City of Iron Mountain
Downtown Development Authority
Monday, March 9, 2026
Regular Meeting Minutes
12:00pm

I. Meeting called to order - at 12:03pm. Megan Blomquist, Joe Linn, Mark Klossner, David Hendrickson, Jordan Stanchina, Kim Webb, Sonja Matzke, Katherine Mentel, and Tim McCauley present.

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

III. Consent Agenda Items - *The consent agenda was approved on a motion by Klossner, seconded by Stanchina, and carried unanimously.*

A. Regular Meeting Minutes

I. 2/09/2025

B. Committee Reports

I. Events Committee: 2/24/2025

II. Business Development Committee: no February meeting

III. Beautification Committee: 2/03/2025

IV. New Business

A. Treasurer Report for January 2026 - McCauley noted that the January report did not contain a receipts register since the DDA received no payments in January. In response to a question from Matzke, he noted that the check payment (on the Check Disbursement Report) to Belson Outdoors for $1609.16 for trash can liners had been recognized as an expense in December, paid in January. McCauley also noted that the $48,046.85 received YTD from the property tax assessment would likely be supplemented by roughly $3,000 to $4,000 between now and June 31, bringing the FY 2025-26 total to a number similar to that noted as "actual 2025" in the recently adopted FY 2026-27 budget.

On a motion by Linn, seconded by Klossner, and carried unanimously, the Treasurer Report for January 2026 was approved.

V. Staff Updates/Reports

A. **Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Essentials Progress** - McCauley distributed screenshot copies of an online collaboration dashboard which the City uses to interact with Pablo Majano at the State of Michigan and submit documents for the RRC program. He noted that Mr. Majano met with City staff (Stanchina, Micheau, McCauley) in late 2024 to discuss RRC Essentials and clarify steps to be taken to address deficiencies or incomplete items, also known as "best practices." Since then, City staff have submitted three documents (Internal Review Process, Capital Improvements Plan, and Planning Commission Annual Report) which have been approved and designated as complete. City staff are currently working on the Training Plan for City councils, boards, and commissions. In response to several questions from the Board, McCauley explained that the training plan is a simple document that sets forth a list of ideas for training for each council, commission, and board - including the DDA Board - and that he would email it to the DDA Board before their April meeting.

A discussion then ensued regarding a timetable for any remaining RRC document tasks to be completed. McCauley noted that those items include an Orientation Plan for City councils, commissions, and boards (including the DDA); a Public Participation Plan; Bylaws for City councils, commissions, and boards (including the DDA); the 2025 Planning Commission Annual Report; and the Downtown/TIF plan. Stanchina noted that all but the Downtown/TIF plan were relatively simple documents, could be based on samples or templates from other Michigan communities, and could probably be completed without too much time or effort. He added that the downtown plan is a requirement to achieve RRC Essentials status, but a companion TIF plan was not. McCauley concurred, noting that the downtown plan is a legal requirement for establishing a TIF district in Michigan, but that TIF was separate from the RRC program. He and Blomquist noted that establishing the TIF district was a high priority for the DDA financially, and completing the Downtown/TIF plan would enable that to happen as soon as possible. Blomquist suggested that this process move ahead and that the Downtown/TIF Plan Advisory Committee previously discussed by the Board be assembled and brought into the planning effort.

While there was a consensus around the urgency of completing the Downtown/TIF plan, it was also agreed that finishing up the RRC process should be accomplished - aside from the Downtown/TIF plan - if the necessary steps could perhaps be completed within the next month. McCauley noted that since he and Mentel were somewhat ahead of schedule in planning the summer event season, and since the arduous Brew Fest planning process would be avoided this year, that it should be possible to complete all of the remaining RRC-related documents before the next DDA Board meeting in April. At that time, they could receive a status report and discuss the Training Plan and Orientation Plan document sections that pertain to the DDA Board. The Board requested that McCauley make this his highest priority over the next month, setting aside the Downtown/TIF plan during that time if necessary. McCauley added that he would attempt to keep the Downtown/TIF plan work moving as well, and at least take initial steps to assemble the Downtown/TIF Plan Advisory Committee in accordance with guidelines set forth in a DDA Board motion approved at the June 9, 2025 meeting last year.

B. **Downtown/TIF Plan Progress -** McCauley noted that he would now provide the Board with examples of progress to date - for demographic & housing data, and also geographic & land use data - that are being used to write the Background Information section of the plan. That section is intended to inform local government officials and the public regarding current conditions and trends so downtown plan vision, policies, programs, and projects can be formulated in a manner that takes account of real challenges and opportunities. For example, he noted, population and household growth in the City and the larger IMK area has been stagnant for several decades, the cost of building multi-unit housing and mixed-use buildings is beyond the ability to charge reasonable rents for the current market conditions, the demand for new housing seems to be in Breitung Township, and thus promoting multi-unit and mixed-use buildings may not be a practical or achievable recommendation for the Downtown/TIF plan.

McCauley then distributed 4 data tables showing population, median age, median household income, and year built for housing units in the City of Iron Mountain, the surrounding area, and other areas such as Escanaba, Marquette, Green Bay, Michigan, Wisconsin, and the USA. He pointed out a few observations regarding the data as the Board studied the tables. He added that the data tables he handed out were beyond the level of detail to be presented in the plan, and that in writing the Background Information section the challenge was to keep it concise while including relevant and compelling information. He noted he has been engaged in writing and

interpreting the data, and that he could provide the Board with a brief one-page summary of findings for demographic, housing, income, and labor force data in the near future.

McCauley then distributed copies of data and associated maps depicting land use, building use, and condition of buildings for the entire DDA area as well as the core downtown area. The data and maps indicated location and extent of residential, commercial, public, and other uses, and showed that roughly 27% of both the total DDA area and the core downtown area were covered with parking lots - mostly privately-owned. He noted that small towns, without multi-level parking ramps and public transit, typically have a higher percentage of land devoted to parking, according to an AI-generated analysis he also handed out. McCauley added that the AI analysis indeed made sense, based upon his past in-depth analyses of land use in both large cities and small towns in Southeastern Wisconsin, and that downtown Iron Mountain may be in need of more public parking facilities. This is another example of how data can be used to help guide formulation of plan recommendations. Stanchina noted that there likely is enough parking downtown, but the locations of parking facilities was probably not optimal.

Webb noted that over time, as a realtor, she observed some buildings downtown being hard to sell due to the perception that customers or residents would have a hard time parking nearby. She added that this and other factors influence the usability and value of properties downtown. McCauley pointed out that conclusions from the Background Information section of the plan, along with real-time observations and input from citizens, business people, and others, including Ms. Webb, come together when a group of informed people engage in discussion. That dynamic is what makes a Downtown/TIF Plan Advisory Committee a valuable and essential part of formulating a realistic vision and action plans for the future.

After all of the foregoing discussion, McCauley was asked if he thought it was possible to complete writing the introductory and background information sections of the Downtown/TIF plan for the May DDA Board meeting. McCauley responded that doing so would certainly be possible if he had no other duties to perform, and noted in years past that March, April, and May tended to be very busy with summer event preparations. However, he reiterated that he and Mentel are very well organized and ahead of schedule this year, and are not going to be engaged in time-intensive Brew Fest preparation, so it's likely that he will have sufficient time. In any event, McCauley added, it should be possible to provide an abbreviated draft of the aforementioned plan sections by the May meeting, so he will set aside anything else possible over the next two months to make it happen.

VI. Public Comment - There was no public comment at the meeting and none was reported by any of the Board members present.

VII. Member Privilege - Matzke noted that she was changing employers from CCI Systems to Systems Control, and would no longer be employed by a downtown business. McCauley noted that the DDA/TIF law in Michigan states that "Not less than a majority of the members shall be persons having an interest in property located in the downtown district or officers, members, trustees, principals, or employees of a legal entity having an interest in property located in the downtown district." and that the composition of the Board would still meet those requirements by a wide margin.

VIII. Adjournment - *On a motion by Stanchina, seconded by Matzke, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 1:18pm.* Next regular DDA Board meeting: Monday, April 13, 2026.