



DDA Board Meeting
8:00 am Wednesday August 5, 2026
City Hall Conference Room
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, MI 48335

Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 AM by Todd Craft.

1. Roll Call

Present: Todd Craft, Karlyn Cassidy, Claire Perko, Joe LaRussa, James McLaughlan

Absent: Shawn Kavanagh, Donovan Singleton, Sean Murphy, and Tom Pascaris

Others Present: Jess Westendorf, Jenny Gray

2. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by LaRussa, seconded by McLaughlan to approve the Consent Agenda, including the June 3, 2026 DDA Board Regular Meeting minutes, June 18, 2026 DDA Design Committee minutes, and July 9, 2026 DDA Design Committee minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Regular Agenda

Motion by LaRussa, seconded by McLaughlin to approve the regular agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment

No public comments.

5. Executive Director Update

Jess Westendorf reported that the Art Park Promenade was open and the Make A Wave mural was complete, earning an Oakland County Main Street placemaking award and regional media coverage. Additional furnishings, sculptures, and site improvements were still being completed, with a formal dedication planned once installation work was finished. She also noted continued growth in the downtown public art program, including the sale of a Ken Thompson sculpture for permanent installation at Hillside Townes, the installation of Gateway for Our Souls at the Promenade, and an upcoming Public Art Committee meeting to select additional Midwest Sculpture Initiative pieces.

The Retail LAB opened with The Lowry Estate, with Valbona Vintage scheduled to follow in September, and interest from prospective 2027 tenants remained strong. Westendorf also highlighted upcoming visits and media opportunities involving the Michigan Association of Mayors and SEMCOG. Discussion continued regarding The Farmington mixed-use development, including limited height-related variances, project density, and alignment with downtown development goals; Westendorf noted that TIF

support would be needed to address the project's financial gap. She concluded by recognizing recent volunteer efforts, including MJ Hrutkay's receipt of the Mary Martin Service Award, and reported that preparations for Harvest Moon Celebration and Grand Raven Festival were underway, with sponsorship revenue running ahead of 2025 levels.

6. Ratify Warren Construction Invoice #2508-6 & Invoice #2508-7

Westendorf presented Warren Construction invoices #2508-6 and #2508-7 for services performed in June. The work was divided between two invoices to provide a clean fiscal-year break.

Motion by LaRussa, seconded by McLaughlin, that the DDA Board move to ratify payment to Warren Construction of \$91,403.90 and \$26,679.00 for Art Park Promenade derived from account 248-000.00-970.242. Capital Outlay, Art Promenade. Motion passes unanimously via roll-call vote.

Votes

Ayes (5): Todd Craft, Claire Perko, James McLaughlan, Karlyn Cassidy, Joe LaRussa

Nays (0): None

Absent (4): Donovan Singleton, Sean Murphy, Shawn Kavanagh, Tom Pascaris

7. Approval of Pay Request #8 – Warren Construction

The Board considered final Pay Request #8 for Warren Construction in the amount of \$40,142.80 for work completed at the Art Park Promenade.

Motion by LaRussa, seconded by Cassidy that the Board approve pay order #8 in the amount of \$40,142.80 to Warren Construction for the Art Park Promenade derived from 248-00.00-970.242 Capital Outlay, Art Promenade. Motion passes unanimously via roll-call vote.

Votes

Ayes (5): Todd Craft, Claire Perko, James McLaughlan, Karlyn Cassidy, Joe LaRussa

Nays (0): None

Absent (4): Donovan Singleton, Sean Murphy, Shawn Kavanagh, Tom Pascaris

8. Hillside Townes TIF Reimbursement #1

The Board reviewed Hillside Townes TIF Reimbursement Request #1. The packet requested approval of \$1,021,954 in eligible costs, with an initial payment of \$29,292.44 available from current tax increment revenues. During discussion, board members raised questions regarding certain eligible costs and agreed to approve only the currently available first payment while conducting additional review of the overall reimbursement request.

Motion by Perko, seconded by LaRussa move to approve Reimbursement Request #1 for Hillside Townes – 33000 Thomas Street in the amount of \$ 29,292.44. The motion passed unanimously via roll-call vote.

Votes

Ayes (5): Todd Craft, Claire Perko, James McLaughlan, Karlyn Cassidy, Joe LaRussa

Nays (0): None

Absent (4): Donovan Singleton, Sean Murphy, Shawn Kavanagh, Tom Pascaris

9. Sign Grant Request Review – Table 42

Westendorf presented the Table 42 sign grant request. The reimbursable grant provides 50 percent of eligible costs up to \$4,000. Staff recommended authorization contingent upon a final Design Committee review confirming that the materials and construction met the committee's design standards.

Motion by LaRussa and seconded by Cassidy, that the DDA Board approve the Sign Incentive Grant application for Table 42 in an amount not to exceed \$4,000, contingent upon final review and approval of the proposed sign design and materials by the DDA Design Committee. Reimbursement shall be based on paid invoices or receipts and shall not exceed 50% of eligible project costs or the amount approved by the DDA Board. Funds shall be derived from Development Incentives 248-000.00-880.005. Motion passes unanimously via roll-call vote.

Votes

Ayes (5): Todd Craft, Claire Perko, James McLaughlan, Karlyn Cassidy, Joe LaRussa

Nays (0): None

Absent (4): Donovan Singleton, Sean Murphy, Shawn Kavanagh, Tom Pascaris

10. Committee Updates

- a. Promotions Committee: Westendorf reported that the Promotions Committee had not met formally, but promotional work continued. Recent water bill inserts highlighted the Great American Main Street Award, the Retail LAB, Farmington After Dark, and the upcoming Harvest Moon Celebration. Fall promotional materials were also being prepared for distribution.
- b. Business Development Committee: McLaughlan reported that the Business Development Committee had not held a formal meeting since the previous Board meeting. Positive feedback had been received from the current Retail LAB participant, and the committee was preparing for review of upcoming participants and the next phase of the program. The Board also discussed potential future pop-up businesses and ways to begin promoting incoming Retail LAB tenants while continuing to support the current tenant.
- c. Design Committee: Perko reported that the Design Committee had focused on The Farmington development at the former Village Shoe Inn site. The committee also reviewed a proposed replacement monument sign for Farmington Place and provided feedback requesting a revised design. Perko noted that the Art Park Promenade had opened and was already receiving strong public use, including activity during the Farmers Market.

- d. Public Art Committee: Perko noted that the committee would meet later in August to select additional sculptures through the Midwest Sculpture Initiative for placement in the Art Park Promenade.
- e. Organization Committee: Cassidy reported that the Org Committee had not met formally but had been active through volunteer engagement efforts. The recent Volunteer Appreciation event and volunteer sign-up were reported as successful. Cassidy was personally reaching out to individuals who had registered through the DDA volunteer portal with the intent to familiarize new volunteers with available opportunities, including event assistance and committee service, and Cassidy discussed developing a frequently asked questions resource based on those conversations.

11. Other Business

James McLaughlan reported strong participation in the third annual Farmington Fit program, noting that engagement appeared higher than in previous years. The program concluded successfully without any sessions requiring cancellation or rescheduling.

Joe LaRussa reported that he had begun discussions with Spectrum about improving Wi-Fi coverage in Riley Park. Westendorf added that broader public Wi-Fi improvements are planned in future downtown infrastructure plans and that the DDA is currently testing a Wi-Fi device in Riley Park to support Farmers Market vendor transactions.

12. Board Comment

Todd Craft thanked Board members for their time and involvement at the recent Volunteer Appreciation event. He specifically recognized Sean Murphy for his remarks honoring MJ Hrutkay and thanked James McLaughlan for his continued work with Farmington Fit. Craft expressed appreciation for the additional time and effort Board members have contributed to support DDA staff and downtown programming.

13. Adjournment

A motion by Perko, seconded by Cassidy to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 AM. The motion passes unanimously.