

# Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2026, 3 p.m. | City Hall, 241 W. South Street

**PRESENT:** Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Jeff Breneman (virtual), Trisha Kidd, Rick Searing, Cheng Kidd Sun, Jessica Thompson, Harvin Sandhu

**STAFF:** Meghan Behymer (Downtown Coordinator), Maria Smith (Community Investment Administrative Assistant), Bobby Boyd (Economic Development Supervisor)

## A. CALL TO ORDER

**DIRECTOR AARDEMA CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 4:06 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Curt Aardema, Mayor David Anderson, Jeff Breneman (virtual), Trisha Kidd, Rick Searing, Cheng Kidd Sun, Jessica Thompson

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Clarence Lloyd, Stanley Steppes

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCE:** None

**THE MARCH 16, 2026, ATTENDANCE, INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES IS RECORDED.**

### 1. Purpose Statement:

The purpose of this Downtown Development Authority is to halt property value deterioration and promote economic growth within its business district, to increase property value.

The purpose of this Downtown Economic Growth Authority is to correct and prevent deterioration in residential, commercial, and industrial areas, to authorize the acquisition and disposal of interests in real and personal property; to authorize the creation and implementation of development plans and development areas.

The Kalamazoo DDA and DEGA, acting in concert, have set forth the strategic objective of focusing its resources on improving “The First 16 Feet”, a three-dimensional volume of space including buildings ground floor façade, the frontage that exists between the façade and the common space, and the common space that provides access to and through the district.

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## B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

**DIRECTOR KIDD SUN MOTIONED TO ADOPT THE MARCH 16, 2026, DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AGENDA AS AMENDED. DIRECTOR THOMPSON SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.**

## C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**DIRECTOR THOMPSON MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD ON FEBRUARY 16, 2026. DIRECTOR SEARING SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.**

## D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

### 1. Financial Report – January 2026 (Meghan Behymer, Downtown Coordinator)

Behymer presented the January 2026 Financial Report: In January, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) received no revenue. 2026 year-to-date revenue totals \$0. January expenses totaled \$602. Key expense categories included: Utilities (\$602) for electricity. 2026 year-to-date expenses total \$602.

**DIRECTOR KIDD SUN MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE JANUARY 2026 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FINANCIAL REPORT. MAYOR ANDERSON SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.**

## E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

### 1. 2026-2027 Slate of Officers

The Executive Committee recommends the following slate of officers for the 2026-2027 term:

- Chair: Curt Aardema
- Vice-Chair: Clarence Lloyd
- Treasurer: Rick Searing
- Secretary: Trisha Kidd

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The proposed slate mirrors DEGA structure because Behymer identified a misalignment in bylaws regarding officer roles: DDA has combined Treasurer & Secretary roles. DEGA has separate roles with the option to combine Treasurer/Secretary role. The plan is to align structures via bylaw amendment (Article III) and bring the amendment for Board approval in April.

**DIRECTOR KIDD SUN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2026-2027 SLATE OF OFFICERS, CONTINGENT UPON DDA BYLAW AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE III: OFFICERS). DIRECTOR KIDD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION APPROVED.**

## F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

## G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director Kidd shared her excitement for her daughter making Kalamazoo Central varsity soccer team.

Director Thompson expressed her gratitude for Behymer and the Board's hard work and showed excitement for the new members.

Director Kidd Sun thanked Director Breneman for serving on the Board for 8 years.

Director Searing thanked Behymer for her the downtown branding refresh and congratulated the (St. Patrick's Day) parade organizers.

Mayor Anderson led a discussion on the reported increase in "unhoused sleeping contacts". The group suspected this is due to weather rather than shelter availability and Behymer will work to get additional details on how the information is derived. It was pointed out that the data reflects interactions, not unique individuals as this can't be tracked due to legal/privacy concerns.

The Board expressed interest in participating in the weekly meeting with Public Safety and community partners.

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Mayor Anderson brought up ongoing concerns about parking, safety perception, disruption in traffic flows and the need for the Board to align input to represent downtown.

The Board expressed strong concern about upcoming parking policy changes and public perception. Board feedback has influenced some changes such as delayed implementation, later meter start time (10a.m.), retention of free parking in some areas, and addition of short-term loading zones. Feedback from businesses has largely been neutral to negative and doesn't reflect a clear demand for increased parking enforcement or paid expansion.

Director Aardema expressed ongoing concerns about the lack of clear data supporting the need for parking policy changes. The Board has encouraged a delay in implementation due to big changes coming like road construction, event center, and state theater, but the City has continued with the plan. The Board's overall perception is that parking decisions are driven by a desire to turn parking spaces more frequently, revenue generation and the recoupment of investment in new kiosks. The apparent risk of moving forward with the plan is a reduction in downtown visitation due to negative customer experiences from parking enforcement which will hinder economic growth.

The Board discussed ways to be proactive about the parking concerns and effective and productive ways to move forward such as continued engagement at parking meetings, formal board action, increased documentation/data collection, and public communication if concerns escalate.

Director Aardema shared about his fun experience downtown at Burdick's. He also thanked Director Breneman and Director Thompson for their hard work all the years on the Board.

### H. ADJOURNMENT

**DIRECTOR THOMPSON MOTIONED TO ADJOURN, SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR KIDD SUN. MOTION APPROVED WITH NOONE OPPOSED.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 P.M.**