

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday, June 11, 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 Chair Matteo Passalacqua presiding.

A. Roll Call Taken and Quorum Determined

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

Absent: Uli Laczkovich – *excused*
Brian Zifkin – *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
Dan McMinn, Parks & Recreation
Adam Wozniak, Berkley DPW Liaison

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2025

Dutcher moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 14, 2025, Heath-Lee seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Financial Reports for May 2025

Gross reported revenues of @\$490,000, expenses of @\$492,000, resulting in available revenues for use of @-\$2,000 and a fund balance of @\$207,000. Gross noted that makes it appear that @\$90,000 can be spent on the flower program this year. For budget-to-actual the DDA' revenues are @\$32,000, the tax capture portion being higher than projected and expenses were @\$32,000 over budget. There are still some projected expenses that haven't been allocated, including those

budgeted for the Robina Project. The expense to maintain ArtSpace wasn't included in the budget as well.

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

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Mural Application – EMRI

Finney reported that EMRI (Coolidge) has submitted an application for a Mural award of \$4,500.00 (the total cost of the proposed mural), and representations were included in the board packet. The artist chosen is new to the DDA mural program but not new to Berkley mural painting. The Board liked the graphic and visibility, and the Art & Design Committee recommended approving it.

The owner has already made other improvements to their location and has no extra cash to contribute to having the mural painted.

This would be the last mural application reviewed before previously discussed rules change in the upcoming year.

After discussion and noting upcoming revisions to the mural program requirements, Passalacqua noted he'd approve an award of 50% of the total request, or \$2,250.00. Poirier suggested that, going forward, the DDA create a matrix and point system for evaluating future applications, and the Art & Design Committee uses a similar approach in deciding which applications to bring to the Board.

Passalacqua moved to approve the mural application of EMRI for an amount up to \$2,250.00, or no more than fifty percent of the final cost, and Poirier seconded. On a roll call vote, Francis, Gross, Heath-Lee, Passalacqua, Poirier, Schaefer, and VanVleck voted in favor, Dirkse, Dutcher, Forte, and Grace voted against, and the motion was approved by a 7 to 4 vote of the Board.

It was stressed that the Board expressly detail the conditions of the approval with the applicant-owner.

Finney reported that going forward (after 2025/26) the Art & Design Committee will be proactively reaching out to building/business owners to sell them on the opportunity the mural program presents and encouraging them to "put some skin in the game."

B. MoGo

Finney reported that after discussions with MoGo, she learned the cost to continue the MoGo program would be \$19,952.00 and \$4,186.00 to remove the stations, \$600.00 to de-brand the bikes, and MoGo is interested in buying the bikes back from the DDA for \$120.00/bike. The level of ridership in Berkley has been low.

After discussion, the Board agreed to end the program, ask MoGo to take back all of their bikes and equipment, and pay nothing more to them.

Schaefer moved to end the Berkley MoGo program and pay them no additional money, Dirkse seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

C. 12 Mile and Coolidge Brick Work

Finney reported discussing with Alex Brown, the city's facilities manager, the issues at the 12 Mile/Coolidge shopping center (north side) where the brick work is crumbling, possibly being damaged by a vehicle. Brown said one contractor quoted a cost of \$16,350.00 to reset all of the brick work, and Brown said another option is to slightly change the design of the repair at a cost of \$11,370.00. Schaefer had knowledge of what's involved, and he suggested getting other contractors to contact for a bid, and he would work with Finney on that.

Dutcher moved to have Finney get more bids on the brick work and research insurance coverage, Dirkse seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

D. Farmer's Market

Finney reported that she had received from Braun the terms she would request in a contract to coordinate the market this year: Approximately \$25,000 for the season (through October 2025). There was extensive discussion at the meeting as to whether to accept Braun's terms or continue to research the best way to structure any farmers markets and continue the pause for this season.

Braun noted she has already incurred expenses trying to prepare for this season, Since January, she has been making contacts with vendors and preparing promotional materials such as printing. If the Board decides to continue the pause, she was asking to be reimbursed for those expenses and suggested the DDA pay her @\$10,000. Passalacqua told her to itemize the expenses and present a bill to the DDA.

Gross suggested that the DDA's role is actually more like a "sponsor" of the event. Passalacqua supports the market but wants to see more of a structure before approving a contract with Braun to continue the season

Passalacqua moved to continue the Farmer's Market pause for the 2025 season while continuing to research on how it should be restructured in the future, Dutcher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

At that point in the meeting Dirkse had to leave to open her store. Passalacqua announced that it was her last meeting as her term had expired, and she elected not to reapply. He noted she had been an Invaluable member of the DDA, On behalf of the Board, he thanked her not only for her Board service as well as her service to the community.

E. Holiday Lights

Finney had included information about LeClerc's proposal to decorate Downtown Berkley for the 2025 holiday season at a cost of \$40,545.00. Several new options were included in their proposal with some added locations for the decorations.

Board members and visitors discussed what they liked and disliked about prior years' decorations, including the color schemes, and it was agreed to delay final approval of the design details until another meeting.

Passalacqua moved to approve LeClerc's proposal for the Holiday Lights at a cost of \$40,545.00, with the final direction (colors/designs) coming from the Art & Design Committee, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 3180 Coolidge Façade Grant

Finney reported that this grant was already approved by the Board, and construction at the location is ongoing. They need additional time and are asking for an extension to finish and receive the award funds (\$10,000.00).

The item was included on the agenda so it could be discussed, and no Board vote was required.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported that Council met on June 2 and recognized and thanked all City volunteers. An appreciation lunch was held for City volunteers (including the DDA Board) and a proclamation was issued honoring Jack Blanchard for all of his work supporting Berkley. The Greenfield Presbyterian Church has an ongoing gun buy-back program, and the guns collected are then scrapped and made into art objects. There will be a dedication ceremony to honor former Berkley mayor Maybelle Fraser on July 7 at the gazebo. Council will discuss the handbook being created for Board and Commission members. The Historical Commission is planning their cemetery tour on Oct. 18 and has plans for more events including a scavenger hunt.

B. Community Development – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported the revised plan for the Columbia/Coolidge PUD is being reviewed. The proposed sale of the former Rite Aid building to Wayne Wudyka fell through and so the fate of the Theatre Marquee is still up in the air.

C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner

Kempner reported the Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposal from Mug & Jug on 12 Mile to consolidate the space from their current location to Greenfield and add a gas station and eatery. Other approvals are still required (ZBA, Council).

Public Works – Adam Wozniak

Wozniak reported DPW is getting ready for the Art Bash and the closure of Dorothea for the new packet park.

D. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Absent – no report.

VIII. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Gonzalez reported he had communicated with their NHS advisor about rules for student volunteer (hours, etc.), and he said someone from the Board should contact the advisor about ways the students can volunteer to improve the downtown. Francis will follow up.

Goodwin reported that BHS is celebrating Pride Month and kicking off the Summer Reading program.

BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

A. Art & Design Committee

1. Subcommittee West 12 Mile

Finney reported she will set up a June meeting for all the committees to start on their work plans.

B. Business Development Committee – No report.

C. Events Committee – No report.

D. Marketing Committee – No report.

E. Organization Committee – No report.

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

A. Mural Program Update

Finney reported this is ongoing.

B. Robina Placemaking Project

Finney reported she's still gathering quotes.

C. Pilot Pocket Park – Dorothea

VanVleck reported block party events will kick off the opening weekend. Many events are on the City's Web site and volunteers are needed.

D. Berkley Theatre Marquee

Finney reported maintenance work is complete, and they have DTE bills detailing how much it costs to light the marquee.

E. Thank You, Donna

Before she left, the Board joined together to thank her for her long service

X. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

None.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The opportunity for public comment was offered, and 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.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 AM on motion by Poirier and second by Grace.