

Tuscarora Downtown Development Authority

Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: November 24, 2025

Body: Tuscarora Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dan Nivelt

2. Roll Call

Present: Dan Nivelt, Dawn Bodnar, Eric Delamielleure, Lori Pollard, Kris Olson, Trudy Maves and Sue Fischer.

Absent: Matt Whitener (requested that the DDA Summer Music Series item be tabled).

3. Approval of Agenda

a. Motion by Dawn Bodnar to change Agenda, Second by Eric Delamielleure. Motion carried.

- Item F under New Business (DDA Summer Music Series) was tabled until the next meeting at the request of Matt Whitner, who was unable to attend.
- A new item was added under New Business (H): Discussion of sidewalk clearing and maintenance.

Motion by Dawn Bodnar to approve the agenda as amended; second by Lori Pollard. Motion carried

4. Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes from the prior meeting. A correction was noted to change the date on the agenda to November 24.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented, with the correction to the date on the agenda; made by Sue Fischer and second by Lori Pollard. Motion carried by voice vote.

5. Financial Report

The Treasurer reported an initial balance of approximately \$157,157.24. Payments included electricity for the sturgeon/fish feature and a payment on the DDA (streetscape/sidewalk) loan. A reimbursement related to a backpack for Doug had also been processed previously. After recent activity, the reported balance is \$119,064.88.

It was noted that approximately \$10,043 was moved into the pooled account. Additionally, a principal payment on the USDA loan exceeded the amount originally budgeted for principal,

and a budget adjustment will be needed to account for the additional principal reduction. This adjustment will be prepared for a future meeting.

Motion to approve the financial report as presented made by Dawn Bodnar and second by Sue Fischer. Motion carried by voice vote.

6. Old Business

a. Safe Routes to School

No new action has been taken. The DDA is still attempting to contact Quinn Ridley to arrange a meeting and obtain a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the project.

b. Sealing of Sidewalks

Sidewalk sealing is complete for this winter season, with only a small portion of red brick remaining. The sealer performed well and improved the appearance of the concrete, but there were significant issues with sprayers clogging due to the fast-drying, solvent-based product. Staff will research better application methods and equipment used by contractors who regularly work with similar sealers.

There was discussion about whether the colored concrete on the bridge (funded by the DDA) should also be sealed. It was noted that the surface would likely need a thorough cleaning/acid wash first due to rust and weathering. Staff will inspect the bridge area and report back with recommendations at a future meeting.

Regarding the Consumers Energy excavation near BC Pizza, it was reported that the restoration work is in their queue but no schedule has been provided. Given the season, it is likely that the concrete restoration will occur in the spring.

c. Well Cover (Sturgeon Area)

A temporary wooden cover has been installed over the well near the sturgeon feature. It currently has minimal decorations and is considered an improvement over the previous exposed components. A family member is preparing a drawing for a permanent decorative cover styled as a sturgeon-spearing shack. Once available, the concept will be shared with the Women's Club, BLPA, and others for review and input.

d. DDA Board Vacancy

Applications were hand-delivered to three individuals who expressed interest in serving on the Board, but no applications have been returned. The vacancy therefore remains open. It was noted that Diane Friedrich indicated she would be interested in returning to the Board in the spring after she returns from Florida. She was previously a strong contributor and

writer for the DDA. If another candidate is appointed before then, the Board will proceed accordingly.

e. Sturgeon Drinking Fountain

A new stainless steel drinking fountain, similar to the unit at the Chamber, has been ordered and will be donated. Installation is anticipated in the spring. Scott has agreed to donate the plumbing hookups, as he did when the previous fountain froze and failed. A drywell/stone drain system will be installed for discharge, and water testing will continue. The DDA has already approved covering the ongoing testing costs as part of the well project. Final well testing and clearance from the health department (Ramsay) are still pending.

f. Bench Donation (Women's Club)

The donated bench from the Women's Club, originally intended for the sturgeon area, will instead be placed near the kayak launch/Marina Park, where there is a greater need for seating as people prepare to launch. The donor was supportive of this change.

DPW staff noted that this style of plastic/dock bench has a limited lifespan in public use and that several similar benches elsewhere in the township have deteriorated over time. Nonetheless, the bench will be installed in the spring in the Marina Park area.

g. Bench Refinishing – Safe Routes to School Benches

Four metal benches along the Safe Routes to School pathway (from town up toward the school) are rusting, especially those in full sun. These benches are approximately 15–20 years old. The DPW obtained an estimate from a powder-coating contractor, who anticipates a range of \$750–\$800 per bench for sandblasting and re-coating in the same color and grade as the current streetlight poles. New benches of similar quality would cost in the range of \$2,500–\$3,000 each.

Motion to authorize refinishing of four benches along the Safe Routes to School pathway at a cost not to exceed \$800 per bench, made by Dan Nivelt and second by Kris Olson. Motion carried.

h. Community Entry Signage

The Board reviewed three proposed designs for new community entry signs prepared by the same vendor who provided the decorative street signs and brackets. One design was generally preferred. Trudy asked that “Tuscarora Township” be included on the sign faces. Staff will request pricing on the preferred design, including a version that incorporates “Tuscarora Township” and an arch-style sign that could be used at key trail or roadway entrances. Pricing and options will be brought back to a future meeting.

7. New Business

a. Fireworks / Community Celebration Committee

There was discussion about forming or staffing a committee to plan a two-day community celebration and fireworks (not necessarily on July 4). Various members were informally nominated, and in a light-hearted exchange, a motion was made to appoint Sue Fischer to serve on the committee made by Dawn Bodnar and second by Lori Pollard. Despite her objections, the motion carried. Sue will represent the DDA on the celebration/fireworks planning committee.

b. Streetlight Banners and Advertising Policy

Representatives of the Indian River Women's Club attended to discuss the use of the township-owned light poles for banners. The Women's Club has, for over 60 years, invested in beautifying the community and recently purchased 40 summer banners, 40 winter banners, and bridge banners using community and business donations. It was their understanding that these banners would remain on the poles throughout their respective seasons.

A for-profit event organizer (for the "Tune Time" event) requested use of the light poles for promotional banners, which would require removal of the Women's Club banners for a period of time. The Women's Club expressed strong concern about:

- Using decorative banner hardware on township poles for for-profit advertising;
- Setting a precedent that could open the door to numerous business/event advertising requests;
- Damage and wear caused by repeatedly removing and reinstalling the seasonal banners and hardware;
- The perception that community-donated beautification elements are being displaced by commercial promotion.

They also noted that there are many other advertising options available (yard signs, feather flags, ground signage on private property with permission). The Board discussed possible compromise options such as leaving some poles without permanent banners or adding more brackets, but concerns remained regarding consistency of appearance, safety during frequent changing of banners, and long-term policy implications.

There was also discussion of past practice, including an instance when the event organizer removed the Women's Club banners without coordination and did not reinstall them, requiring DPW staff to put them back up.

Motion to prohibit commercial or event advertising banners on the township light poles and to retain the Women's Club seasonal banners on the poles for the full season, with the Women's Club continuing to manage the decorative banner program, made by Dan Nivelt and second by Sue Fischer. Motion carried.

c. Sidewalk Maintenance and Snow Removal

The Board held an extended discussion on sidewalk snow removal and the related equipment needs and cost allocation among township entities. It was reported that the existing sidewalk tractor is no longer repairable. A replacement unit is estimated at approximately \$37,000 with the municipal discount. A financed option without the municipal discount was quoted at roughly \$34,900 at 5.9% interest, with the concept of financing for a short period and paying off the balance after the next budget year begins.

Historically, the DDA budgeted \$500 per year for sidewalk clearing, and the DDA has not been billed for snow removal for at least the last two years. DPW staff explained that their department and the Parks budget have been absorbing much of the cost of shared equipment (tires, maintenance, fuel, etc.), even though multiple cost centers benefit (DDA, Township, School, cemeteries, DeVoe Beach, boat launch, etc.).

The Board discussed the need for more equitable cost sharing, better tracking of hours and use by cost center, and possibly treating maintenance as its own department or cost center in the future. It was noted that the school is contractually responsible for maintaining the Safe Routes to School sidewalk segment and that the township will approach the school regarding a contribution (potentially a flat annual amount) based on an estimated half-hour of clearing per event.

For planning purposes, staff estimated that a typical pass through town requires approximately two hours of operator time, and that there could be on the order of 50 passes per season (with significant variation from year to year). A preliminary internal rate of \$50 per hour was discussed to cover wages, fuel, and a portion of equipment replacement and maintenance costs.

Motion to budget \$5,000 for sidewalk snow removal and related maintenance (based on \$50 per hour and an estimated 100 hours per season), with this arrangement to be reviewed in approximately four months after actual use and costs are better known, made by Dan Nivelt and Motion seconded by Dawn Bodnar. Motion carried.

8. Public Comment

No public comment was offered beyond the discussion with the Indian River Women's Club noted above.

9. Board Comment

No additional Board comments were recorded.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Dan Nivelt. The meeting was adjourned.