



RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

1315 S. Washington Avenue
Morley Building – 1 Tuscola
989.399.1311
January 13, 2026
MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll Call:

Chair Keenan-Lechel called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Abraham Allen, Erin Andrus, Steve Hensley, Brian Keenan-Lechel, John Moton, Tim Morales, Travis Hare
Absent: Martin Chelekis, Steve Gerhardt, Mark Fischer, Jacinta Seals
Excused: Aaron Bedford, Joshua Daniels, Carrie Davis, Vee Murugan

Chair Keenan-Lechel opened the meeting with a moment of silence for the loss of Commissioner Kevin Rooker.

Approval of Minutes:

A quorum was not present.

Public Comments:

None.

Chair Report:

Chair Keenan-Lechel reported that the Bringing Back the Ice event at Hoyt Park begins this Saturday and continues for the next five Saturdays. He reported that there will be a pond hockey tournament beginning on February 13 and continuing on February 14, with the 12th Annual Outhouse Races also taking place on the 14th. These events are coordinated by Positive Results Downtown and the Friends of Hoyt Park, with Saginaw County Parks serving as sponsor and contributing partner.

Reports:

- **Medical Diamond**

Manager Morales reported that there is no new information, however, the City Council Strategic Planning session will include updates from MDOT on the M-13 corridor study, Saginaw County Health Department, Central Michigan University, Saginaw Valley State University, and Great Lakes Bay Health. He stated that Tom Miller of Saginaw Future will provide an overview of the Medical Diamond Project.

Manager Morales further reported that the engineering and site plans are done for the park. Commissioner Hare reported that the floodplain and Army Corps of Engineers permitting process has begun for the features of the park and that process will likely continue for another year. Commissioner Hare also reported that the infrastructure work for the park will likely begin late summer or early fall this year.

- **City Manager**

Manager Morales reported that the City Hall construction project is ongoing with the hope that the second floor will be completed by June.

Commissioner Hare reported that the Ojibway Island Road work and parking lot construction will begin when the weather breaks in the spring and the goal is to have it completed by July 4. He stated that the trail project from Ojibway south to Wickes Park and from Ojibway north to the Medical Diamond area will likely also be complete around July. He further reported that the Council of Michigan Foundations would like to award the city with \$100,000 for further construction.

Commissioner Hare stated that MDHHS recently awarded Covenant \$500,000 and the city was also awarded \$400,000 for improvements at Bliss Park and that the city will apply for smaller grants for traffic islands for pedestrians to cross Michigan safely to get to the park.

Manager Morales reported meeting with the Saginaw Community Foundation, and they would like to fund additional play dates. The goal is to work with SCF and the County Parks to facilitate and fund the additional dates with the goal that Council set in its Strategic Plan last year of adding \$100,000 to parks and recreation.

Commissioner Hare reported that the Boat Launch, Lee Street, and Hoyt Park upper drive will all be bid together as one project for repaving this year. He also stated that benches will be installed on Ojibway with funds from the ARPA allocation.

Commissioner Hare further reported that beginning July 1, the city will receive an additional \$500,000 per fiscal year for road funding, which is a 50% increase from previous years. With the additional funding, Hancock and Ames, between Michigan and Niagara will be repaired. He stated that streets near the M-46 and Gratiot split will be milled and resurfaced utilizing CDBG funds, local streets funds, and also local road millage dollars.

- **DDA/Old Town**

Commissioner Hensley reported that the DDA is about halfway through its fiscal year and budget and has \$30,000 of \$50,000 façade grant money left. He stated that there are Special Event dollars left as well. He further reported that the DDA recently unveiled its Public Arts Grant and made the first award of \$7,500. The grant can be used to support any beautification that's free and open to the public. The application window opened October 1 and closes February 1.

Commissioner Hensley further reported that the Match on Main program launches March 1 and goes through April 20. The DDA receives the applications and forwards one or two to the State for review. This year MEDC allocated \$1.5 million to the program and has about \$75,000 rollover from last year. As a redevelopment ready certified community, the city qualifies for support of small businesses, and the program is intended for activation of underutilized spaces.

Manager Morales reported that the apartment project in Old Town between Adams and Cass will begin this year and will be approximately 30 units. He further reported that there will be restrooms and a pavilion constructed on the Tea House property to facilitate more events.

- **Riverfront Loop**

No report.

- **Beautification Day**

Chair Keenan-Lechel stated that he intends to speak with the Mayor regarding adding a beautification day on the Friday before the Clean Up event to coincide with the Community Foundation's Spring into Service Day, which is May 14. The goal would be to combine resources and have a larger impact.

- **Ojibway Island**

This report was combined with the City Manager report for this meeting.

Miscellaneous:

Commissioner Andrus reported that the text for the Les Tincknell marker has been approved and she is in the process of obtaining a price for the pedestal.

Adjourn:

Chair Keenan-Lechel adjourned the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Recorded by,

Kristine Bolzman
City Clerk