



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026 – 5:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN, MI

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mast at 5:03 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

III. Roll Call

PRESENT: Tracy Mast, Julie Capron, Sidney Finan, Libby Hein, Michael Reed, Haley Jones, and Mayor Mark Weedon

ABSENT: Joseph Williams, Michelle Fletcher

CITY STAFF: City Manager, Tony McGhee; City Clerk, Kalla Langston-Weiss; Community Development Director, Kristen Gundersen

IV. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Reed to approve the agenda as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

V. Public Comments - Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

None

VI. Approve Minutes

A. *Consider the Regular Meeting Minutes from February 11th, 2026.*

Motion made by Hein, seconded by Capron to approve the minutes as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. TIF & Development Plan: *Review and consider approving the draft TIF & Development Plan.*

Fette reported that the TIF and Development Plan is substantially complete. Updates to the plan include confirmation of residential thresholds, incorporation of updated GIS mapping and legal descriptions, and revisions to remove references to specific properties.

Fette recommended issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for marketing, branding, and wayfinding services prior to final adoption of the plan. It was advised that obtaining bid results would allow the Board to refine budget allocations before forwarding the plan to the City Commission.

The anticipated timeline includes issuance of the RFP within the next several days, receipt of bids within approximately 14 to 21 days, and submission of the plan to the City Commission in early April.

The Board agreed with Fette's recommendation and supported delaying final adoption of the plan until cost information is obtained through the RFP process.

B. Marketing RFP- *Consider the proposed Marketing RFP to go to bid.*

No formal motion was made regarding the TIF and Development Plan, as discussion remained preliminary. The Board agreed to revisit the matter after bid results are received to help clarify and adjust projected funding amounts.

VIII. New Business

A. Farmers Market Presentation

A presentation was provided regarding the upcoming Farmers Market season, scheduled to run from May 3 through October 10. It was reported that approximately 35 to 40 vendors are anticipated to participate, including a mix of returning and new vendors.

B. Sip! Buchanan- DDA contributing to Sip! Buchanan

A presentation was provided regarding the proposed SIP Buchanan event. The event is planned to include a car show (Cruise Buchanan), a beverage tasting component, and live entertainment throughout the day and evening.

It was reported that the Chamber of Commerce has secured approximately \$10,500 in sponsorship funding to date. A request was made for a \$5,000 contribution from the DDA to assist with event-related expenses.

Motion made by Hein, seconded by Finan, for the \$5,000 to contribute to SIP Buchanan.

Discussion: The Board discussed the event's alignment with the DDA's goal of increasing downtown activity and foot traffic. Concerns were raised regarding communication and outreach to downtown businesses. Additional discussion acknowledged the upfront costs associated with hosting the event, including permitting, alcohol procurement requirements, and equipment.

Hein amended her motion to amend my original motion to ask for \$2,500 now for SIP Buchanan, and if we do not reach our marketing efforts by March 31st, that we are awarded or presented with another \$2,500, seconded by Finan.

The roll call vote carried unanimously.

C. Buchanan Equity- review of existing loan and direction to staff.

McGhee provided an overview of the Buchanan Equity loan. The original loan amount was \$20,000 (2018). The current remaining balance was clarified to be approximately \$6,328. The borrower has been in default since 2023.

Options presented to the Board included demanding full repayment, resuming the original amortization schedule, restructuring the loan, or deferring payment until the sale of the property.

**See Attachment A for Memo from City Manager McGhee*

Discussion:

The Board discussed the borrower's payment history, the importance of accountability, and the desire to balance enforcement with supporting local businesses. Clarification of the remaining balance resulted in an adjustment of the proposed terms.

Superseded Motion made by Reed that we take this loan amount, total amount owed, with no fees, and we make it a four-year term starting immediately at 2% interest, supported by Jones.

Following the initial motion, the Board reviewed the loan documentation in detail to confirm the remaining balance. During the discussion, it was identified that the previously referenced balance of approximately \$15,736 reflected an earlier amortization schedule and did not account for subsequent payments. Upon further review of the payment records and supporting documentation, it was determined that the correct remaining balance of the loan was approximately \$6,328.21, with the last recorded payment made in November 2023.

Based on this clarification, the maker of the motion indicated the need to revise the proposed terms.

Amended Motion made by Reed, seconded by Jones, to pay the remainder of their loan off on a two-year term at 2%, and if they are to default and not pay the loan over 90 days, we will take proper legal action to garnish or collect on the remainder.

The roll call vote carried unanimously.

IX. Communications

A. Downtown Flowers

Staff discussed the restoration of seasonal downtown plantings, which were not completed during the prior year due to construction activities. The estimated cost for the program is approximately \$5,000.

It was noted that plantings have historically been completed in coordination with local partners and volunteers. A request was made to also include the Commons and farmers market areas, where landscaping has been identified as needing improvement.

No formal action was taken. Staff will return with a formal proposal for Board consideration at a future meeting.

B. Munchie Monday Flyer

Staff presented proposed updates to the Munchie Monday program, including adjusting event hours to conclude earlier (approximately 3:30 PM) and updating promotional materials to include the year and DDA branding. The Board discussed the role of food trucks in supporting downtown activity and generally viewed the program as a positive driver of foot traffic. It was clarified that the DDA's role is to promote the downtown district as a whole rather than individual businesses.

No formal action was taken.

C. Monthly Finance Reports

Monthly financial reports were provided to the Board for review.

D. Photography Downtown-Communication email from Dustin Tam, interest in photographing for DDA efforts.

Information was shared regarding an individual offering downtown photography services for potential future marketing use.

X. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

Ashley Hanson- comment was made regarding the condition of landscaping within the Commons area, particularly near the bathrooms and stage. It was noted that existing flower beds have not been maintained or replanted in recent years. The speaker requested that improvements to these areas be included as part of upcoming downtown beautification efforts.

Dennis Mori- comment was also provided in support of the SIP Buchanan event. It was expressed that the event has strong potential to become a signature annual event for the community and to increase visitation and economic activity downtown.

Additional comments were made regarding ongoing downtown promotional efforts by the Buchanan Business Boosters, including monthly events and printed materials designed to encourage visitors to explore local businesses. A request for financial support was reiterated, along with a discussion of the need for guidance on eligibility for DDA funding.

XI. Staff/Committee Comments

XII. Adjournment

Chairperson Mast adjourned the meeting at 6:25 PM.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Chairperson, Tracy Mast