



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

6:30 PM

Village Hall – 21 East Church Street, Lake Orion, MI 48362

(248) 693-8391 ext. 102

1. Call to Order

The March 18, 2025 Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Chairperson Burgess.

2. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

PRESENT

Chairperson Debbie Burgess
Treasurer Matt Shell
Secretary Hank Lorant
Board Member Lloyd Coe
Board Member Sally Medina
Board Member Alaina Campbell
President Teresa Rutt

ABSENT

Vice Chairperson Sam Caruso
Board Member Chris Barnett

STAFF PRESENT

Executive Director Matthew Gibb
Assistant Director Janet Bloom
Village Manager Darwin McClary
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Lynsey Blough

3. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of DDA Regular Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2025

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to approve the Downtown Development Authority Board Regular Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2025, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

4. Approval of Agenda

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to approve the Downtown Development Authority Board Agenda of March 18, 2025, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

5. Call to the Public

Susan Dandalides introduced the Green Space Initiative, which she hopes to have included in the 2026 ballot millage. The goal is to secure funding for the purchase and preservation of green spaces in the Village of Lake Orion. She also noted that this initiative aligns with several goals and objectives outlined in the Village of Lake Orion Master Plan.

6. Consent Agenda

All items on the Consent Agenda are approved by one vote.

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to approve the March 18, 2025 Consent Agenda by one vote, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

A. Financial Reports

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to receive and file the financial reports for February 2025.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

7. Financial Matters

A. Bill Approval

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to approve disbursements in the amount of \$40,912.81 for February 2025

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

8. New and Old Business

A. GM on Main Street Grant

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to move to receive and file the grant application for the GM on Main Street 2025 program, directing the Executive Director to send all application material to the Village Council as a communication.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

Secretary Lorant commented that the grant application package is sensational and well-written.

B. Marketability and Attraction Strategy

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to accept the recommendation of the Executive Director and approve a contract with Dirt Realty, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$9300, plus DDA pre-approved reimbursable expenses, with funding from GL 248-728-801-000 contractual Services.

President Rutt asked if the 90-day consulting period would provide timely feedback. Executive Director Gibb explained that 90% of the key data would be ready by mid-May. He emphasized that the project would be driven by data, not just wish lists. President Rutt clarified that the goal is to attract unique retailers, not generic ones. Executive Director Gibb confirmed that the ICSC (International Council of Shopping Centers) conference will allow the consultants (DIRT Realty, LLC and Bob Waun) to target high-quality retailers for the lumberyard.

Board Member Campbell asked if a leakage report, showing what people are leaving the community to purchase, would be part of the market use and redevelopment analysis. Executive Director Gibb confirmed it would be included and mentioned that they're working to access the Placer AI program through Oakland County to gather dynamic data, which will help plan for franchise locations and understand local demographics.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

C. Village Capital Improvement Fund

Chairperson Burgess welcomed Village Manager McClary's comments. He suggested renaming the second motion to the "DDA Public Infrastructure Account" rather than the "Village Capital Improvement Account" to avoid confusion, as the funds are specifically for public infrastructure within the DDA district. He also recommended creating a separate fund for easier tracking of DDA contributions and expenditures. This would ensure that unused funds are carried over and can be easily audited and would provide clearer tracking and accountability for the funds. Executive Director Gibb did not object to Village Manager McClary's suggestions.

Board Member Campbell asked about the "negligible" difference between the estimated and actual tax revenue. Executive Director Gibb clarified the actual number over the years. He explained that such differences would eventually balance out and that using the billed revenue rather than estimated figures from the county reduces discrepancies. Village Manager McClary added that the DDA's actual contribution is calculated based on the tax bills sent in July and December. The final contributions will be based on the actual billed amount, with no disputes expected, but contributions won't be made until the end of the fiscal year when the actual numbers are confirmed.

MOTION #1 made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to approve the AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF LAKE ORION AND THE LAKE ORION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGARDING RESPONSIBILITIES AND COST ALLOCATION FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT as recommended by the joint Ad Hoc committee at its meeting of March 13, 2025, directing the Executive Director to execute the same.

Council Member Dandalides expressed gratitude for the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee, where he serves as chair. He noted the committee's efficiency and the unanimous support for all motions, despite initial concerns about the dynamics. He also thanked the committee for their cooperation and collaboration.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

MOTION #2 made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to create a new GL account, number to be determined, and name to be determined, and direct that the Executive Director work with the Village Clerk/Treasurer to implement this GL as the capital improvement fund for project contemplated by the previously approved agreement.

A brief clarification was provided, and no action was taken.

AMENDED MOTION #2 made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, move to create a new GL account, number to be determined, and named “Public Facility Improvements”, and direct that the Executive Director work with the Village Clerk/Treasurer to implement this GL as the capital improvement fund for project contemplated by the previously approved agreement.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

MOTION #3 made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by President Rutt, to catch up the fund we just named in the amount of \$142,453 by transfer of \$67,616 from GL 248-260-965-401, transfer to capital improvement fund, and the transfer of \$74,837 from 248-000-390-000 fund balance to the newly created GL account.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

D. Budget – Contract Based Admin and Service Fees

MOTION #1 made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to adopt the use of Contract based Administrative and Service expenses as a budgetary policy of the DDA, and refer the draft agreements to the DDA Budget Task force for recommendation to the Executive Director in the preparation of the 2025-2026 Budget.

President Rutt raised concerns that the current motion might be out of order, depending on whether the ad hoc committee’s scope is expanded to include budget and service agreement negotiations. She suggested adjusting the motion if the scope is expanded, but felt unable to proceed until that decision is made.

Board Member Campbell inquired about the budget impact of proposed increases. Executive Director Gibb clarified that the figures are estimates and will be adjusted once more details are finalized. He explained that while the budget might increase, the final amount will be based on actual needs and contract costs, with a more precise approach to tracking expenses.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

MOTION #2 made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to direct the Executive Director to issue a communication to the Village explaining and outlining the adoption of this budgetary policy approach, including therein the draft agreement with a request for comment(s).

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

E. Request from Village Council - Ad Hoc Expansion

Council Member Dandalides expressed concerns that the process felt predetermined and seemed backwards, agreeing with President Rutt. He questioned the committee's role and emphasized his willingness to follow the direction but struggled with how to proceed when the solution seemed to be in place before the problem was fully addressed. He suggested that the Executive Director and Village Manager should collaborate on a recommendation for the committee.

President Rutt acknowledged the intergovernmental agreement is still a draft and suggested that there could still be value in bringing both groups to the table for further discussion, with the Budget Task Force reviewing essential services.

Executive Director Gibb recommended preparing a more detailed budget and postponing the matter to a Special Meeting or April Meeting for further refinement, emphasizing the need to finalize the agreement structure before involving the committee.

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to table the item for another meeting.

A brief clarification was provided.

AMENDED MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to table the meeting for the next 30 days.

Another clarification was made.

AMENDED MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Board Member Coe, to postpone the item until a meeting within the next 30 days.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

F. Budget - Calendar

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to hold a Special Meeting regarding the budget no later than April 8, 2025, and direct the Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director to coordinate such meeting.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

9. Reports, Resolutions and Recommendations

A. Assistant Director's Report

Assistant Director Janet Bloom shared updates on recent and upcoming events in the Downtown area, noting they are listed on the Downtown Lake Orion and Community Calendars. She also provided social media statistics. She mentioned that Daniel Pavelich, the former groundskeeper, took nearly 600 photos of commercial businesses in the Downtown District and uploaded them into the BOOMS Tracker. He also assisted in the Silversmith Program.

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by President Rutt, to receive and file the Assistant Director's Report.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

B. Lumber Yard - Monthly Progress Report

Executive Director Gibb provided an update on the Lumberyard project, noting that demolition is nearly complete, with only an inspection for an 18-inch buried shed wall pending. The temporary fencing was recently moved due to a windstorm, but parking will reopen soon. He explained that while they have saved money on demolition, the architectural bids for construction and structural repairs came in too high to make the project feasible. As a result, they plan to reject the architectural bids. The site will be cleaned and secured, and cat shelters have been purchased for the local community cats. Over the next month, targeted reconstruction will begin, including siding and window installation, with a focus on foundation work for the main barn. Gibb emphasized that while the project is moving quickly, they need to slow down to better manage costs. No motion was required for this update, but further progress will be posted on the Lumberyard page on the DDA's website.

C. Rejection of Architectural Bids

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to reject the architectural bids.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso
MOTION: Carried

D. Executive Directors Report

Matthew Gibb provided an update, expressing enthusiasm about the ongoing work and conversations despite the complexities involved. He commended President Rutt and Council Member Dandalides for their hard questions and engagement. He also highlighted improvements in the relationship with Mr. McClary and emphasized the ongoing collaborative efforts. He mentioned several ancillary projects, including the discovery of rail pieces at the lumberyard, plans for repurposing grain bin parts into public art and seating areas, and brainstorming ideas for water features and pocket parks. He also noted progress on flower baskets, picnic tables, and planters, as well as preparations for street sweeping. He assured that these activities are underway.

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to receive and file the Executive Director's Report.

VOTING YEA:	Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt
VOTING NAY:	None
ABSENT:	Barnett, Caruso
MOTION:	Carried

10. Board Comments and Training Feedback

Board Member Medina shared her joy of seeing Chairperson Burgess feeling better.

Secretary Lorant welcomed Chairperson Burgess back and added that it was good seeing her.

Treasurer Shell also shared the same feelings towards Chairperson Burgess. He also thanked Executive Director Gibb, Assistant Director Bloom and Village Manager McClary for their hard work. He praised the collaboration between the Ad Hoc Committee, the Board, and the Village, and encouraged continued cooperation. Reflecting on the capital improvement fund's purpose to improve Village-DDA relations, he expressed hope that past conflicts with Council Members would end and emphasized focusing on productive efforts rather than complaints. He thanked everyone for their perseverance through recent challenges.

Board Member Campbell volunteered to help with the upcoming Spring Clean Up on May 10 and offer free ice cream for volunteers. She also mentioned refurbishing a Santa's sleigh and reindeer for future Lighted Parades. Matthew Gibb suggested gathering other historical items, including an old parade train and truck, currently with Council Member Carl Cyrowski and Rob Cavanaugh. Board Member Campbell expressed excitement about the idea of a Lumberyard-themed parade entry.

President Rutt expressed enthusiasm for the Santa's sleigh idea, suggesting it could decorate the Lumberyard beyond the Christmas parade. She also apologized for a potential snow event, joking that it was her fault due to storing shovels. She thanked the Ad Hoc Committee for their hard work and collaboration in finalizing the public infrastructure agreement.

Kidding aside, Board Member Coe said that if it snows, he will go back to Florida. He also mentioned that the Cornhole League will start in June with 44 teams and encouraged restaurants and merchants to stay open later to accommodate the large crowds. He also expressed interest in helping with the Spring Clean Up day and suggested contacting WWAM, a group from Oakland

County, for assistance. He raised concerns about the overgrown brush on the west side of M24 near the lake, suggesting it be cleaned up to improve the area's appearance. He proposed using rocks, similar to what was done by the dam, to enhance the embankment's look.

Chairperson Burgess expressed gratitude for the collaboration between the Village Manager, Executive Director, and Assistant Executive Director, praising the team's efforts to move the community forward. She highlighted the positive impact of the community attracting visitors from surrounding areas and thanked for the beautiful "We wish you healthy" flowers. She also appreciated the many upcoming local events and commended the executive director's legal expertise in handling agreements. She acknowledged the hard work of the Ad Hoc Committee and Village Council, emphasizing the importance of working together for the good of the community.

11. Next Regular Meeting – April 14, 2025

12. Adjournment

MOTION made by Treasurer Shell, Seconded by Secretary Lorant, to adjourn the March 18, 2025 Downtown Development Authority Board Regular Meeting.

VOTING YEA: Burgess, Shell, Lorant, Coe, Medina, Campbell, Rutt

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: Barnett, Caruso

MOTION: Carried

The March 18, 2025 Downtown Development Authority Board Regular meeting adjourned at 8:06PM.

Debbie Burgess
Chairperson

Lynsey Blough
Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Sonja Stout
Village Clerk/Treasurer

Date Approved: as presented on April 15, 2025.