed this event. Kempner reported BOO!kley plans are underway.

D. Marketing Committee

Grace reported holding brainstorming sessions.

E. Organization Committee

Francis noted they had been busy on the new Executive Director hiring as well as the settlement with the Farmers Market Coordinator, Janine Braun.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

A. Berkley Theatre Marquee

VanVleck reported the lights have all been tested prior to Cruise Fest on 8/15.

B. DDA Audit and Priorities

Finney reported working with the new Director, Mack, on the next direction for the DDA.

C. Executive Director Transition and Thanks

Finney reported that Mack's start date is August 18. She will continue to follow up with him on orientation in a two week transition. Two meet-and-greet meetings will be open to everyone on 8/22 and 8/27. VanVleck reported Finney will be treated to dinner on Sept. 10.

XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

Francis extended his and the Board's thanks to Finney for her excellent service.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The opportunity for public comment was offered. Braun thanked the DDA for resolving payment issues for her Farmers Market coordinator work. No additional 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 9:09 AM on motion by Francis and second by Poirier.