

# **Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Meeting Minutes**

## **Friday, November 14, 2025**

### **Regular Meeting**

**Location:** Village of Pinckney, Village Hall

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman **Mike Szafranski** called the meeting to order at **9:44 a.m.**, the earliest time a quorum could be achieved.

#### **2. Roll Call / Attendance**

**Present:**

- Mike Szafranski, Chair
- **Jen Cooke**
- Julie Amy
- Marie Butler
- Greg Strine
- Martina Fenech

**Absent:**

- Mike Carney
- Linda Seger
- Bridget Kane
- Jeff Buerman

A quorum was present.

#### **3. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **4. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion** by **Jen Cooke** to approve the agenda.

**Second** by **Greg Strine**.

**Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried.

#### **5. Approval of Minutes**

Approval of the prior meeting minutes was tabled until next month because the minutes were not included in the meeting packet.

#### **6. Public Forum**

**Public Forum opened:** 9:46 a.m.

**Jim Jensen**, the liaison between the Village of Pinckney and Putnam Township, reported that several local leaders attended the Tom Barrett fundraiser, which is expected to have a positive impact on the Village and Putnam Township.

**Public Forum closed:** 9:46 a.m.

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## 7. Chairman's Report

Chairman Szafranski reported:

- **Spooktacular** went extremely well.
- Closing Main Street was a great decision and should be considered for future events.
- The **Pinckney–Hamburg–Hell Chamber** is interested in doing more activities in the Town Square, including:
  - a potential **permanent cornhole space**, and
  - installing a more efficient **banner-hanging system** for event visibility.
- The Chamber would like to invest funds toward improvements.

## 8. Village Report

The Village representative reported that:

- The Village narrowly approved cannabis operations in **2020**.
- A **pros and cons informational sheet** is available from the Village meeting.
- A **scoring rubric** is being used for **10 licenses** to ensure a fair, balanced selection process.
- Pinckney will be the **first cannabis space in Livingston County**.
- It is expected to be a positive move toward addressing the Village's **financial deficit**.

## 9. DPW Report

DPW items were deferred to Old Business.

## 10. Old Business

### a. Financial Reports

Chairman Szafranski shared that he has not been receiving the financials regularly, apologized for the inconsistency, and confirmed they will be distributed more consistently going forward.

### b. Wreaths Across America

Chairman Szafranski reminded the Board that **Wreaths Across America** is scheduled for **December 13, 2025**. Members are encouraged to continue promoting wreath sponsorship purchases to family, friends, businesses, and community partners.

### c. Community Garden

The Community Garden Committee will reconvene to prepare a presentation for Council recommending a **new garden location**. The Board noted:

- The December Council meeting will include sales strategies.
- Any party attending Council should have a plan for creating a **building/use on the site**, not only purchasing property.

### d. Tree Grates / Raised Beds

It was confirmed that downtown includes:

- **Four (4) tree grates**, and

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- **Six (6) raised concrete beds** (not tree grates).

Follow-up actions / discussion:

- The Board will define clearer expectations for **summer grounds crew maintenance**.
- Chairman Szafranski will meet **weekly** with the grounds crew during summer, with a detailed spring agenda for their responsibilities.
- The committee will determine what should be done with the four tree-grate locations now that the inventory has been clarified.
- A new concept emerged: one centralized, natural-looking, glass-enclosed community information display (possibly near **Mill Street and M-36**) updated weekly by the Event Coordinator or designee.

#### e. Lampposts / Holiday Lighting

Updates included:

- **Lamppost skirts** will be installed by **DTE**, not DPW. This new development creates another delay.
- **Garlands are up.**
- DTE must test **26 poles** with electrical problems.

#### f. Recognition Dinner

The **DIO** was identified as the likely location for the recognition dinner.

#### g. Light Up the Park / Holiday Décor

- **Santa's Elves** have been booked to outline building exteriors from Howell to Mill on **November 24–25**.
- **Jo Self** reported strong progress overall, including new outlines and snowflakes added this year.
- Potential additions for next year include:
  - second half of Main Street,
  - Bliss & Fish,
  - Village Hall, and
  - ornaments on building corners.
- **Marie Butler** suggested exploring **projection mapping** in future years, potentially creating a “living Advent calendar.”

#### h. Governor Whitmer Main Street Funding

- **Linda Seger** and **Jo** are continuing work related to Governor Whitmer's Main Street small business funding.
- Linda's research found Pinckney was approved previously but did not complete follow-through; she is investigating how to become recertified.
- Jo will support communication while Linda is out of town.
- Further updates are expected in future meetings.

#### i. Women's Summit

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- **Jo Self & Julie Amy** hosted a Women's Summit with **24 participants**.
- The event included **40 minutes of mingling** and **five table topics**.
- Jo noted a need to support or teach networking/mingling in future formats.
- Interest was expressed in forming a **women's group in Pinckney**.
- Jo will share highlights on the Pinckney Community Page.
- The Board considered the event a strong success and a valuable first step.

## 11. New Business

### a. Depot Project

The Board discussed the Depot Project:

- A fundraiser/GoFundMe was previously considered.
- New funding access appears feasible and may cover **engineering and schematics up to \$8,000**.
- The project is expected to move forward soon.

### b. Upcoming Events

- **Spooktacular** was reaffirmed as a major success.
- For **Light Up the Park**, additional trees remain available for purchase/sponsorship.
- Members are encouraged to promote sponsorship to other business owners to increase community exposure.
- **Aunt Betty's** plans to open one final day for the **Light Up the Park Grinch Breakfast**, despite a recent closure announcement.

## 12. Public Forum

**Public Forum opened:** 10:29 a.m.

No public comment was offered.

**Public Forum closed:** 10:29 a.m.

## 13. Open Discussion / Board Comments

- **Website update:** DPW remains the final step for completion of the new Village website. It is expected to be completed by **New Year 2026**, assuming DPW items are finalized.
- **Village staffing:** **Lori Eccles** has been hired as the new Village Office Manager.
- **DDA Facebook page:** The Board is working to identify current admin ownership of the existing DDA Facebook page. If ownership cannot be confirmed, **Jo Self** may create a new official page. The Board discussed keeping the page informational with comments disabled if necessary.
- **Business sign support (Hunter Pilates):** The Board discussed a Hunter Pilates Facebook post regarding a new business sign. **Jen Cooke** asked whether any programs could help cover the cost. The Board noted the business should first approach **Council** to apply and review permitting and funding requirements.
- **Workforce development / business support:**

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- **Jen Cooke** emphasized supporting businesses so staff feel stability and remain in the community.
- Ideas included a **job fair**.
- Jim Jensen asked what other towns do to support workforce development.
- Jo Self noted smaller investments can create strong retention dividends.
- **Business incentives / growth:**
  - Martina Fenech asked what incentives exist to attract businesses to Pinckney.
  - Jo suggested a **bed-and-breakfast** to support visitors.
  - Jo also recommended exploring a **business incubator** concept.

## 14. Adjournment

**Motion** by **Julie Amy** to adjourn.

**Second** by **Martina Fenech**.

**Vote:** All in favor. Motion carried.

**Meeting adjourned.**

DRAFT

**Minutes Prepared by:**

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**Julie Amy**, Secretary  
Village of Pinckney DDA

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**Mike Szafranski**, DDA Chair  
Village of Pinckney DDA

**Approved by the DDA on:** November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025.