



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 08, 2026 – 5:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

THE Downtown Development Authority OF THE CITY OF BUCHANAN, in compliance with Michigan’s Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a regular meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.

** Comments may be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the City Clerk at Clerk@cityofbuchanan.com*

I. Call to Order

Mast called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mat led in the pledge of allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Present: Capron, Finan, Fletcher, Hein, Jones, Williams, Reed, Weedon, Mast

Absent: None

City Staff Present: City Manager Tony McGhee, City Clerk Kalla Langston-Weiss, Planning & Community Development Director Kristen Gundersen

IV. Approve Agenda

Weedon moved, seconded by Reed, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

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

Randy Hendrixson – spoke in favor of adding board reporting to the DDA agenda instead of forming a new subcommittee, which has been tried in the past. Allowing the boards room in the agenda to report directly to the DDA has been more productive in his experience.

Kate Gassman – spoke in support of the Downtown Boosters and Run! Buchanan funding requests. The Boosters have been approached to create a community calendar, she recommends the DDA incorporate this into their marketing plan.

VI. Approve Minutes

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

Jones moved, seconded by Reed, to approve the Minutes from March 11, 2026 as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. TIF & Development Plan: *Consider approving the draft TIF & Development Plan.*

McGhee presented the draft TIF & Development Plan, which has not substantially changed in the past few months. If they are satisfied, it can move forward to the City Commission for approval. The budget

can be amended if needed. Williams asked if the total number of residents in the district was confirmed, McGhee said they were. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Reed moved, seconded by Finan, to approve the Resolution of the Buchanan DDA transmitting an amendment to the Development Plan and Tax Increment Finance Plan to the Buchanan City Commission with recommending adoption.

B. Marketing RFP: *Review and consider the proposed Marketing RFP.*

McGhee presented the Marketing RFP document.

Finan moved, seconded by Fletcher, to approve the approve the Marketing RFP as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

VIII. New Business

A. Common Concert Series: *Review and consideration of the funding request from The Common for Summer Concert Series*

Based on community feedback, Finan believes it's important that the DDA be engaging with the organizers more to promote trust and transparency. Reed in interested in the numbers regarding the Concert Series impact on downtown businesses, believes it's a great event for downtown and exactly what a DDA should do – bringing people downtown.

Finan asked about crowd counts of 10,000 season visitors that had been provided in the past, Hendrixson responded that they do counts for every concert and that the festivals see more people in general. They also use AI to analyze photos. McGhee was asked what line item this expense would come from, he responded that it would come from special events.

Fletcher asked if any of the funding would go towards the updates and improvements the Common Committee had identified previously. Rowland responded yes.

The committee was asked if there was an itemized accounting of where the \$20,000 would go, as it's a substantial portion of the budget. Rowland answered that yes, a list was provided in the original meeting, and that artist and hospitality costs were the bulk of the expenses.

Reed stated that the Concert Series is a proven thing that brings people downtown. Finan would prefer to provide half now, and half later if the funds are still available. McGhee and Langston-Weiss provided some clarity on the budget numbers as opposed to the TIF plan numbers. Rowland shared that most of their funding comes from the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation, donations and endowment. Williams asked if the Concert Series could do something to recognize downtown businesses that weren't able to donate. Rowland provided more information on the different ways they partner with downtown businesses.

Jones moved, seconded by Reed, to approve the \$20,000 request for the Common Summer Concert Series.

Finan would like to see monthly reports as a monthly agenda item. McGhee reminded them that this is the next discussion point on their agenda.

Roll call vote carried unanimously.

B. Appointment and Creation of Common Oversight: *Sub-committee (Farmer's Market/Tin Shop Theater/Common Stage). Consider appointing 3 members of the DDA to this Sub-Committee.*

The DDA discussed whether to create a Common oversight subcommittee or pursue another form of reporting and communication.

Discussion included whether a subcommittee would add an unnecessary layer of oversight, whether a DDA representative should attend Common Committee meetings, and whether organizations receiving DDA funds should report directly to the DDA. Staff noted that the topic had been added because some detailed expenditure information could not be shared in a public packet due to confidentiality concerns.

The Board discussed requesting regular reports from organizations such as the Common Committee, Farmers Market, Tin Shop, and Fine Arts Council.

Motion made by Reed, seconded by Weedon to postpone consideration of the creation of a subcommittee until the December 2026 meeting. Voice votes carry unanimously.

C. Buchanan Business Boosters: *Consider the funding request for Publications with different options, presented by Dennis Mori and Alan Robandt.*

The DDA considered a request from the Buchanan Business Boosters for advertising funds. The request was for \$1,212 to run eight ads in May in two publications, including the Beacher and Harbor Country News, leading up to Memorial Day weekend.

The Boosters explained that the ads would promote Buchanan and would be targeted toward regional visitors.

Motion by Finan, seconded by Fletcher to approve the publication advertising request in the amount of \$1,212 as presented. Roll call votes carry unanimously.

D. Buchanan Area Recreational Board: *Run! Buchanan Funding Request*

Representatives from the Buchanan Area Recreation Board presented a funding request for the upcoming Run Buchanan for the Parks event, scheduled for May 16 as part of Sip Buchanan. The Board explained that the event would raise funds for park improvements and would bring participants downtown. Estimated event expenses were approximately \$2,508 to \$2,800, with the largest cost being race timing and bibs. Sponsorship levels were presented, including a \$2,000 sponsorship level to cover major expenses.

The Board noted that donations had already been received, including \$200 from Heinz Electric and water donated by Harding's. Redbud Insurance also committed during the meeting to match the \$200 donation.

Motion made by Capron, seconded by Jones to approve the funding request of \$2,000.00 for Run Buchanan. Motion carried unanimously.

Staff clarified that, because the DDA budget would not be active until July, approved expenses would initially need to be paid by the City and addressed through future DDA budgeting.

IX. Communications

A. Buchanan Equity Loan Update

Staff provided an update regarding the Buchanan Equity loan matter. Staff stated that legal counsel recommended obtaining title work to determine liens and reviewing corporate documents to confirm who has authority to sign any amended note. Staff also planned to have an independent CPA review the amounts involved. The matter was expected to return to the DDA at a future meeting.

B. Sip! Buchanan Update

An update was provided on the upcoming Sip Buchanan event. The event committee reported that approximately 90% of the moving pieces were in place, fundraising had progressed, and marketing efforts had begun. Updates included changes to the downtown closure map, maintaining the social district, moving the car show area, vendor coordination, and regional marketing.

C. Monthly Finance Reports

Staff reported no changes from the previous month.

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

XI. Staff/Committee Comments

XII. Adjournment

Motion made by Williams, seconded by Capron to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 Pm. Voice vote carries unanimously.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Chairperson, Tracy Mast