

City of Iron Mountain
Downtown Development Authority
Monday, September 8, 2025
Regular Meeting Minutes
12:00pm at City Hall

I. Meeting called to order: at 12:01pm - Megan Blomquist, Sonja Matzke, Kim Webb, David Hendrickson, Lucas Davidson, Joe Linn, Jordan Stanchina, Katherine Mentel, and Tim McCauley present.

II. Approval of Agenda: *The agenda was approved on a motion by Stanchina, seconded by Linn, and carried unanimously.*

III. Consent Agenda Items: *The Consent Agenda Items were approved on a motion by Stanchina, seconded by Matzke, and carried unanimously.*

A. Regular Meeting Minutes

I. 7/14/2025 and 8/11/2025

B. Committee Reports

I. Events Committee: 7/29/2025 and 8/02/2025

II. Business Development Committee: *no July or August meetings*

III. Beautification Committee: 7/01/2025 and 8/05/2025

IV. New Business

A. Treasurer Reports June 2025 and July 2025 - After brief review, *the June and July 2025 Treasurer Reports were approved on a motion by Linn, seconded by Stanchina, and carried unanimously.*

V. Old Business

A. No old business

VI. Event Coordinator Updates:

A. August and Upcoming Events Recap

- a. Farmers & Artisans Market (FAM) - McCauley noted that the FAM generally has about 30% more vendors every Saturday than last year, and that attendance by the public has been similar to last year. Weather seems to be the key factor determining attendance, while other concurrent community events also influence attendance. He also noted that marketing on social media was curtailed somewhat from July 15 to September 1, and that may have resulted in slightly lower attendance by the public. Overall, a minimal amount of social media marketing and engagement, combined with running Facebook ads throughout the season, does not seem to hurt attendance versus last year. Full vendor and public attendance information will be brought to the next Board meeting.
- b. Out to Lunch (OTL) - Mentel noted that there seemed to be widespread acceptance by sponsors and attendees for adding one more OTL performance in the third week of August. She also noted that the rotating food vendors this year

were very well-received by the public. In the course of a short discussion, McCauley and Mentel suggested that OTL is close to breaking even, considering the amount of staff time involved in planning and conducting the OTL events. It was the consensus of the Board that any additional OTL date would require an additional music sponsor. Staff will also provide complete financial results for OTL at the next Board meeting..

- c. Italian Fest - Mentel noted that attendance and net proceeds were down 25% from the previous year, mainly due to adverse weather (lightning, rain from noon to 4:30). The staff had to implement a weather safety plan until about 1:00 due to the lightning, which was understood by the public but nevertheless hurt overall attendance.

McCauley and Mentel also noted that roughly 11 cases of canned craft beer and other beverages left over from Brew Fest were sold at Italian Fest. While it was beneficial to sell the surplus beverages, they also noted that the margin on those beverages was lower than that for keg beer.

Webb suggested that perhaps the DDA and the community should consider modifying the event to include other ethnicities. In the ensuing discussion, several people noted that Italian Fest should probably continue as-is due to its connection with local heritage and the fact that it is very well-received by the public each year. If anything were to change formats, Brew Fest would be a good candidate for replacement with something having broader appeal, as suggested by Webb. Perhaps Brew Fest (under a different name) could be scheduled for the third week of June and transform to a more of a variety of food and family fun type of event. This will be discussed at a future Board meeting sometime before the staff would have to confirm Brew Fest vendors in March/April 2026.

- d. Oktoberfest - Mentel noted that the staff is finalizing event details, and has been meeting with Mark Klossner to improve aspects of the event. The staff will also explore ways to make Oktoberfest have broader community-wide appeal in the future. She noted that everyone the staff talks to is excited about the 15-piece polka band playing during the middle of the event.

Mentel also noted that she and McCauley had recently evaluated pricing and margins for drinks - both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. In particular, prices for Coke products had increased over the past several years to about \$1.55 per bottle, and therefore the cost at DDA events should be \$3 rather than \$2. This was the Board's consensus on the matter as well, so Coke products will be sold for \$3 per bottle from now on. All other prices seem to be about right. For future purchases of pop/soda, Stanchina suggested purchasing 16.9 ounce bottles rather than 20 ounce bottles if the cost is lower, then selling them for \$3.

- e. Fall Events (Pumpkin Walk, Girls Night Out, Christmas Walk) - Mentel briefly noted planning is underway for the later fall events. Sign-ups for Pumpkin Walk and Girls Night Out were sent out with the DDA September newsletter. After Party for Girls Night Out will be held at Sol Blu, with details to be finalized during October.

VII. Program Coordinator Updates:

- A. **DDA Strategic Goals and Action Plan** - McCauley noted that Goal #10, pertaining to partnerships and working relationships, was selected for this month's discussion of strategic goals and actions. He distributed a copy of a table listing key sponsors, key volunteers, key vendors, and others that have important relationships with the DDA. He asked the Board members to review it at their convenience and provide ideas for adding to the list. It would also be beneficial to consider partnerships that would be desirable, but which do not currently exist.

In terms of new relationships, Mentel noted that someone who can provide photos and video of DDA events would be beneficial. She added that finding good photos and video for event promotions is often a challenge. Stanchina suggested having people share their photos with the DDA on social media as one way to obtain new photos of events.

- B. **Toro Greenspace Enhancement Grant** - McCauley noted that he and Matzke had been discussing ways to spend the remaining \$13,200 in funds from the grant received by Friends of the Iron Mountain DDA last year, and distributed a table detailing the proposal so far. Stanchina noted that removal of 20 trees this spring, some of them quite large in terms of root growth, was perhaps an over-commitment of DPW resources, and that planting 10 more trees next spring would be problematic in light of that experience. He indicated that perhaps 5 more trees would be more realistic in terms of DPW resources.

Matzke provided an estimate of the cost of preparing the "Pit Garden" for receiving new plants to replace existing vegetation and weeds. After a brief discussion, it was determined that the garden is located outside of the DDA boundary, and therefore DDA funds and Friends of the DDA funds cannot be used to fund any activities there. Mentel noted that the Pit Garden would be a good candidate for grant funding to promote pollinators and native plants, and that various other entities such as non-profit organizations could be the recipient of a grant. She indicated that she would discuss the idea with a few friends.

As a result of the previous discussion, Matzke suggested that 5-8 new oblong rectangular sidewalk planters, in a different style than the round concrete ones currently in use, could be purchased and placed in areas which do not currently have flowers, such as the alleyway next to Blackstone Pizza. There was consensus with her idea, and she agreed to work with McCauley on finalizing the use of funds for the Toro Greenspace Enhancement Grant.

- C. **RRC Essentials progress** - McCauley noted that he and Issac Micheau had uploaded and submitted the "Internal Review Process" RRC document to the MEDC and received feedback to add a few items of clarification to the document to finalize the submittal. They will also submit the City's "Capital Improvements Plan" within the next few weeks after Stanchina reviews one key section of that document. Then, around October 1 they plan to submit "Planning Commission 2024 Annual Report" following some edits and additions to that document by Micheau.

D. Downtown/TIF plan progress - McCauley noted that Census data preparation, needed for gathering demographic and housing data for the plan, was complete. He anticipates having meetings with potential advisory committee members in October and November.

VI. Public Comment - There was no public comment.

VII. Member Privilege - Blomquist noted that the sidewalk planter next to Sol Blu on Ludington Street did not have any plants in it. McCauley and Matzke indicated that it was planted with flowers around June 1, and they will investigate how the planter came to be empty.

VIII. Adjournment - *The meeting was adjourned at 1:05pm on a motion by Davidson, seconded by Stanchina, and carried unanimously.* Next regular meeting: Monday, October 13, 2025.