

Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 6:00 pm

In-PERSON/VIRTUAL MEETING

Room 2044, City Hall

By Phone or Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join>

For the Public, Members of the media and the public may attend by calling: (US) +1 (646)931-3860

Meeting ID: 617-065-5357

Pass Code: 959083

All public participants' phones will be muted during the meeting except during the public comment period where applicable.

RDA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

~~1) 100 W. Main St. block demolition, Town Square design etc., and publicizing town square project for possible funding from sources other than the City.~~

2) Facilitating quality development in downtown, and

3) Creating an approach and working to attract development projects downtown.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

A. Present: Mason Becker, Steve Board, Ald. Arnett, Jacob Maas, Ald. Berg, Ryan Wagner, Dave Zimmermann

B. Virtual: Todd Huhn joined at 6:10pm

C. Absent: None

D. Other attendees: Citizens Smith, Broere, and Kaddesh. Virtual: Zach Goodrow (WDT)

3. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order at 6:01 pm

4. Approval of meeting minutes

A. Regular board minutes 6.18.25. Ald. Berg commented that he would like to see a little bit more detail in the meeting minutes going forward. Mason Becker confirmed this could be worked on.

Steve Board motioned to approve

Dave Zimmermann seconded the motion. Jacob Maas abstained due to not being at the previous meeting. Motion carried.

5. Public Comment

A. Stefanie Broere stated that she appreciated being able to attend the WEDA Economic Development 101 session that was held the previous evening and found it informative.

6. Old Business:

A. Rock River District Vision

Mason Becker shared that he and Ryan Wagner met earlier in the week with the head of a local company who was interested in learning more about the project. There will be future discussions with this person. Wagner will also be reaching out to others to raise awareness on this plan.

a. Development update:

- i.** Mason Becker and Mayor Stocks met earlier in the day, and the mayor requested a presentation from him on possible uses of the 111 S. Water St. property at a Committee of the Whole meeting on August 5th. Mason Becker plans to do this to gather feedback from the Common Council. Ryan Wagner suggested the council could also share other opinions of future visions for the downtown area.

B. Discussion of future goal setting:

- a. Review: WEDA Economic Development 101.
 - ii. Ryan Wagner shared he thought it was an informative session and encouraged others to attend the next one. Mason Becker will send out a reminder email.
 - i. Next session July 29th. Melissa Hunt from WEDA will be presenting again, and there will be more details on the use of tools such as TIF and other processes. Ald. Berg inquired if the school board could be reached out to and invited again. Mason Becker confirmed he will follow up again with the school district superintendent.
 - ii. TID statistics from MadREP: Mason Becker stated that he was unable to get the requested data from MadREP. He has reached out to WEDA to see if they have any information available. He hopes to have this information at a future meeting.

7. New Business:

A. Election of RDA vice-chair:

- a. Ryan Wagner suggested Steve Board for vice-chair. Ald. Berg commented that it's good to have someone with experience serving. He asked Dave Zimmermann if he was interested. Zimmerman declined due to other time commitments. Steve Board confirmed he would accept.

Ryan Wagner motioned to approve

Dave Zimmermann seconded the motion, motion carries.

B. Review and approve appointment of members to RDA Budget and Finance Committee:

- a. Ryan Wagner discussed appointing Jacob Maas and Steve Board to the committee. Discussion of past budget practices followed. Ryan Wagner, Jacob Maas, and Steve Board will serve as the Budget and Finance Committee.

C. Review and take possible action to approve proposed RDA Citywide Sign Grant Program:

- a. Mason Becker discussed the proposal, which was reviewed by the city attorney. Ald. Arnett questioned the need for the RDA to receive an administrative fee. Some members voiced support for keeping this in and discussed the funding needs of the RDA. Mason Becker stated it was a suggestion and not a requirement. After further discussion, the consensus was to drop this provision.

Steve Board motion to approve with three changes:

- I. **Edit provision regarding project work to "on-site activity must commence"**
- II. **Remove the 10% administrative fee**
- III. **Remove "if required" regarding permits and approvals**

Ald. Arnett seconded the motion. Motion passed with Jacob Maas opposed.

D. Review and take possible action to approve the proposal from Partner2Learn:

- a. The RDA previously voiced interest in engaging in future planning and visioning for the RDA board. Mason Becker shared that he had received positive feedback from the city's fire chief as well as officials from two other communities. This information was shared in a memo that was distributed to the RDA. The board requested that Mason get further information on possible "travel and other expenses". The board also discussed the proposal being more robust and time-intensive than desired. Mason Becker said he would follow up with Partner2Learn, request a more streamlined proposal, and request they present to the RDA board at a future meeting.

Ryan Wagner motioned to table this item.

Ald Berg seconded. Motion carried.

E. Review and discuss RDA mission history and mission:

- a. Mason Becker presented a PowerPoint on the history of the RDA, its programs, and possible future activities. Discussion followed. Arnett criticized the Economic Impact Analysis information and questioned the methodology ICF had used to make their determinations. Becker thanked the board for allowing him to present.

8. Status Reports:

A. Housing Rehab Grants:

- a. Mason gave a quick recap and stated funds would be depleted soon. He will send an updated spreadsheet out to the board soon.

B. Beltz Foundation Grants:

- a. This item was moved to the top of Old Business, with no objections, due to the applicant (Bob Smith from Uptown Bar) being present. Mason Becker reviewed the application and shared that the Grant Review Committee had reviewed the application and recommended approval. Smith shared plans for the remodel project. Board members commented that they appreciated the enhanced appearance and the reinvestment in the property.

Ald. Arnett moved to approve the grant application as presented.

Ald. Berg seconded. Motion carried.

C. Social media/messaging update:

- a. The board reviewed the submitted report from Lisa Famularo. Ryan Wagner mentioned that including positive quotes from Mason Becker's presentation would be good for future social media posts. Ald. Arnett mentioned that permission would be needed. Mason will follow up with Lisa on this.

D. Council update:

- a. Berg shared there is a new business opening on S. Third St.
- b. Arnett shared there was not much at the Common Council meeting that was relevant to the RDA. Baker Tilly gave an audit report and there were some license approvals.

E. Executive Director update:

- a. Items for next agenda:
 - i. Mason asked that the board email him with requests.
- b. Next meeting August 20, 2025, at 6 pm

9. Adjournment at 7:15 pm

Zimmermann motioned to adjourn.

Board seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.