

**CITY OF ALPENA, DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF A NORMAL MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY BOARD
APPROVED 1/6/2026**

Meeting date of Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 3:00 pm

Meeting was held at City Hall Council Chambers, 208 N. First Ave. with the option for members of the public to join virtually.

Present: Todd Britton, Corey Canute, Mike Mahler, Brian Peterson, Rachel Smolinski, Melissa Tolan-Halleck, Matt Wojda, Ben Young, Andrea Yoxsimer

Absent: Loren Jackson, Cassandra VanHorn

Staff Present: Anne Gentry

AGENDA ITEMS

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm by Chairperson Mahler.
- 2. Citizens Appearing before the Authority:** None.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda:** It was moved by Canute and seconded by Wojda to add Contract for Food Co-Op Study with G2G Analytics to New Business. All ayes. Agenda was approved as amended.
- 4. Review and Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meetings (November 2025):** It was moved by Smolinski and seconded by Britton to approve the minutes from the November 2025 Board Meeting as presented. All ayes. Motion carries.
- 5. Hearings:** None.
- 6. Executive Director's Report:** Gentry reported on the following:
 - The holiday season at the Water Street Commons has been going well. Vendors reported equal sales on Black Friday & Small Business Saturday. Christmas at the Commons is scheduled for Saturday, December 13 from 2-7 pm. There will be horses, a cash bar with mulled wine and beer, live music, tractor rides, and a food truck.
 - The local team from the Walkability Action Institute met with staff from the Michigan Department of Transportation to see what might be possible regarding lane reductions, sidewalk expansions, and traffic changes to Chisholm St. and 2nd Ave.
 - Gentry shared updates on holiday events, including Santa's visits to Culligan Plaza and New Year's Eve.
 - Gentry shared highlights from 2025, including 19 facades under construction thanks to DDA grant writing (\$2.7 million of investment total), 6 business start-ups or expansions supported by DDA grant funds, 2 murals completed, the National Register of Historic Places listing, 10 new businesses that opened downtown, and the first year of the Water Street Commons, which welcomed 17 businesses downtown and activated a vacant piece of property in the heart of the downtown along the river.
- 7. Correspondences:** None to share.

8. Review and Acceptance on Monthly Financial Reports (November 2025): It was moved by Tolan-Halleck and seconded by Smolinski to receive and file the financial reports from November 2025. All ayes. Motion carries.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. Budget/ Finance: Did not meet. No report given.
- b. Education & Promotion: Did not meet. No report given.
- c. Design & Beautification: Did not meet. No report given.
- d. Economic Development: Did not meet. No report given.

10. Report from the City of Alpena: Smolinski reported on the following:

- Culligan Plaza has officially reopened. The tree is up, and the first event that was held in the new Culligan Plaza was the tree lighting ceremony after the holiday parade.

11. Unfinished Business:

- Crosswalks Downtown: There was some discussion on snow removal downtown. No action was taken.

12. New Business:

- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Projects 2027- 2032. Gentry reviewed CIP Projects submitted for preliminary review. It was discussed by the board to add wayfinding to the entry under Walkability, specifically along the riverfront. It was moved by Smolinski and seconded by Yoxsimer to recommend the proposed CIP Projects 2027-2032 to the City for approval. All ayes. Motion carries.
- Liability & Property Pool Renewal from Michigan Municipal League: It was moved by Wojda and seconded by Canute to approve the Liability & Property Pool Renewal from Michigan Municipal League. Roll call vote was taken. All ayes. Motion carries.
- Contract for Food Co-Op Study with G2G Analytics: Gentry reviewed the parameters of the grant the DDA received from the Healthy Food Financing Initiative through the Food Access and Retail Expansion Fund Program for \$41,000. Gentry also reviewed the proposal from G2G Analytics to complete a feasibility study for a food co-op. It was moved by Smolinski and seconded by Yoxsimer to approve the contract for a food co-op study with G2G Analytics with the addition of a travel/expense stipend not to exceed \$2,500 and to authorize Anne Gentry to sign the contract. Roll call vote was taken. All ayes. Motion carries.

It was moved by Smolinski and seconded by Wojda to authorize Anne Gentry to enter a grant agreement and sign all associated documents with the Healthy Food Financing Initiative through the Food Access and Retail Expansion Fund Program on behalf of the DDA. Roll call vote was taken. All ayes. Motion carries.

13. Adjournment: There being no other business, it was moved by Tolan-Halleck and seconded by Smolinski to adjourn the meeting at 3:39 pm.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Anne Gentry.