

Downtown Development Authority Meeting

Friday, July 17, 2026

Meeting Minutes

12:01 PM: Call to Order.

Roll Call

Pamela Shermeyer	Present
Charlotte Jones	Present
Tracey Williams	Present
Bruce Kantor	Present
Alex Green IV	Present
Patricia Felton	Absent (Ex.)
Mike Greene	Absent (Ex.)
Lisa Burr	Present
Jeff Fitzryk	Present

Bruce Kantor makes a motion to excuse Dr. Felton and Mike Greene, since they informed DDA staff of their absences. Alex Green IV was omitted from this, but he arrived to the meeting at 12:09. Jeff Fitzryk seconds. The motion passed unanimously.

12:01 PM: Approval of Agenda

Pam Shermeyer informs the board that a late item needs to be added to the agenda, approving DDA staff to acquire a liquor license for the Lathrup Village Music Festival. DDA Project Coordinator Tom Kennedy also adds that he needs to make a revision to the meeting minutes, as he accidentally marked Jeff Fitzryk as absent, even though he is noted as being present and voting.

Bruce Kantor makes a motion to add Item 8B: Approval of the LVMF Liquor License. Jeff Fitzryk seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

12:04 PM: Approval of Minutes

Bruce Kantor makes a motion to approve the minutes for the June meeting with the amendments that Tom mentioned. Lisa Burr seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

12:04 PM: Consent Agenda

Jeff Fitrzyk makes a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Bruce Kantor seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

12:05 PM: Public Comment

No public comments.

12:05 PM: Old Business

Lauren Beras presents updates about the LVMF to the DDA Board. All but two sponsors have provided funds. At this point, the LVMF has \$41,746 in funds, while waiting for the final two sources, which would bring that total to under \$45,000. Still looking for more volunteers in the Family Fun Zone- not that there's a desperate need, but a few more hands on deck would bolster the area and make it the safest it could be. Also looking for more activities for children in the area.

There are 47 confirmed vendors, which has caused the planning team to change the layout to accommodate. This includes a photo booth that will provide one free digital photo to all attendees, with paid options for those who want it. 8 Food Booths, 12 certified businesses, 1 club, 4 government entities, 16 products-based and 1 nonprofit. This also includes three authors, an interior designer, a kid entrepreneur, Forgotten Harvest, Southfield Library, Southfield Fire Department, a resident-driven initiative to raise funds for Sarrackwood Park, a resident inventor, companies for homeowners that may need repairs, and Be Kind will be front and center by the bar patio.

Signs, banners and other promotional items have gone to print as well as mailout flyers, which will be distributed Mid-August. Flyers for businesses can be provided by request. Parking is being moved to the property north of City Hall to clear the parking lot for the vendors. Emergency Vehicle Only signs will be posted at north and south entrance of the lot. There are 5 food trucks and Kona Ice as well.

Mike Ward, who ranked 7th internationally among folk artists, is opening, followed by Danny Cox, who brings soul and storytelling to the stage. Thornetta Davis, Queen of the Blues, will ramp up the show, followed by

Wayne Gerard- a Lathrup resident. Brendan Lindley is a first timer to the LVMF- an up-and-coming blues artist. Cast Iron Cornbread returns to headline. This is their fourth year with the LVMF and first-time headlining.

12:12 PM: New Business

Cost Share Agreement Amendment 1: DDA Director Janet Bloom presents – There have been changes to positions due to turnover in city hall, and one conglomerate position has been split into three. The former Building Official position was once the Code Enforcement, Building Department and Permit technician. This position was changed, and now the Code Enforcement Officer is a part-time role, the building inspector is a part-time role, and the Permit Tech position is contracted out to McKenna, who also will handle inspection scheduling. DDA staff recommends an amendment to the current Cost Share Agreement that reflects the change.

The Full GL line will be reduced by \$27,540, with part-time salaries increasing by \$14,040. Employee benefits and taxes will be reduced by \$3,000, and the planning/consulting fees will be increased by \$22,950 to reflect McKenna's permit tech cost.

Pam Shermeyer asks about the math presented- if we're going from full time to part time, how does that lead to an increase in the budget? DDA Project Coordinator Tom Kennedy adds context: Due to the former Building Official position being three roles in one, there came some cost-savings built in. However, since now the position is being split into three roles once again, that means there are three new hires, which means three new salaries to pay. This isn't to save on money, it's to save on efficiency. Bruce Kantor acknowledges the position, as it was, was a burnout position; the city went through four code enforcement officers in as many years, so the hope is that this will reduce burnout, and increase efficiency. All Board Members are satisfied with the explanation.

Bruce Kantor makes a motion to approve the new cost-share agreement. Lisa Burr seconds the motion. A Roll Call vote is held. All members vote in favor, with two absences; the motion passes unanimously.

LVMF Liquor License: DDA Director Janet Bloom presents – This matter is so the DDA staff can acquire a Liquor License for the LVMF. They need formal board approval to apply as a municipality. This matter came upon DDA staff the day of the meeting, so a memo was emailed to the Board

requesting they approve the acquisition of a liquor license. There will be a minimum, mandatory cost that is within the staff's spending limit. Tracey Williams makes a motion to approve the staff's application for a liquor license for the LVMF. Jeff Fitzzyk seconds. The motion passes unanimously.

12:20 PM DDA Director Report

Janet Bloom presents and acknowledges this report will be different than what the board may be used to. Since this is her second full week, this report is more of a "what I've been up to" as opposed to the usual "what's going on in the DDA District/around the city". She's taking the chance to learn more about the community and its stakeholders. She also has meetings with local property owners and businesses to make connections.

There is an Open House for the Master Plan project, run by Giffels Webster from 4 PM – 7 PM before the Planning Commission meeting on July 21. Janet also reiterates that she has an open-door policy for anyone who wants to meet with her.

Janet gives the reins to Tom Kennedy, who announces Health and Wellness Month for August. An initiative in collaboration with the Lathrup DDA, Parks and Recreation, Oakland Community College and Henry Ford Health System to bring educational events to Lathrup Village's residents and businesses. These events include a health lecture every Wednesday by Dr. Carmen Stokes of the Henry Ford Health System's Cancer Treatment and Prevention Ward, from 5:30-6:30 before every Music in the Park; a CPR Certification course brought by the American Heart Association through Oakland Community College on Monday, August 10 from 12-4 PM; and a Blood Drive brought by the Versiti Blood Center of Michigan, through OCC, Friday August 14 from 1-5 PM. Parks and Recreation partnered with the National Kidney Foundation to bring balance and fall recovery classes every Thursday from 10-12 until the end of September. There may be more events on the fly through August, including an event with former business owner Valerie Bryant to give away as many wigs as possible as one last hurrah to send her off into retirement. Tom thanks Trixy Hall with Oakland Community College, Dr. Stokes with Henry Ford, and the Parks and Recreation Board for helping to organize these events, which are all free to the community.

Pam Shermeyer asks about how the event is being promoted. Tom responds that OCC is handling their own promotions, while DDA Staff are making the promotional material, along with the links for signups.

Before moving on, Janet adds that next month the DDA Board will receive applications to review regarding the Sign and Façade grants. Also, next month there will be a conversation about the Snow and Landscaping RFP's. The DDA staff will also be looking into new communications methods with our Businesses utilizing Social Media.

12:29 PM: Public Comment

John Sousanis speaks about livecasting the DDA meetings through Facebook's streaming options. Being honest, the DDA Board members and Staff members already thought that was happening, so they agree that it should be streamed. He also adds that he still wishes for the DDA to share some responsibilities with the Parks and Recreation. He asks if the DDA would consider methods in which DDA staff could support Parks and Recreation in the city, since the P&R budget isn't big enough to support a staff team.

12:45 PM Board Member Comments

Pam thinks that both of John's comments should be discussed. She asks John to clarify if he's seeking the DDA support P&R monetarily or if it's just the staff support the way it used to be before Tom was given his multi-role position in April.

Tracey Williams asks about the logistics behind the ask. The Board asks Tom for his input, and he offers his experience. There was a lot of inefficiency on all sides- he wasn't doing enough to support the DDA in his role because he had to do Code Enforcement, and so many people would call on him to handle non-code violations. Then he wasn't efficient enough in Code Enforcement because he had to support Parks and Rec in some way, which was tough because the only way he could support was through grant research, and the city doesn't qualify for a ton of grants. Government grants to fall the cities way because many parks are not ADA complaint, and private grants go to less-fortunate communities more often than not, so Lathrup is disqualified there, as well. And he wasn't able to do that job well enough because he had to do DDA work. It was a lot of mental pain

and stress for little reward, and made him feel like he was failing in his position.

He does add that he and Janet have been talking about recreation events, since he loves recreation so much and they see a value in providing something like that for the community. Not only that, but how can they incorporate the downtown businesses in these recreational programs and events.

Lisa Burr clarifies if the position earlier was 4 extra hours per month towards Parks and Rec or per week. Tom responds with Per Week.

Pam adds that, in her opinion, P&R just needs a point person for the city, but Bruce adds some context. P&R has a burnout problem since there is no staff member to handle their events, they have to handle all of the events, and they don't want to. The original plan worked out well, and even the modified plan where Tom handled three departments, because it gave P&R a point person. Now, it's up to city council and P&R to figure a way to best support them. With Tom being full-time DDA, there has to be a compromise somewhere that would make logistical sense.

Pam reiterates that the DDA only spends money within the business district, not on the neighborhood parks. If there is a way to help, they will find it, like using Paradise Garden's or whoever takes over the watering and lawn maintenance RFP that will go out next year. Bruce also adds that the DDA did cover the cost of the original 4 hours, which took \$5,000/year from the budget.

Alex Green asks about the hit to the budget that the 4-hour position cost the DDA. Tom explains that, at the time, he was only a 20-hour part-time position. Now, that \$5,000 hit to the budget is rolled into his full-time salary, so there's no additional hit to the budget. Alex adds if there was something more that could be done, like offering 4 to 5 extra hours on top of the 40 hour work week so that Tom could do more P&R related work. Tom warns against that as there is overtime, and the DDA would be on the hook for that every week.

Lisa Burr asks for clarity on the \$5,000 annual budget hit, but Bruce Kantor explains how it is rolled into the budget, and it's not a separate line item in the budget, it was combined with the full-time promotion that Tom earned earlier in the year.

Bruce Kantor brings up the garbage can discussion that was had at the end of the June meeting. The P&R received the feedback from a survey they ran and public trash cans was the second highest priority.

Alex Green asks if there will be another CPR certification course on a weekend, which Tom says there's a possibility- they would have to work around the OCC Class Schedule. Depending on how well received and attended these events are will depend on how frequently they happen.

Lisa Burr asks if Lathrup Village had a Farmer's Market in the past. Bruce responds that yes, but the market ceased after the organizer left, and the vendors started going to other, more lucrative markets. DDA staff admits that it's a little late to do it now, but they do want to do it. It's going to be a struggle with the redevelopment of the school north of City Hall, but it's doable. Janet was actually part of the consulting team that helped Lathrup Village start their own years ago, so she has experience in this particular market.

12:49 PM: Adjournment

Charlotte Jones makes a motion to adjourn. Jeff Fitzyk seconds. The motion is passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.