

# DLI Board Meeting

January 8, 2026 | 11:30 am

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

**Members Present:** J. Estill, J. Hinze, K. Klein, J. Pugh, J. Flores

**Members Absent:** J. Durham, K. Tomac, A. Rusek – arrived late

**Board Advisors Present:** James Lenon, Peter Spadafore

**Staff Present:** C. Edgerley, J. Markam, Kate, Mario

**Guests Present:** Julie Lawton-Essa, Eric Helzer, Chelsea Dowler

## Minutes

**1. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 11:34 a.m. by J. Estill

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

**3. Correspondence:** Email received from a concerned citizen who was repeatedly approached by unhoused individuals asking for money. C. Edgerly shared that this communication was also shared with our Downtown CPO, LPD, Advent House, Mayor's Office and City EDP Department.

**4. Motion to move Discussion/Presentation from Capitol Walk Apts. Up on the Agenda:** The Lawton Group and Eric Helzer attended to give a presentation on a proposed apartment development on the west side of Downtown. Discussions were held on increased costs for development compared with sister projects. Utilizing some surface parking as part of it and saw cost savings. Costs of rent will be income based. Construction begins this year and is expected to be completed in two years. Public outreach like today's presentation is a requirement as is their investment for the Brownfield policies. This presentation aimed to review how the project could benefit the community as a whole. Rental rates are based on workforce salaries and data. 124 "Workforce Units. The LEDC and developer identified the project was based on the Comprehensive Market Analysis conducted by DLI. Because of this the project scope was approved by MSHDA and the project leads thanked DLI for making the study public so they were able to use it.

Questions from Board members included:

Is there a plan for when construction is done – what is going up around it with commercial space encouragement. Market analysis recommendation was adding walkable food source. Chelsea brought up that CATA would be contacted about the route.

Developers brought up a situation with homeless situation and issues they have had in the past.

## 5. Consent Agenda Approvals

- November 13, 2025
- Minutes from October 2025 Meeting
- Committee Reports
- Monthly Financials – J. Durham

Motion by J. Flores to approve consent agenda. Second by J. Hinze

**6. Old Town Updates:** J. Lenon reported on Old Town updates: J. Lenon followed up on Old Town's December and the success of Krampus. PSD approval is going forward with expanded District B as approved by Council. Working on forming a committee to flow funds to the right spots. K. Klein expressed partnering. Fully executed MOU with DLI. The Lights over Turner installation is completed and has been well received. Upcoming events include:

-February 3<sup>rd</sup> is annual meeting and 3 open seats for board.

-Chocolate Walk is February 7<sup>th</sup>.

-Lumberjack Festival is on March 7<sup>th</sup> and being planned.

-J. Hinze asked how the approach to the dues v PSD assessment. J. Estill suggested reading the PSD ordinance with the MOU.

**6. Lake State Updates:** None

## 7. Internal Reports:

- **Director's Report:** DLI's Annual Report has been published and will be shared with council. Follows Michigan Main Street template. Will be distributed to all downtown merchants today or tomorrow by Mario. We will also share at the upcoming Business Huddle, share with donors, etc..

Professional Development is a priority of this organization and Board. Jenea will be attending the annual Main Street America conference in Tulsa, OK. If a board member wants to attend, talk to Cathleen. Additional training and information in the packet.

CSO Street Reconstruction: Staff and the City have been holding meetings with merchants monthly. We were recently informed that the planned CSO street reconstruction project is not taking place in 2026. A. Kilpatrick has agreement with Army Corps of Engineers, so reevaluating time and structures into 2028. Cathleen and Kate will meet with the City and Smith Group in two weeks to learn more about and discuss next steps. J. Estill asked when funds would be needed in order for CSO to proceed. Spadafore indicated bonds will be funded and it does not need to be rushed. What needs to be done for fiber/underground? Is there specific internet provider that would work with us? Edgerly responded that she will look into it as neither she nor P. Spadafore had the answer for that.

Policies and procedures: Jenae updated social media, crisis communications, AI and enews procedures. Motion to formally accept policies as presented in packet: J. Flores motioned, J. Pugh. Approved. J. Estill asked that they be added to web site for public review as well as on social channels as allowed.

- **President's Report:** J. Estill congratulated Edgerly on her Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) certification through the International Economic Development Council and requested we do an article and press announcements as well.

State of Downtown: Going into the 5<sup>th</sup> year. Requested discussion on whether it should continue and thoughts and opinions. Discussion held on combining with Evening of Excellence. Klein shared perhaps making it more interactive and changing formats.



## 8. Action/Discussion Items:

– **Smith Group Ongoing Services Proposal:** C. Edgerly shared that SmithGroup’s proposal originally was to lead CSO Washington Sq. sidewalk redesign on DLI’s behalf based on input from stakeholders during planning process as well as CMA. With the delay in CSO construction, C. Edgerly asked for an updated ongoing services proposal to help with design and construction projects as needed. Discussion held on asking for specific budget vs blank check, or no clear scope of services. If approved, they would provide a budget and cost on each item as it comes out, and project specific budgets would still be brought to the Board for review and discussion. This ongoing services proposal allows DLI to having plans in place for what is recommended and what can be done as Downtown, City and other projects come up for things like Waste disposal, alley improvements, etc. and having them on retainer.

J. Hinze Motioned to approve the proposal as put forth by SmithGroup: J. Flores 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion approved unanimously.

–**Big Red Ball Recap:** Mario reported on success of Big Red Ball. Evening was financially successful as well as receiving good reviews and comments from attendees and donors. Event supported and included 20 local Lansing businesses. Host committee recap meeting is tomorrow. This year approximately \$12,000 increase of net profit. Goal was \$50k and net proceeds are \$51,895. Sponsorship raised was just under \$107,000. Board discussed questions for Host Committee to consider including how much more can we generate in sponsorship, efficiencies in costs, and what should we be looking at for this year.

–**Budget:** C. Edgerly presented the Draft FY 2027 Budget for Board consideration and feedback. Income is budgeted conservatively and expenses on the high end. Highlights in Income changes included Assessment from PSD boundaries expanded this year and will generate more income but will increase the amount submitted to OTCA. 18% of our budget is PSD dollars. Match on Main was discontinued. Design & Public Spaces: Adopt A Spot program is not generating donors or sponsorships. Business extension fees the Board voted a couple months ago to not collect fees – City is responsible for this. Discussions with Bronner’s about them decorating downtown and will continue working with them. Grant income is down from previous years as we continue to spend this down. Funds from grant are remaining and Edgerly is working with new City Treasurer regarding interest collected and general fund balance. Middle Village moved to DLPI.

**Expense Highlights:** Business Development Retention and Recruitment supports tenant improvement grants, and J. Durham asked Board to consider other programs to support local merchants. We can look at in February for what grant programs are being offered. Downtown Lighting – reallocating as it needs to be spent as grant funds for art or decorations. Information Technology: budgeted based on City needs and based on their formula.

Organization costs remain standard. Professional development is slightly reduced.

Personnel: Kept within budget and allowing for annual increases.

Promotions: general marketing and major event expenses.

No questions from board on draft budget. A. Rusek motioned to approve FY 2027 Budget and to submit to City and Council as presented. J. Hinze 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion approved unanimously.

–**Main Street America Accreditation:** J. Estil shared that accreditation received with high achievements. They were impressed with historic preservation opportunities and this organization’s vision and ability to hire fundraising committee.

– **Board Officer Elections:** All current Board officers have agreed to serve again if elected. J. Estill asked for any other nominations. J. Pugh motioned to approve the current slate of Board officers as they currently stand as no additional nominations were made. Motion seconded by A. Rusk. Motion passed unanimously.



**9. New Business:** None

**10. Motion to Adjourn:** A. Rusek motioned to adjourn at 1:01 p.m. 2nd by J. Flores. Motion approved unanimously.

