Downtown Management Board & Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting

Wednesday, September 12th, 2025

301 Washington Ave. Bay City, MI 48708 Room 317 8:00 AM

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

DMB	DDA
_✓_ Jeff Hildebrant	_✓_ Daniel Dimitroff
_✓_ Magen Samyn	_✓_ John Neeb
_✓_ Scott Nemode	_✓_ Jesse Kendall
_✓_ Howie Diefenbach	_✓_ Chris Girard
_✓_ Avram Golden	_✓_ Nick Schwall
_✓_ Jennifer Stasser	_ex_ Paul Wiese
_✓_ Cassidy Bouchard	_✓_ Sheila Turbett
_✓_ Tricia Coonan	_ex_ Jamie Ralph
_ex_ Alex Weiss	_✓_ Jean Ann DeShano
_✓_ Sara Dimitroff	_✓_ Jim Reaume
	_✓_ Terry Moultane

2. Approval of the Agenda

a. DDA Approval of the Agenda
    1. Motion to approve the agenda by J. Reaume, supported by C. Girard. Motion carried.
b. DMB Approval of the Agenda
    1. Motion to approve the agenda by H. Diefenbach, supported by S. Nemode. Motion carried.

3. Review and Approval of Minutes

a. **DDA Approval of August 2025 Minutes**
   Motion to approve the August 2025 minutes by J. Reaume, supported by J. DeShano. Motion carried.
b. **DMB Approval of August 2025 Minutes**
   Motion to approve the August 2025 minutes by T. Coonan supported by M. Samyn. Motion carried.
c. **DDA Receipt of Financials**
   Motion to receive the financial reports by C. Girard, supported by J. DeShano. Motion carried.
d. **DMB Receipt of Financials**
   Financial reports were not received.

4. Public Input - No public Input

5. Director & Committee Reports

a. Rupp Report
b. Events Committee Report
c. Parking Committee Report
d. Marketing Committee Report
e. Beautification Committee Report
f. Michigan Main Street

6. Action Items

a. **DDA Accounts Payable**
   Motion to approve accounts payable as presented by J. Reaume, supported by S. Turbett. Motion carried.

b. **DMB Accounting**
    i. The DMB reviewed service proposals from Rehmann and Boge. M. Samyn made a motion to proceed with Boge, which was seconded by J. Hildebrant. The motion carried unanimously.
c. **DDA RFQ Update**
The DDA RFP has been posted on the Michigan Downtown Association website, Hey Bay City, the DDA website, and MLive. To date, there has been interest from two potential prospects.
d. Downtown Beautification Award
    i. The DDA and DMB were given sheets to cast their vote for the Downtown Beautification award for retail and restaurant/bar.

7. City District Updates

- Terry Moultane reported that the Planning Commission will begin reviewing chapters of the new zoning ordinance at its meeting on September 24.
- Sara Dimitroff noted that the DMB special assessment requires updating for 2025–2029 and will collaborate with Kellie and the board to complete this process.
- Chris Girard shared that the 3rd Ward commission seat is currently vacant. He also highlighted upcoming community events: a city-wide Halloween decorating contest and a Health Walk and Health Fair on October 11 in Wenonah Park.

8. Roundtable

- Magen Samyn shared that James Canders will be the speaker at the September 19 Eye Opener Breakfast. She also noted that the Chamber will host a Business After Hours event on November 18 at Old City Hall, presented by the Kory Agency.
- Jim Reaume announced that on November 13, the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Bay Future, and the Bay Area Community Foundation will host a free nonprofit workshop featuring Bob Harris.
- Avram Golden reminded attendees that the Farmers Market runs through October on Tuesdays from 2:00 to 6:00 PM.

9. Adjournment - 8:40 AM

a.) Rupp Report

- **Wednesdays in the Park**
  Wednesdays in the Park wrapped up on August 20th with Air Margaritaville. It was a great 2025 season and I'm looking forward to 2026. Next year, we were thinking of potentially adding 2 more shows to the tail end, to have it go later in August as it seems the weather is a little better then. Below are the pass the bucket results, I do have a week by week breakdown if anyone is interested in seeing that I'm happy to share.
- **Pass the Bucket results:**
  - **Grand total raised 2025 (9 concerts):** $18,273.50
  - **Grand total raised in 2024 (7 concerts):** $15,231.18
  - **Increase:** 3,042.32
  - On June 11, donations were split with the Bay Concert Band, and on August 13 all proceeds were directed to Brian's House.
- **Bay Metro Ridership 2025 :**
  - Eastside (Adams & 5th Lot): 11 riders
  - Westside (Vet's Park): 26 riders

- **Fridays at the Falls**
  Fridays at the Falls launched on July 4 at Third Street Waterfall Park and concluded on August 29. In collaboration with Jeff Poirier, we booked local musicians to provide free live music each week from 6:00 to 7:30 PM.
- **Health & Wellness in Wenonah Park**
  The free health and wellness classes in Wenonah Park continued to see strong participation, with 15–20 attendees per session. Kaitlyn MacGregor from Ocean Jasper has done an excellent job coordinating with instructors to offer a diverse lineup of weekend classes, including yoga, functional fitness, dance fitness, and Pilates. These classes continued through the end of August.
- **Hell's Half Mile Film Festival/ SVSUStudent Outreach**
  I am working with Sara Parker (Bay Area Chamber of Commerce) and Lex Hallberg (SVSU) to arrange transportation for students to attend this year's Hell's Half Mile Film Festival in September, helping bring more young people into Downtown Bay City. On the same day, the Food Truck Festival will be held in the Washington 6th parking lot.
- **Professional Development – IOM Scholarship Application**
  I received a $750 scholarship for the Institute for Organization Management (IOM) and have registered to attend the first week of January in Tucson. IOM, offered through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is a leadership and organizational development program designed for professionals in chambers, associations, and nonprofits to build capacity and enhance impact.
- **Office Move**
  Our office has officially moved to the Davidson Building at 916 Washington Avenue, Suite 206. The move went smoothly, and a big thank you to Jeff and his team for their help!

b.) Events Committee Report

Next Events Meeting: September 16th

In Attendance: Kellie Rupp, Tara Knipp (First Look Bridal), Kathy LaLonde (Little House), Tricia Coonan, Alex Weiss, Jeff Hildebrant

First Thursdays

- **September 4** – Pet Night
- **October** – Cider Sampling
- **November** – Food Drive with Hidden Harvest
- **December** – Possible *Find the Elf* hunt (similar to Lucky Leprechaun Hunt in March) or a Men's Night

Fall Into Autumn Open House

- September 5 & 6 - Merchants will receive slips for shoppers to turn into win one of three downtown Bay City gift certificates. Same weekend as the Fall Uptown Market.

Halloween Block Party

- **Date:** October 30, 7–10 pm
- **Activities:** Costume contest (best individual, group, couple, spookiest), games, DJ, palm reading, adult face painting, smoke machine. Kellie is in contact with merchants along Saginaw and Center who would be affected by the closure and let them know potential plans and if there would be any interest.

Other Events & Ideas

- **January & February** – Brainstorming ideas needed
- **Food Truck Festival** – September 26, 2025, Washington/6th parking lot
- Consider creating a Fall Event Bag Stuffer for merchants with upcoming events listed
- Explore possibility of a Restaurant Month/Week similar to Traverse City (look into software options)

c.) Parking Committee Report

Next Parking Meeting: October 7th, 2025

In Attendance: Kellie Rupp, John Neeb, Jean Ann DeShano, Jeff Staudacher (Jennison)

- Jeff Staudacher of the Jennison joined us as he as Kellie have been in contact with Rob Clapper from Ram Construction about the Jennison Parking structure. It was asked of us to capture the spots and mark out the leak locations so that they could be addressed Thursday (8/4)

d.) Marketing Committee Report

Next Marketing Meeting: October 1st, 2025

	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	April 2025	May 2025	June 2025	July 2025	August 2025
Facebook Content Interactions	4,400	2,599	3,700	1,500	5,100	4,600	6510	6014
Facebook Followers	30,433	30,425	30,544	30,634	30,776	30,997	31,659	31,756
Facebook Post Reach	97,700	113,900	244,087	59,900	254,409	376,818	280,626	232,437
Facebook Video Watch Time	7d 4h	13h	1d 3h	16h	3d 11 hrs	1d 20h	2d 7h	3h 22m
Instagram Followers	8,765	8,787	8,809	8848	8,900	8,960	9039	9071
Newsletter Open Rate	38%	39%	39%	39%	34%	39%	38%	39%
Constant Contact Subscribers	9879	9869	9859	9857	9852	9870	9862	9843

Small Business Month (November)

- Social Media: Post on Facebook/Instagram 2–3 times weekly
- Merchant Registration: Open in October
- Information to Collect:
    - Business name
    - How long they've been in Downtown Bay City
    - What got them into the business
    - Call to action
- Photos/Videos: Kellie & Jeff to schedule visits with businesses. Decide preference: photos vs. video.

Holiday Gift Guide (December)

- Plan to create and promote

Other Discussions

- Create a folder of press releases (new businesses, events, awards, etc.) ready to go
- Impact report from Jake's regarding summer street closure (in progress)
- Thank you letters for Wednesdays in the Park sponsors
- 2026 sponsorship form to go out by late September/early October

e.) Beautification Committee Report

Next Beautification Meeting: September 25th

In Attendance: Jeff Hildebrant, Mike Schingeck, Jean Ann DeShano, Alex Weiss, Penny Warner, Jesse Kendall

Beautification Awards

- Three categories finalized:
    - Best Restaurant/Bar
    - Best Storefront
    - People's Choice (voted on Facebook)
- Voting to take place during the September 2025 DMB/DDA board meeting
- Awards will be presented at the Merchant Mixer, September 26th

Downtown Maintenance Plan

- Mike Schingeck (SPM) proposed SPM submit a formal plan for downtown upkeep
- Plan would include 10–15 hours/week (April–October) for:
    - Weed removal
    - Maintenance at Waterfall Park
    - General downtown improvements
    - Reporting issues/problems identified

Vacant Storefront Art Displays

- Penny Warner shared initiative to use vacant storefronts for artwork
- First potential location: Water Street & Fifth (old Sempliners)

Fireplace Updates

- Bierlein Trombley Electric completed fireplace work, both units are now fully operational

f.) Michigan Main Street Report

Next Local Main Street Committee Meeting: September 16th

Next Meeting with Leigh Young (MEDC): October 1st

Completed online training series:

Chris G., Dana M., Dan D., Howie D., Jeff H., Jen S., Jesse K., Jim R., Magen S., Paul W., Sara D., Sheila T.

In Progress:

John N., Nick S.

Not registered:

Avram G., Scott N., Jamie R., Jean Ann D.

Meeting with Leigh Young – Michigan Main Street Goals

- Reviewed Michigan Main Street goals with Leigh Young.
- Leigh confirmed that all goals are well done, realistic, and can be copied directly into the Select Level application.
- She highlighted specific areas of focus for the next 12 months (next page)