



Downtown Racine Business Improvement District #1

Wednesday, April 15 at 5:30pm | Hotel Verdant

Zoom Option: Zoom.com

Meeting ID: 886 7828 2681 | Passcode: 241547

- I. **Call to Order** – 5:30 PM- Amanda Paffrath, Chair
- II. **Approval of Agenda** - Amanda Paffrath, Chair
- III. **Approval of March Minutes** - Amanda Paffrath, Chair
- IV. **Baker Tilly Audit Review** – Special Guest Wendi Unger
 - a. Some highlights: Favorable variance in expense categories by almost 11k. Public service outreach was 11k over budget because of lack of free interns last year, plus additional staffing for an event. Streetscape 6600 and street amenities (14.6k) because holiday take-down was under budget as it moved to 2026. Added 12k - positive year in regards to budget.
 - b. Guidance: Fund balance - always keep enough money for any unforeseen situations; somewhere between 10-25% of operating budget
 - c. Things that need to be disclosed are in the center of the report
 - d. 52k capital assets, 28k depreciation
 - e. Highlights a “material weakness” point which would lead to a material misstatement. Proper segregation of the account with an outside accounting firm; however, the audit team becomes an internal part of our organization for a short time, so that is a material weakness. Something you need to be aware of... not unusual or seen as a negative
 - f. M. Godfrey - asks about receivable of 325k adjusting down this year - Wendi will confirm with Kathleen to make a note in the audit and adjust on a go-forward basis
 - g. No requirement to report the information to the IRS, because we’re a governmental entity. Wendi confirms we can get a federal ID for a governmental entity. Wendi will check for the original documents for Godfrey and confirms that all reports were shared w/ Kelly.
- V. **Flower Watering** – Special Guest Dan Reisdorf
 - a. Dan from Milaeger’s - received two estimates. Plantings and maintenance of plantings.
 - b. Dan states that they watered 12x more last year than they got paid, and they include fertilizer in the water. They have always replanted the plants that get vandalized or stolen and they never charge us for it. Dan offers a new solution for baskets, since the wire baskets have 20 replaced every year. Suggests a planter with a reservoir, supposedly you should only have to water a third as much and is offering to do it at their expense. They are \$90 apiece versus the wire baskets which are \$45. Maybe start this year on 6th street. wire planters last about 4 years, while the new baskets should last much longer. Some cities are starting to use these and water every 3rd day instead of every other day. Possibly this could result in the water budget reducing in following years. Additionally, planters will go out early in June this year instead of the end of June.

- c. BID discusses internally: Godfrey motions to approve; Ebony seconds; all agree

VI. Unlocking Capital Grant Update

- a. Collab with UW-Milwaukee: Received 30 surveys, did 7 1:1 visits that are or are about to open in the last 18 months. Met with city officials for clarity. There is now a list of businesses in BID, GIS vacancy map, summary of market profile data, and synthesis of survey results. However this didn't use any of the grant money. The final interview is in two weeks. We'll use the grant money to follow up on the insights and also tailor the city's website with some of this information.
- b. RCEDC/DRC/City of Racine grant update: DRC has contributed 70k in grants. RCEDC 200k in revolving loans 3% interest, City has 200k in forgivable loans. 470k downtown grants to apply in the coming weeks. Waiting for full commitment from the city. Walt says working with RCEDC to make a mechanism to make the money flow. Certain metrics will bolster the application - retail/restaurant/ preferential if open / proven track record. Businesses that will establish foot traffic (as opposed to professional offices). Targeted to downtown area up to City hall. New businesses should also apply.
- c. Part of the grant - Cari Grieve will match realtors to new businesses.
- d. In the next 2 weeks, there will be meetings in regards to the TID. Walt will forward the TID meeting to Ebony Thursday morning.

VII. Alder Update- Malik Frazier

- a. Malik had a conflict with the PS&L meeting today.

VIII. BID Manager's Report – Kelly Kruse

- a. Merchant outreach and additional communication: DRC has been very active in reaching out to businesses trying to get face-to-face and get feedback. Exec board has been tasked with reaching out. Tracking on a spreadsheet - trying to talk to everyone. Is there a process in place to capture the new businesses as they open up? Godfrey mentions they need to use the GIS program. GIS scrapes data from the deeds; however, this may not capture rentals.
- b. Business development update: Several businesses are opening up in May

IX. Security Update - Angela

- a. FLOCK cameras: Yearly Subscription, with maintenance. \$3000 per camera. There's also a recommendation for a person who specializes in downtown lighting. Draves encourages signs that show "Smile, you're on camera". Is this a public safety issue that should be taken care of by the police department? Douglas Ave Bid lobbied for 30k for overtime for police to monitor speeding. Angela will share FLOCK camera details.
- b. We will invite Chief Ramirez to the next meeting. Add the lighting conversation to the time when Chief Ramirez joins. Are there areas that are larger problems than others?

X. Flowerpots

- a. ROW (Right of Way Encroachment) Permit (assistance with applications and payments): Chris suggests DRC and BID can communicate the permits for pots to the rest of downtown.
- b. Flower Pot contest: between businesses to see who the public prefers. Could be communicated during business visits.
- c. Amanda suggests working with block captains. Targeting the August or Sept First Friday.

XI. Financial Report – Michael Godfrey, Treasurer

- a. Review of March 2026 Financials: The correct budget is updated into the financials. Most has been our contract with DRC. Audit is a little bit over-budget this year because of a small mistake. We've spent 40 grand so far.
- b. Amanda motions to receive and file the financial report, Chris seconds, all approve

XII. Marketing Planning for 2026

- a. 2026 options
- b. Amanda presents the option of working with Clario; Angela would like to dedicate a longer time. Godfrey suggests an overall strategy.
- c. Amanda suggests inviting Jen to a meeting in 2 weeks to help us understand what the strategy and provide a proposal. Amanda motions to invite her to the next meeting. Chris seconds.
- d. Heather motions to carry forward the idea for setting up the RFP process. Amanda suggests discussing with Jen from Clario.
- e. DRC wine walk coming up May 9th and 16th and the first first friday coming up / creative crawl. Can we give the OK for the marketing procedure for first first friday - Godfrey makes a motion, Chris seconds. Amanda points out there's ticket revenue that comes in for the wine walks.

XIII. Old Business

- a. Operating plan changes submitted to City: Amanda spoke to mayor, and he's waiting for Scott Lutney, city atty. It seems like the amendments will need to go in front of the city council. Godfrey is concerned about defining who's voting and who's not; how soon will we get a person appointed? Amanda points out that the alder is a voting member.
- b. Flag poles for Fourth Fest: 29 for main street approved, is it OK to add sixth street? There are 15 locations on Sixth St. would add \$1500. We can agree to do the brackets and Amanda will talk to Anna about Fourth Fest providing the flags. Double check with Walt or John Rooney about DPW putting up the brackets. BID had previously agreed on providing \$1000, which is below the \$1500 figure.

XIV. Other Business / Public Comment

- a. Godfrey mentions Monday 4/20 tulip tavern social from 5:30-7:30
- b. Marketing strategy: Amanda will reach out to schedule an info session with Jen for May 6th or April 30th.
- c. Next regular Board meeting date: Wednesday May 20th

XV. Adjournment

Chris motions to adjourn at 8:19. Amanda seconds. All agree.