

**Ishpeming Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 24, 2025**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Ishpeming Downtown Development Authority was held on Monday, March 24, 2025, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chair David Aro at 4:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: David Aro, Brice Sturmer (arrived at 4:04 pm), Tracy Magnuson, Brian Buchanan, Antonio Adan, Kelly Milano, Krystan Beaumont, Brett Argall, and Randy Scholz (9). Absent: Carrie Meyer (1). Vacant: one seat (1). Also present was Linda Andriacchi for Beautification and Chris Germain and Rachel Raak from the Lake Superior Community Partnership.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT - There was none.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Member Buchanan, seconded by Member Beaumont and carried unanimously to approve the January 13th and January 27th minutes as presented.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Grant Getschow reviewed the monthly financial report for period ending February 28, 2024.

A motion was made by Member Magnuson, seconded by Member Adan and carried unanimously to approve the financial report as presented.

6. BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Linda Andriacchi gave a brief history of her 11 years with the City of Ishpeming working on the beautification effort. She explained that after COVID several of the volunteers had not returned. She would like to try and recruit additional volunteers and would like to begin the process of hiring the Beautification Caretaker position. She added Emily Hebert, who was previously the Beautification Caretaker, would again like to do this work. There was discussion related to the position being hired by DPW as a summer laborer and being assigned the caretaker duties. In addition, she would like the position to remain at \$15.00 per hour.

A motion was made by Member Magnuson, seconded by Member Adan and carried unanimously for the DDA to support the Cemetery Board recommendation to increase the wages for the summer laborers to \$15.00 per hour.

7. LSCP UPDATE

a. LSCP Quarterly Update

Chris Germain, Lake Superior Community Partnership, provided a brief quarterly report covering the work outlined in their contract which included an update on the 2025 Match on Main that became available after receiving the Redevelopment Ready Communities essentials certification; the general grant writing workshop was very well attended; flyers for the DDA Façade Grant program and Start Up Assistance program were developed along with the ranking criteria; there were approximately 17 ribbon cuttings in Ishpeming in 2024; and the West End Newsletter featured many businesses in Ishpeming.

**Ishpeming Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 24, 2025**

In addition, he advised the LSCP was assisting the City with the MEDC Branding and Marketing grant; and announced the upcoming events to be held including the Breakfast and Business and the LSCP Annual Dinner.

8. REQUEST FOR 2024 FAÇADE GRANT EXTENSION

a. The Mather

Bill Anderson, The Mather, informed the DDA they did have a contractor that had committed to the restoration of the basement and the same contractor also committed to completing the work on The Mather façade. All work will be completed in 2025.

A motion was made by Member Beaumont, seconded by Member Magnuson and carried unanimously to extend the 2024 façade grant received by The Mather through December 31, 2025.

9. 2025 FAÇADE GRANT APPLICATION RANKING

a. The Plant Connection

There was discussion related to the façade grant application received from the Plant Connection. All information was included in the application. The total of the proposed improvements was \$6,300 with a requested grant amount of \$3,150.

Linda Andriacchi was present and advised she was excited to have the work complete and the site would look great in the end.

A motion was made by Member Magnuson, seconded by Member Buchanan and carried unanimously to approve the façade grant application for the Plant Connection in the amount of \$3,150.

b. 204/206 Cleveland Avenue

There was discussion related to the application submitted for the project. Questions were raised by some of the members of the DDA which included concerns over the removal of the brick; what the final project would look like; not having a rendering of the completed project; and obtaining some additional information related to the structural integrity and aesthetics.

It was the consensus of the DDA to place this item back on the May regular agenda and reach out to the owner and request his attendance at the meeting.

Member Sturmer suggested the DDA consider allowing the façade grants to be rolling grants (one year from date of application) versus a calendar year deadline. He realized this would require some tracking; however, it would be much better for the applicants. He also suggested, with rolling grants, the DDA could continue to accept applications while funds were available.

The DDA suggested Member Sturmer research other communities and place this item on the next regular agenda in May.

**Ishpeming Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 24, 2025**

10. ISHPEMING COMMUNITY EVENTS REPORT

Member Magnuson reported Music in the Park will be happening again this year along with Festival of Treasures. Festival of Treasures will be held on Thursday, July 3rd and Ishpeming will celebrate the Fourth of July on Saturday, July 5th. Member Milano announced she was taking over the Fourth of July picnic and gave a brief update on some of the proposed scheduled events.

11. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discuss potential hiring of a part-time DDA Director

Member Adan thought with the momentum in the City currently it would be great for the DDA to have a Director to oversee projects and to be the front-line person for anyone interested in coming to the City; to work on event organization; attend ribbon cuttings; and to work on obtaining grant funding.

Discussion followed related to the duties of the position; if any benefits could be offered; full-time versus part-time; wage range; and the possibility of still utilizing the LSCP for assistance to the Director.

Finance Director Getschow suggested the part-time Zoning Administrator be increased to full-time and assume the duties of the DDA Director.

Manager Scholz and Finance Director Getschow will look at various options for the next regular meeting for the part-time DDA Director position. An approximate wage would be \$56-65,000 for a full-time position.

Skate Park Update - Finance Director Getschow informed the DDA that the City held a listening session to receive input on the proposed design for the skate park. American Ramp was making some revisions to the plans which would result in a slight increase in cost.

Anderson Building Update - Member Adan reported work on the stabilization of the Anderson Building would begin late spring/early summer.

12. NEW BUSINESS

Member Beaumont advised she was not aware that the Marji Gesick event was named after the Native American explorer connected with Ishpeming. She further explained she met with Sarah Garver from Native Nails and they talked about having a Pow Wow in Ishpeming potentially in September of this year. She thought this was a great idea and would like to continue discussions with Ms. Garver. Members Milano and Beaumont would meet with Ms. Garver to further discuss.

13. ADJOURNMENT

At 5:35 p.m., a motion was made by Member Beaumont, seconded by Member Adan and carried unanimously to adjourn.



Cathy Smith, City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager