

**Romeo Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting**

**Monday, October 6, 2025– 7:00 p.m.**

**361 Morton Street, Romeo, MI 48065 South Meeting Room**

**MINUTES**

1. Roll Call: 7:00 p.m.  
Present – Hutnick, St. Laurent, Murdock, Stephens, Van Wormer, Lee, Osebold  
Absent - Poznanski

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by: VanWormer

Second by: Hutnick

Discussion: None

All ayes.

Motion Passes: 7-0

4. Approval of the Minutes:  
August 19, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes

Motion by: Hutnick

Second by: Murdock

No further discussion.

All ayes.

Motion Passes: 7-0

September 22, 2025, DDAA/BOT Joint Meeting Minutes as corrected

Motion by: Lee

Second by: Hutnick

All ayes.

Motion Passes: 7-0

5. Public Forum:  
None.

6. Financial Report:
  - a. Report provided in Board packet from Plante Moran. A fund balance of \$185,804.05 was presented for August 22, 2025. The financial report was received and filed.





8. New Business

a. **Tree Board Presentation**

The Tree Board recently received a proposal from Davey to address future maintenance of our downtown trees. The board presented a wide array of reasons why it's important to have trees downtown including: aesthetics, economic development by driving people into downtown etc. The board asks that we consider a maintenance program to keep trees healthy in the period before the streetscape project goes into effect. They mentioned that Honey Locust trees (the type we have in Romeo) are actually a good type of tree for downtowns. They recommend pruning. Clarke spoke and indicated that these types of trees don't usually cause issues with sidewalks while Lee stated these are causing trouble with walkability and safety. Lee is looking forward to finding a new solution and better trees that suit downtown with the assistance of the Tree Board. The Tree Board stated that if there is ever a vote to remove the trees they hope they are part of it. St. Laurent proposed the Tree Board join our DDA/BOT joint meeting scheduled for November 10th to be a part of the further discussion and a possible multi-organization solution for shared cost.

b. **Holiday Lighting RFQ**

Quotes were received from Hayward Light Installers, Go-to-guys Home Maintenance Services, and High Maintenance Lawn Care.

Motion to approve funding Holiday Lighting Installation with Hayward Light Installers in the amount of \$18,535.00.

Motion by: St. Laurent

Second by: Lee

Discussion: Everyone agrees Hayward Light Installers did a great job last year and welcome them back. They were the most competitive bid as well.

Ayes - St. Laurent, Lee, Hutnick, Murdock, Stephens, VanWormer, Osebold

Nayes - None

Motion Passes: 7-0





Ayes - Lee, St. Laurent, Hutnick, Murdock, Stephens, VanWormer,  
Osebold  
Nayes - none  
Motion Passes: 7-0

8. Unfinished Business

a. **Village Park Cleanup**

We have received complaints that the park is in need of a cleanup.

Cleanup efforts were completed before the Peach Festival. Weeding, mulching, trimming and replacing rose bushes with more manageable box hedges. DDA Director continues to work on banners for the Gazebo and bulletin board updates.

b. **Michigan Class**

In order to achieve a higher yield and increase our operating budget for infrastructure projects, the DDA will utilize Michigan Class as an investment pool for allocated funds.

Our account is now LIVE! We have moved funds from our General Fund over to the new investment account. Reporting will begin next month going forward.

c. **People Drive Credit Union - Marketing/Promotional Bank Account**

For better management and security, having a separate small bank account to run our marketing/promotional actively from is encouraged.

The DDA Board decided to approve an account with People Driven Credit Union as they are great partners and located in Downtown Romeo. Our account is now LIVE! We have a merchant account set up with Square as well that is now taking payments for our Downtown Merch.

d. **District 360**

The program is now LIVE! DDA Director is now working from the platform daily to capture communications and scheduling tasks.

e. **OneSource Publication**

Meetings have wrapped up on planning and we are now working on content and layout designs for our pages. Content to include - contact information, social media and website info, downtown events coming soon, about the DDA

section, upcoming projects and a blog/article. The first issue will be delivered at the beginning of December to 16,371 residents.

f. **Wayfinding & Attraction Strategy**

The Village of Romeo and the Romeo DDA (Downtown Development Authority) seeks to spur economic development and promote local businesses, improve navigation, and enhance its identity and overall visitor

experience by developing and implementing a comprehensive attraction strategy.

Crimson has delivered their final conceptual plans along with cost and implementation plans. The DDA and Village are researching grant opportunities. The DDA has partnered with Romeo High School and a new Marketing Intern has started working with the DDA to bring our strategy to life over the next year. This is part of a work based learning program and she will be focused on our marketing efforts and visitor attraction strategy.

e. **Multi-Modal Streetscape Project**

In an effort to improve the walkability and multi-modal options along Main Street, as well as connecting to the trail, a request for quotes was made by architectural firms to develop conceptual plans and a budget that then can be used for two potential grants the DDA has been exploring with the Four County Community Foundation.

The giffels-webster team and DDA Director presented the final conceptual plan to Macomb County in August. The County approved all except for the dedicated bike lane from the Macomb Orchard Trail. The center turn lane is for safety reasons and should not be altered. giffels-webster is working on planning a Town Hall meeting beginning in 2026 to present our plan. We held a walking tour in September to two (2) grant writing experts provided by 4 Counties Community Foundation who will be assisting with researching available funding options. Due to the new administration in Washington, a lot of programs have been halted and so we are having to be very strategic, using multiple grants to piece funding together. This is going to lengthen the process significantly.

e. **Visionary Leaders Circle**

A group of local businesses have formed a group to lead and support business growth, collaboration and event organization. The goals are to

attract more visitors to downtown and also foster a culture of inclusion and connection among our business owners.

The group just recently held the Golden Girl's Day Out event in September and it was a great day. We had multiple downtown businesses participate and we increased foot traffic. They are currently planning the Witches & Warlocks, Return to Romeo event.

10. Public Forum

**Sharon Smith** let the board know that the Rotary loved putting on Vintagefest and would like to continue doing so. They want to hold in on June 1st, that Saturday going forward in order not to conflict with other events happening in the CBD. They support a 2 day event but only closing Main Street for 1 day. Jacobe Newby did a fantastic job this year.

**Clarke** - not happy with Village Park Maintenance. Says the weeds are back and the bushes planted are dying with lack of water. How much does it cost to water grass? Mentioned he doesn't think most of the DDA Board has read the Bylaws or Mission Statement and we should start there. Clarke admonished Stephens for missing multiple board meetings.

**Linda St. Laurent** - thank you for supporting the Christmas Home Tour again this year.

**Stephens** - let everyone know that he was dealing with personal issues and why he missed meetings recently. Also reminded the group that he has given freely of his time and monetary gifts over the years. He takes offence to his character being questioned.

11. Executive Director Report

Kay Pochert went over her current activities from August/September and provided an itemized report and project management list.

12. Board Member Comments

**VanWormer** - appreciates all of the feedback, good and bad. It helps us get better.

**Murdock** - communication is key! The more we hash things out, then we can achieve positivity moving forward. It's been a learning curve for her and there are a lot of grey areas. Forming a committee to add clarity to our bylaws and procedures would be good.

**Lee** - thanked Carl and Andrew for putting up the fall lights for free. They look fantastic. Kudos to Pochert for wearing so many hats and hopes she knows it doesn't go unnoticed. Our downtown merch is impressive and all the things that are happening. Thank you!

**St. Laurent** - wants to touch base on what she has witnessed today. Concerns her that not agreeing doesn't mean she doesn't agree with the event. Her issue is with the ethical way of spending. She doesn't like when our processes are circumvented. Saying "I didn't know or misunderstood something doesn't cut it". Also stated "absence of government doesn't mean you can make your own decisions". St. Laurent asks that "we return to voting at the table so every member has a voice and it's transparent to the public". She stated the board is "legally responsible".

**Hutnick** - appreciates everyone's hard work. Thanks to Osebold and Pochert for the Golden Girls' Day Out, it was a great success. She is looking forward to working together and having more success.

**Osebold** - thanked everyone for coming and giving their input. Thanked the board members for their opinions. "Not everyone needs to agree". Stated that Pochert is a "gem" and glad to have her working hard for the DDA.

12. Adjournment: 9:10 p.m.

Motion by: Lee

Second: St. Laurent

All ayes.

Motion passes: 7-0

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Pochert

Executive Director