



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 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 Chairperson Mast at 5:00 PM

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Roll Call

PRESENT: Tracy Mast, Mayor Mark Weedon, Sidney Finan, Michelle Fletcher, Libby Hein, Haley Jones, Michael Reed

ABSENT: Joseph Williams

CITY STAFF: Tony McGhee, Kalla Langston-Weiss, Kristen Gundersen

IV. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Jones, supported by Fletcher to approve the agenda, as presented. Voice vote carries unanimously.

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

Carla Johnson addressed the Board regarding the Buchanan Sweet Shop, expressing concerns about transparency, property taxes, and the DDA's treatment of downtown business owners. She emphasized the importance of preserving the Sweet Shop and respecting the concerns of residents and taxpayers.

VI. Approve Minutes

A. Minutes- Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes and Closed Session Meeting Minutes from September 9th, 2026.

Motion made by Weedon, supported by Fletcher, to approve the minutes as presented. Voice vote carries unanimously.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Christmas Decoration Committee: Update on Downtown Christmas Decorations.

An update was provided regarding the Christmas Decoration Committee, consisting of representatives from the DDA, Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce, and Buchanan Business Boosters. The committee developed a concept for downtown holiday decorations, and a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued October 1, 2026, with responses due October 16, 2026.

Staff contacted six potential suppliers regarding the proposals. Due to the custom nature of several requested decorations, alternative options may need to be considered for the current holiday season. The committee will review proposals and bring recommendations to the Board for consideration.

B. Marketing Proposal: Consideration of the 2 proposals from Destination by Design.

The Board reviewed two marketing proposals submitted by Destination by Design, with proposed expenditures of \$25,000 and \$40,000. Discussion centered on the additional services and opportunities provided under Option Two.

Motion made by Finan, supported by Weedon, to proceed with Option Two, the \$40,000 marketing proposal from Destination by Design. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

Staff will work with the vendor to prepare a contract for consideration at the next meeting.

The Board also discussed establishing a marketing subcommittee to facilitate ongoing discussions, review marketing initiatives, and provide recommendations to the full Board. Three members volunteered to participate. The subcommittee will serve in an advisory capacity, with final decisions remaining with the DDA Board. Staff will coordinate an initial meeting.

VIII. New Business

A. DDA Monthly Finance- Consider approving the expenditures and finance reports.

The Board reviewed the monthly financial report. Staff reported fiscal year 2026–2027 revenues totaling \$135,877, with limited expenditures to date.

Motion made by Jones supported by Capron to approve the expenditures and financial reports as presented. Roll call votes carried unanimously.

IX. Communications

A. Michigan Downtown Association Annual Conference, November 4-6, 2026

The Board was informed that the Michigan Downtown Association Annual Conference will take place November 4–6, 2026, in Kalamazoo. Members interested in attending were encouraged to contact staff for registration information.

B. Buchanan Equity LLC- update.

Staff provided an update regarding the September 24, 2026, sheriff's sale. The property received a single accepted bid of \$70,000.

The DDA has received and deposited the outstanding amount of \$8,024.08, satisfying the debt owed to the Authority. The remaining proceeds are subject to the applicable claims process through the County. Staff reported that the DDA's financial interest in the matter has been satisfied.

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

Bruce Larson invited Board members and the public to attend a presentation regarding the Buchanan District Library's annual calendar on November 5, 2026, at 6:00 PM in the library's upstairs community room.

Dennis Mori invited the community to attend the Halloween Teens, Tweens, and Zombie Dance on Main Street. He reported that approximately \$800 had been raised for prizes and giveaways and that donations were still being accepted. The event will include food, refreshments, and activities for children and families.

XI. Staff/Committee Comments

Staff expressed appreciation for the Board's dedication and continued efforts to advance downtown initiatives. Staff also expressed enthusiasm for moving forward with the marketing project and working with the newly established subcommittee.

Hein provided an update on October 3, 2026, Buchanan Harvest Fest, reporting that event tracking data indicated more than 2,500 visitors from outside the area and a peak downtown attendance of

more than 1,200 individuals at approximately 3:00 PM. It was also reported that approximately 900 participants took part in the chili walk.

Board members expressed appreciation for the success of Harvest Fest and the efforts of the Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce and community volunteers.

Additional comments recognized the dedication of DDA members, the importance of collaboration, and the Board's shared commitment to strengthening downtown Buchanan.

XII. Adjournment

Motion made by Weedon, supported by Reed to adjourn the meeting at 5:19 PM. Voice vote carried unanimously.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk