

# DLI Board Meeting

September 11, 2025 | 11:30 am

215 S. Washington Square Ste. 100, Lansing, MI 48933

**Board Members Present:** J. Estill, J. Hinze, J. Pugh, A. Rusek, N. Thompson-Frazier, J. Flores, Julie Durham (via Zoom)

**Board Members Not Present:** K. Tomac

**Board Advisors Present:** S. Benson

**DLI Staff Present:** K. Litwin, C. Edgerly

## Minutes

**1. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 11:36 a.m. by J. Estill

**2. Citizen's Comments (items not on the agenda):** None

**3. Correspondence:** None

### 4. Consent Agenda Approvals

- September 11, 2025
- Minutes from July 2025 Meeting – No August meeting due to lack of quorum
- Committee Reports
- Monthly Financials – J. Durham

Motion by N. Thompson-Frazier to approve consent agenda. Second by A. Rusek.

**5. Old Town Updates:** S. Benson reported Bluesfest coming up next weekend. Third Thursdays are happening each 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday ongoing through year. Dam Jam no longer at Fish Ladder but at Rotary Park. OTCA is working on Downtown Day and using historic preservation as theme and including walking tour. Fall Clean-up scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup> and recruiting volunteers.

Business news in Old Town: Sweet Jewelry celebrating new location with grand re-opening and ribbon cutting with mayor, including celebration of their Match on Main grant.

Doing surveys with seeking information from community as to what they want to see, as well as business' and what they would be seeking for programming.

With Samantha's upcoming move, her position as Executive Director is open and the organization is in the process of first round of interviews.

PSD conversation is ongoing with half of council and working with larger stakeholders and others to make sure talking points are united. C. Edgerly asked for a deadline for District B review and finalization. Benson indicated they hoped for end of year.

**6. Advent House Update:** Susan and Edward attended the meeting to provide a quarterly update on services provided and needs. A hard copy of description of services circulated and explained by S. Cancro with contact information provided. Edward introduced himself as the Downtown dedicated street outreach lead. Updates included status of county and federal funding, as well as a new employment program developed to fill the need of those needing very basic things to even show up for a job interview. To date 6 people have been able to find jobs through this outreach.

Rusek asked what the greatest need they see day-to-day and insights on pods through the city. S. Cancro indicated they work with PATH in Charlotte (grant has been cut) and some of the things that they see that they see would be handwarmers and footwarmers, as well as winter wear, socks, hats, blankets as people are sleeping outside or in vehicles. Funds are also needed for security deposits for those moving into housing.

J. Estill asked for numbers of how many are being helped and perhaps who is being left out, including in what zip codes. Advent House is currently serving approximately 400 individuals who are homeless. The number of individuals over 60 years of age is growing. Per other organizations, 50% of unhoused individuals they interact with are now over 60 years of age. Additional discussion was held regarding City Pods and the status of the City's RFP process.

Rusek asked for information to circulate something that is asking for numbers on needs met. They will send out. Rusek offered to help with resume writing as well.

Pugh asked for numbers of individuals serviced and number connected with stable housing and jobs. Asked for just numbers.

C. Edgerly indicated they have seen people using bike storage for personal storage and wondering if they can. Few businesses have noticed increase in homelessness on Kalamazoo. There is an Advent staff member at the library and one at CATA. Suggested businesses direct people to them.

**7. Lake State Report:** As weather starts to turn to Fall, the Downtown maintenance team is maintaining summer plants, transitioning to Fall plants, October fall clean-up will start and will continue through the month.

## 8. Reports

- Director's Report: Reminder that September 30<sup>th</sup> workshop on Grosse Pointe – it's focused on board strategy (Alex, Mario and Cathleen attending).
  - Tuesday the Historical Society celebrates first physical location.
  - Interviewing for marketing and branding position ongoing. Shakayla and Cathleen accepting award from CMPRSA for last year's Big Red Ball's marketing campaign
  - City Council assessment role and public hearing – Assessor had submitted everything in May; it did not go as planned in terms of getting assessment role and renewal before Council. September 22<sup>nd</sup> public hearing. No changes as to assessments.
- President's Report: Estill mentioned that parking was brought up by mayor to city. Brings up the question of equity between neighborhood – pricing for parking is different between each zone which isn't beneficial to DLI efforts. The recommendations of this Board and Downtown regarding loading zones and no movement or updated timeline before council at this time. Retailers have asked for 15 minutes of free parking on each meter. Parking garage v meter parking has not changed either. Looking for action, consistency and movement and is it our board's job to demand some of these things from the city? Discussion took place and S. Benson mentioned that she has met with Rawley.



Possible next steps – C. Edgerly suggested Old Town and Downtown collaborate and ask for joint meeting before next budget season. Executive Committee will discuss and make a united front to present to city.

#### **8. Action/Discussion Items:**

– **Karl Dorshimer’s Resignation from DLI Board:** After 12+ years of service, K. Dorshimer retired. With that he has resigned from the DLI Board. Motion by N. Thompson Frazier to accept his resignation. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rusek. Motion approved unanimously.

– **PSD District B Memo of Understanding:** C. Edgerly will circulate the Memo to Board and include existing notes/edits. Estill explained basic thought on what is being re-worked for zone boundaries. Working with OTCA on memo for both boards to finalize. Estill asked for review of document and email any questions or requested information to C. Edgerly by next week.

– **Big Red Ball & Fund Development Update:** Staff met with Capitol Fundraising Associates and what the contract will look like. Big Red Ball is a priority as it’s our major fundraiser and the date is approaching fast. Goal is to have 15 host committee members, as well as sponsors. Board discussion took place regarding who else should be represented as Michigan’s Downtown? Fundraising retreat upcoming. December 6<sup>th</sup> is Big Red Ball – need to secure \$15k presenting sponsor. Event will be held at the historic Knapp’s Centre this year.

– **Strategic Action Plan, Goal #3, Objective 1:** J. Estill introduced this. With CSO Street reconstruction, staff and City are holding standing meetings and feedback from stakeholders with Smith Group. How can staff and Board support to ensure redesign is not putting it back as it currently is, but enhanced and addresses our goal of an accessible and welcoming Downtown experience. Placemaking and streetscape are once in a lifetime/50 year asks.

C. Edgerly briefly touched on what is happening in other areas of Downtown with partners

**9. Closed Session – Pending Litigation:** Board met to understand where we are with pending litigation from past Downtown business owners of Neva Lee’s.

**10. Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by N. Thompson Frazier at 12:57 p.m. J. Pugh Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

