



CITY OF IONIA
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
8:00 AM, Wednesday, March 18, 2026
IONIA THEATRE

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson John Krueger called the meeting of the Ionia Downtown Development Authority to order at 8:00 AM.

II. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Roll call revealed a Quorum with Board Members Precia Garland, John Krueger, Mark Ludema, Tricia Meyers, Zachary Sheehan, Dustin Sommer, Benjamin Weller, Ryan Wilson present. Board Member Taryn Altobelli was absent.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

(IV.1.) To approve the March 18, 2026 meeting agenda.

With no changes or additions, Board Member Sheehan made a motion, seconded by Board Member Ludema, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(V.1.) To approve the minutes from the February 18, 2026 meeting.

Minutes from the regular meeting of March 18, 2026, were reviewed. Member Garland made a motion, seconded by Member Sheehan, to approve the March 18, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORT

(VI.1.) To accept the Accounts Payables for the DDA: January 26, 2026 - February 25, 2026 in the amount of \$1,281.99.

To accept the Accounts Payables for the Theatre: January 26, 2026 - February 25, 2026 in the amount of \$10,912.98.

Board Member Weller made a motion, seconded by Board Member Sommer, to accept the financials as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

VII. DDA DIRECTOR REPORT

(VII.1.) Report included in Board Agenda Packet.

Director Rice discussed continued efforts to focus on downtown investment, redevelopment, and stakeholder engagement, with inquiries addressed related to Tax Increment Financing and Match on Main opportunities. Coordination continued with event organizers to support annual scheduling and development of a community events calendar, along with ongoing collaboration with the Ionia Theatre on programming and downtown initiatives. Planning continued for “Pickin’ Through Ionia” with the Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce for the Ionia Freak Fair. Participation continued in City Council, DDA, and partner organization meetings, along with support for theatre operations through front counter coverage and patron services assistance.

VIII. THEATRE REPORT

(VIII.1.) Report included in Board Agenda Packet.

Director Rice reviewed current attendance figures and provided an overview of recent film performance trends at Ionia Theatre, noting how specific titles have influenced weekly turnout. The popcorn membership program was also discussed, with a desire to increase participation. Upcoming programming was highlighted, including planned spring break activities aimed at boosting family attendance, continued free movie offerings to increase community access, and scheduled special events such as a comedy show and additional live performances.

IX. BOARD DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

(IX.1.) DDA Marketing - Ionia Freak Fair

Director Rice presented a marketing concept for the upcoming Ionia Freak Fair focused on increasing downtown foot traffic and business engagement. The initiative, “Pickin’ Through Ionia,” is being developed in partnership with the Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce and would encourage visitors to explore participating businesses through a guitar pick–themed activity. A pre-event business workshop was proposed in collaboration with the Chamber to help merchants prepare for increased traffic, including strategies for customer flow, merchandising, extended hours, promotions, and participation in the downtown activity. Staff also discussed a decorative guitar installation throughout the town as a peacemaking enhancement, potentially featuring local artist involvement or themed displays to support event atmosphere and photo opportunities for the month of August. Overall, the concept aims to increase foot traffic, encourage business visitation, and enhance the visitor experience during the Ionia Freak Fair through interactive and visual elements.

Board Member Sommer made a motion to approve the concept and a budget not to exceed \$1,750 for activations surrounding the Ionia Freak Fair in conjunction with the Ionia Area Chamber of Commerce, seconded by Member Garland.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

X. DISCUSSION ITEMS

It was noted that dirt will begin to move at Steele Street Park in the next few weeks, including removal of some trees. Park construction is expected to conclude in October of 2026.

XI. OTHER

Nothing else discussed.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Sheehan made a motion, seconded by Board Member Sommer, to adjourn.

MOTION BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Rice, Recording Secretary
for Taryn Altobelli, Secretary