

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 8:15 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



- I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:15 AM with Chair Matteo Passalacqua presiding.

A. Roll Call Taken and Quorum Determined

Present: Desiree Dutcher
Katie Forte
Scott Francis
Katie Goodwin
Anna Grace
Chris Gross
Shawn Heath-Lee
Uli Laczkovich
Matteo Passalacqua
Ashley Poirier
Todd Schaefer
Crystal VanVleck
Brian Zifkin

Absent: Lucas Gonzalez— *excused*

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Liaison
Jennifer Finney, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Nate Mack, DDA Executive Director
Adam Wozniak, DPW Liaison

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Francis moved to approve the Agenda, Forte seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting Minutes of April 8, 2026

Francis moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 8, 2026, Grace seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. TREASURER REPORT

Financial Reports for April 2026

Gross reported it appeared money had been reallocated since her last report, but it didn't change the overall budget; \$11,000 was moved to Employee Benefits from Special Events. Mack said he would follow up with the City. April revenues were negligible and there were no surprise expenditures. Year-to-date revenues stand at @\$526,000 and expenses @\$321,000. The ending fund balance after April 2026 was @\$456,000. Anticipated income is @\$30,000, with @\$134,000 in anticipated expenses. Discussion about the process between Mack and Finance is suggested to avoid confusion in the future.

Passalacqua moved to receive and approve the Treasurer's Report for April 2026, Laczkovich seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. 2026-27 Fiscal Year Budget Final Adoption

Mack reported that the new State rules required that after the DDA approved budget is sent to City Council and approved by that body, it is sent back to the DDA Board for its re-approval. The budget was approved by Council at its May 4 meeting, and so it was being presented to the Board for that final re-approval.

Gross questioned the budget spreadsheet with side-by-side columns labeled "Approved" (with a monetary figure) and "Requested" (with another monetary figure), and the totals in each column did not match. If the Council approved the DDA's budget as presented, those figures should match.

Much discussion ensued, and it was determined that Mack and City staff needed to determine the answer, and when that was settled, the Board would hold a special meeting to give the budget its final approval. With the budget needing approval by the end of May, a special meeting date of May 27 was set after polling Board members for their availability. Passalacqua noted that if the City's Finance Department made changes to the budget without communicating them to the DDA, they would be very welcome to join the Board at the May 27 Special Meeting.

Passalacqua moved to table a vote for final adoption of the DDA fiscal year 2026-27 budget until May 27, 2026, with the requirement of clarification on the discrepancy between the figures and correction made, Zifkin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Buns 'N Patties Façade Grant

Mack reported that Buns 'N Patties had been awarded a \$3,200.00 Façade Improvement Grant in 2025 but had not been able to complete the construction work in the time allotted and asked for an extension so that they could fulfill the requirements and receive the reimbursement award. No one on the Board or the Art & Design Committee objected.

Forte moved to approve the Buns 'N Patties Façade Grant Extension, Dutcher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Robina Placemaking Project Update

Mack reported progress in determining options to complete the project, with decisions on concrete, bollards, lighting, and seating close to being made. The total project budget, including grant monies, is \$209,000. Concrete needs to be cut for the new theater's water/fire suppression line, and it's optimum to only cut it once. DPW's Wozniak was meeting that day with the theater's new owner, and he expects to get a firm timeline for that water line work.

The quotation for all the lighting options is quite a bit over the amount the DDA has budgeted, so some options need to be put off. Renderings of what the space will ultimately look like, including the landscaping, were included in the Board packet. Committee members stressed that final decisions for all items need to be made immediately.

The grant requires that the project be substantially completed by September 2026, so it's imperative to make final material decisions and start work as soon as possible. Keeping that in mind, the Board agreed to add this item to the May 27 Special Meeting agenda. Passalacqua noted the Board could approve the *general concept* of what the committee was proposing.

Passalacqua moved to approve the general concept of the Robina Placemaking Project with the condition that at the May 27 Special Meeting there is a revised understanding on concrete timing

and better understanding of the project costs, Dutcher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Dorothea Road Closure Summer/Fall 2026

Mack reported that the pocket park space would be activated in late June through part of July, and Dorothea closed during that time. VanVleck suggested deactivating the space and opening the road back up after Art Fest July 15. City staff availability weighs on open/close times, but she does want to keep the positive momentum. The City could use help from the DDA when the space is activated.

C. Coolidge Corridor Study Update Provided by City Manager VanVleck

VanVleck reported that an RPO will be sent out for the engineering work, probably before the end of the month. The reconstruction of the road from 11 Mile to Webster is expected to cost as much as \$12 million. The reconstruction is anticipated to start in 2030. There will be public engagement sessions, and the DDA will be asked to contribute to the overall project. The City is also actively pursuing grant funding.

D. MoGo Bike Share

Mack reported that MoGo's leadership has changed, and the new group is pushing to restart the incentive. They've approached the decision makers in the South Oakland area that were part of the original group, and he noted Oak Park and Ferndale were the most enthusiastic of those cities. Passalacqua noted his position is unchanged, and he doesn't want to reconnect with them. He suggested clarifying ownership of the different parts (bikes and stations). Forte suggested having MoGo may add to the appearance of Berkley's accessibility and sustainability, and VanVleck added it might help Berkley get grant funding for projects

VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported that Councilperson Black has returned from an 11-month military deployment. Council declared May to be Berkley History Month, and there will be a summer-long scavenger hunt for 20 locations. Only three squares and three currencies are available to be sponsored for the Berkley Days' Berkleyopoly promotion.

B. Community Development – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported they're meeting at the Theatre that day to get a better handle on their timeline. Counsel approved a real estate relationship with Plante Moran to assess City-owned buildings including City Hall and advise them how to move forward. A new business is planning to move into the vacated Be Well location on 12 Mile downtown.

C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner

Absent – no report.

D. Public Works – Adam Wozniak

Wozniak reported the American flags have been put up. Flower installation is held up by a major irrigation repair near 12 Mile and Robina. They will be doing hot-patch repair on Coolidge soon.

E. Chamber of Commerce – Jennifer Finney

Finney reported new leadership is now in place. Chamber Chat is coming up May 15 as well as Art Bash on June 13.

VIII. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Goodwin reported BHS held its Staff Appreciation Week, spring sports are wrapping up and were very successful this year, the theater group staged its last play at Detroit's Bonstelle Playhouse, AP

testing is wrapping up, the Junior-Senior Prom is this week, and graduation is June 4. Encore won two awards at the Indiana competition.

IX. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

A. Art & Design Committee

No additional report.

1. Subcommittee West 12 Mile

Zifkin reported that Mug & Jug is working through the permitting process. Alco's is not getting significant interest in their property. Owners of D&D Bicycle *might* be open to another location in Berkley. Gatekeepers new owners own several bars and may be thinking of expanding entertainment options.

B. Business Development Committee

No report.

C. Events Committee

Ladies Night Out took place the previous week with a Spring theme, and participation was lower than hoped, with a low attendance of @40. Mack is negotiating with a different trolley company as the current company sent a bus for LNO and is uncertain about trolley availability. There were kudos for Dutcher and her spending all evening to help make the event successful. Businesses would like to see better communication with the DDA. Planning for Pride on June 28 is underway. The committee is exploring putting out a postcard with event dates early in the year so businesses that want to take part can plan and notify their customers. They've also discussed surveying businesses for input on how to improve communication, and if events help their bottom line.

Marketing Committee

No report.

D. Organization Committee

Passalacqua reported the committee is discussing and planning for the Director's annual review.

X. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

Mack reported he attended Main Street's Annual Conference in Tulsa in April. The Conference will be in Detroit in 2027. The BOSS District expansion was approved by Council. He submitted BOO!kley for MSOC's 2025 Event of the Year. Frank's Landscaping mulched the flowers and trees a few weeks ago.

XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS: None.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The opportunity for public comment was offered. No requests to comment were made at the meeting. Anyone with comments or questions is asked to e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 AM on motion by Passalacqua and second by Dutcher.