

Tuscarora Township DDA — Meeting Minutes

Date: September 15, 2025

Location: Tuscarora Township (DDA Meeting)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Meeting was called to order 7:02 pm

Roll Call:

Present: Dawn Bodnar, Eric Delamielleure, Lori Pollard, Kris Olson, Matt Whitener, Trudy Maves, Sue Fisher

Absent: Dan Nivelt

Other Notes: Tyler resigned (purchased a home and business outside the DDA district).

Guest: Carlin (Consumers Energy / Consumers Energy Foundation). Public attendee: Patrick McGinness.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Eric Delamielleure Seconded by Lori Pollard. Motion carried.

3. Approval of Prior Minutes

August 2025 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve by Dawn Bodnar, Seconded by Kris Olson. Motion carried

4. Financial Report

Treasurer reported a balance of \$183,148.98 (reflecting funds moved back from the streetscape project).

Bills presented:

Underwriters of Michigan — \$168.00

Consumers Energy (Sturgeon lighting) — \$35.45 (monthly)

Additional notes:

USDA annual principal & interest: a withdrawal occurred; exact posting not yet visible.

\$10,042.00 will be moved into the pooled account once the related account is closed; this will show up next month.

Motion to pay presented bills made by Matt Whitener, Seconded by Sue Fisher. Motion carried.

Motion to approve Treasurer's Report made by Sue Fisher and Seconded by Matt Whitener. Motion carried

5. Old Business

5.1 Safe Routes to School – Pathway Expansion

Project concept: extend existing Safe Routes to School pathway from the school down US-27 to Cooperation Park, improving safe connectivity for large nearby residential areas and access to park facilities.

Feasibility study: plan to go out for bid in the next month.

Grants & partners (discussion with Carlin, Consumers Energy Foundation):

Foundation focuses on People, Planet, Prosperity; typical grants ~\$30k-\$60k (can vary up to ~\$100k).

Three larger themed awards annually (People mid-year, Planet in spring, Prosperity late year), total pool ~\$500k with max \$250k per grantee; highly competitive.

Eligible recipients: 501(c)(3) or municipalities; DDA qualifies.

Preference when Consumers employees volunteer; project must be in Consumers service area; cannot fund items that directly offset CE revenue (e.g., generators).

Letter of Intent (LOI) first; finalists submit detailed application (org docs, board, budget, equity/safety impacts).

Explore other funders: DTE Foundation (contact: Chris Hackbarth), Enbridge community grants, Straits Area Community Foundation, Awakon, etc.

Action items:

Carlin to (a) check Safe Routes resources with contacts (e.g., Amy Tweeten) and (b) share prior criteria/samples.

Trudy to follow up with Carlin and help coordinate materials.

DDA to bid the feasibility study and begin developing cost estimates, timeline, and letters of support (local/state).

Consider consumer employee volunteers (e.g., James Lucas) for added scoring.

5.2 Summer Music Series – 2025 Recap & 2026 Planning

2025 marked the 3rd year of the series; best year to date in attendance and participation.

Six local businesses submitted thank-you letters to the DDA.

Northland Brewing Company donated \$1,500 (top two sellers each week counted; rounded up).

Board will start planning earlier; consider forming a small committee (with community members) and place on next month's agenda.

Pen (and others) to begin outreach/logistics; bookings for next summer are already starting.

5.3 Streetscape Sidewalk Cleaning & Sealing

Scope: clean (power-wash) and apply sealer—prioritize stamped/red areas but consider entire sidewalk for uniformity.

Existing sealer is on hand; confirm shelf life if project is delayed.

Seek expert input on prep method (power-wash vs. soft scrub) and sealing approach for stamped concrete edges and utility cutouts.

Go out for bids as soon as possible; target completion within next month (weather permitting).

Potential contacts/resources: Team Elmer's (Jeff Allen), Gaylord DDA (product/process reference).

Contractor quality follow-up: walkabout with Mason Brothers re: stamped-concrete quality; clarify expectations for future work (no formal enforcement noted due to lack of written specs).

5.4 Bylaws – Term Limits Amendment

Amended on August 18, 2025; original adoption year 1996 (exact date not located).

Updated copy to be converted to PDF and sent to the Township.

5.5 Sturgeon Wellhead Cover (Wall Cover Structure)

Temporary winter protection to be installed this season; planning a permanent ~4x6 structure (design to avoid an “outhouse” appearance). Design discussion to continue next month.

6. New Business

6.1 DDA Board Vacancy

Tyler formally resigned (residence and business now outside DDA district).

Board discussed potential candidates: Jeff Burns, Lance Loca (residency noted), Jace Ryan, Cody Wilson (Pat's), Allan (Screen Graphics), and others; outreach to be made.

Bylaws note: a majority of members must have an interest in property in the downtown district; residency outside of the district can be permissible within limits.

6.2 Sturgeon Drinking Fountain

Mr. Murdoch donated the fountain; M&M Plumbing (Scott Montai) agreed to install at no cost. Public thanks to be shared via Township website/social channels. Consider a plaque acknowledging contributors on the future structure.

7. Public Comment

Patrick McGinness: Township Board forming a committee for the 250th Fourth of July (July 2026). Goal: activities that keep visitors downtown after the parade.

Ideas discussed: double-bridge walk, hot-dog eating contest, kids/family activities (buskers, balloon artists, face painting), music on the corners, ice-cream social, pie sale, fire-hose water play/zipline ball game, rubber-ducky race, and staggered day-long programming.

Suggested committee size: 3–5 people with representation from businesses across downtown (north/mid/south). DDA support welcomed.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Dawn Bodnar.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Action Items Summary

- Bid out Safe Routes feasibility study; begin assembling budget, timeline, and letters of support.
- Carlin to follow up with contacts (e.g., Amy Tweeten) and share grant examples/criteria; Trudy to coordinate.
- Explore funding: Consumers Energy Foundation (quarterly + prosperity award), DTE Foundation, Enbridge, Straits Community Foundation, Awakon, etc.
- Initiate bids for sidewalk cleaning and sealing; consult Team Elmer's and Gaylord DDA for best-practice guidance; verify sealer shelf life.
- Schedule contractor walkabout with Mason Brothers regarding stamped-concrete finish and expectations.
- Update bylaws file (amended Aug 18, 2025; adopted 1996) and send PDF to Township.
- Install temporary protection over Sturgeon wellhead for winter; develop design concepts for permanent 4×6 structure (non-outhouse aesthetic).
- Begin outreach to potential DDA board candidates (e.g., Jeff Burns, Jace Ryan, Cody Wilson, Allan at Screen Graphics).
- Publicly thank Mr. Murdoch and M&M Plumbing for the donated fountain and installation; plan plaque language.
- Coordinate with Township's Fourth of July 250th committee; consider DDA day-long programming and music/busker placements.