

Final
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Commerce Township Hall
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, MI 48390

CALL TO ORDER: The Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Matta at 12:02pm in the Township Hall kitchen for the DDA Holiday Buffet.

Downtown Development Authority:

Present: Debbie Watson, DDA Director
Steve Matta, Chairperson
Larry Gray, Township Supervisor
Brian Winkler, Member
David Smith, Member
Spencer Schafer, Member
Derek Tuck, Member
Susan Spelker, Member
Jose Mirkin, Member

Absent: Molly Phillips, DDA Treasurer
Randy Thomas, Insite Commercial
Tim Hoy, Vice Chairperson

Also Present: Melissa Creech, DDA Secretary
Chris Martella, Dawda, DDA Attorney
Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director
Jason Mayer, Township Engineer, Giffels-Webster
Lt. Eric Hix, Substation Commander, OCSO
Sgt. Matt Leggat, OCSO

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

MOTION by Spelker, seconded by Mirkin, to approve the DDA Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2025. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Item 2: Public Comments

Ray Golota, 1595 Vanstone Dr, Commerce Township – Last month, you gave me an assignment. I had asked if anyone knew what was being built on the northeast corner of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty, in West Bloomfield. I'll tell you what they're going to build. It's something that the Township does not want. It's another car wash.

Chairperson Matta – Thank you.

Item 3: OCSO Update

Lt. Hix discussed the following with the Board.

- The investigation of the recent fatal accident on M-5 should be wrapping up in a few days. The impact was at about 118mph.
- Yesterday, an intoxicated suspect was apprehended near Annie's Party Shoppe.

Discussions continued regarding details of these incidents, along with the recent shooting at Prime 7 restaurant.

Chairperson Matta – Thank you very much. We appreciate all your efforts out there. Stay safe.

Item 4: Insite Commercial Report

Randy Thomas' report was included in the agenda packet.

Chairperson Matta – We don't have Randy today.

Director Watson – If anyone has questions for him, I can relay those.

David Smith – Any updates?

Director Watson – I did speak with him last week. He said the main focus right now is working with the gourmet market on the letter of intent. It's a matter of ironing out the CC&R's.

Item 5: Attorney's Report

• Director's Contract

Attorney Martella – On the agenda is Deborah Watson's contract renewal for 2026. The only difference between what we have seen before and this one is that there is mention of the DDA Assistant. The role is currently vacant. Deborah has mentioned that she will take over as needed to cover that at the moment, and then look into 2026 to fill that position.

Director Watson – I'm happy to continue doing the work and stay within the administrative budget. I can reassess in April to see how things are going and if we need someone at that time, but it's slow during the first quarter. I can manage what needs to be done right now.

MOTION by Smith, seconded by Spelker, to approve authorization of the execution of the DDA Director's contract renewal as presented. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

• Pad A Extraction

Attorney Martella reported that he received a 3-page punch list from Bruce's attorney; a list of the things that need to get done before they allow extraction of Pad A from 5 & Main. The list includes deed restrictions, calculating fee and cost sharing, a proportional share of the traffic light, et cetera. Attorney Martella does not recall anything during his tenure regarding any cost sharing agreements. There would be deed restrictions, and that was understood. He will dispute portions of the request along with delays. He added that an amendment to the B-docs would need to be filed for the condo association to extract the parcel.

The requests within the punch list were discussed, along delays in the extraction process, and the actual terms that were specified in the agreements. The site is supposed to be a level, graded site with utility stubs. In addition, certain restrictions would be allowed to be put into place regarding use and development style. The new restrictions, requests and site calculations do not fit within the guidelines agreed upon. Discussions continued regarding the cost of the traffic signal, the Phase II property and extraction of Pad B. Both Pad A and B will be outlots. David Smith noted that a Marketing Committee meeting could be scheduled to discuss details further.

Item 6: Director's Report

Director Watson's written report of December 11th was included in the Board's agenda packet, and is included below, along with any relevant updates.

Director Watson – Everything is included in my written report. I do have a question. Dave, you said Jim Fielder reported that the grading will be done on Pad A; did he say before the end of the year?

Dave Campbell – Yes, he wanted it done before the holidays. He needs a soil erosion permit from the Building Department to do it. He was calling me to ask about the status of the permit.

Discussion of the permit process took place, which is handled by the Building Department, and they did instruct Jim to proceed with grading.

Director Watson – I went by the site last week. Although I did not see any activity on Pad A, Dort was making extensive progress. In addition, LaFontaine looks amazing.

I. *Updates on Developments – Please refer to the Insite Report and the Planning Director's Report for additional information.*

- *5 & Main –*
 - *The Phase I site is being cleared, surveyed and graded.*
 - *Bruce has his engineer and architect working on plans for the shopette, which will establish the architectural theme for the rest of the development.*
 - *An extension through February 18th was executed last month for the Phase II option. This will allow for a few items to be addressed before any other extension or alternative is considered.*
 - *The gourmet market is in negotiations to purchase their real estate outright and the LOI is in process.*
 - *The Trustees approved the Library parcel extension to Apr. 30, 2026.*
 - *Springs at 5 & Main is now leasing and tenants are moving in. Continental is continuing pursuit of their Brownfield Plan at the County and State levels.*
 - *Dort Federal Credit Union has started construction. They estimate completion by Summer 2026.*
- *LaFontaine Automotive Group (LAG) – At Pontiac Trail & Haggerty; LaFontaine's buildings look fantastic!*
- *Parcel F / Unit 7, in front of the Township Hall – Nothing new to report.*
- *Parcel J1, Haggerty & Oakley Park – We are looking at promoting the potential for a drive-through use. We will present a conceptual at the January Planning Commission meeting to get their preliminary feedback.*
- *Parcels M & N (or Pad A & Pad B) – Pad A – Attorney Martella is pursuing extraction of Pad A, and Randy Thomas is actively marketing the parcel. Grading will be done and the additional soil onsite is being removed soon, according to Bruce's team.*

II. *MTT Judgments – As updates are available, reports are given at the DDA meeting.*

III. *Commerce Towne Place HOA Items –*

- A. *Budget – The 2026 budget will be emailed to the HOA Director's for approval this month.*
- B. *Dues – All dues are current.*
- C. *Tax Forms & Reports – Nothing new to report.*
- D. *Lighting/Electrical – Shaw, Eric Peterson, Adam Dornton, BrightSource, Rich Walton*
 - *We await a portion of our recent lighting supply order for poles and bases.*
 - *We've had two light pole accidents at Oakley Park recently. One damaged a base and the electrical, and the other took down a pole along with the holiday decorations. Shaw has been prompt in addressing issues. Claims will be filed.*

E. Landscaping, Maintenance & Trails – United Lawnscape, Tara Marquart; Rousseaux's Excavating, Mark Rousseaux

- *An accident in November at the Township roundabout took out a large pine tree. Rousseaux promptly cleaned up the tree and quoted replacement. An insurance claim will be submitted.*
- *Lake Trail is still closed, between Avalon & Walmart, due to construction on the Haggerty Pump Station Abandonment project. The trail has been cordoned off to pedestrians for safety reasons. Closure is expected to last through the end of the year. Notice has been posted on the Township website.*

F. Irrigation – Michigan Automatic Sprinkler (MAS)

- *The system was winterized October 25th.*

IV. Other

- *I will be out of the office over the Holidays, but I will be working remotely and available by phone and email for anything that arises.*
- *I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

Township Board Update:

Supervisor Gray reported the following:

- We had a Township Board meeting last Tuesday.
- We approved the Township budget, which includes wages of boards and commissions, the Michigan Airline Trail budget, and the overall Township Board budget for 2026.
- We approved all of the 2026 meeting schedules, holiday closures, and 2025 budget amendments.
- We approved the Library to purchase a new seating area and some equipment for their youth area from 2026 dollars, but they're putting the order in now to save some money. And we're also going to purchase a new self-check machine to replace an old one that's been in there for about 10 years.
- Finally, we approved the Flock cameras, so we'll be putting nine of those throughout the Township. I'm sure Lt. Hicks and Sgt. Leggat are happy about that.
- The biggest part of the discussion was our sidewalk program that we started this year.
 - For those that don't know, we created an ordinance a year ago about all the sidewalks throughout the township.
 - Jason and his team took the Township and divided it into five different areas. Each year we'll be looking at an area, and we'll be rotating those every five years.
 - In each area, his team goes out, looks to see if there's any heaving in the cement, and if a pad needs to be replaced or sanded down, we will contact the residents where the sidewalks exist. We will see if they want to fix them themselves, or we will have them participate in the Special Assessment District or SAD to get those repairs done. Jason did a lot of hard work on this, and it's going to be interesting going around the first time to see how it transpires.
- Next year, the Road Commission will be doing the roundabout at the Wixom, Sleeth and Duck Lake Road. They will probably start the project right after school. They looked to us and Milford to contribute some money for early job completion. It would cost us about \$13,000. It would be about a three-week early completion date, as well as with Milford. Milford denied it. So, our Board approved paying \$13,000 as long as Milford contributes their fair share.

Susan Spelker – When is the anticipated completion of that project?

Supervisor Gray – What did they say, Dave, October? After school begins in the fall.

Dave Campbell – Yes, and that was part of the motivation of paying extra to condense the schedule.

Supervisor Gray elaborated on the detour and issues that may arise with cut-through traffic in the area. There is another project that will take place during that time at Milford and Pontiac Trail. He also noted that he wrote a letter to the Milford Township Board to see if they would reconsider their stance on the matter. Discussion continued regarding traffic issues, road closures and future plans for the roundabout projects at Martin and Richardson, and Union Lake and Richardson.

Supervisor Gray –

- In addition, F&V Operations started operating our wastewater treatment plant yesterday, and they took over all of our water lines.
- We extended our contract with WRC until September 30th for billing and for emergency call-outs. That was only thing we didn't account for that sprung up on us. So, if I had to do this all again, I'd still do it. I would have done it in a year earlier; however, we didn't have that amount of time. The Commerce team has been doing a great job on that.
- That's about it. Have a Merry Christmas!

David Smith – You're thinking water rates will stay the same then?

Supervisor Gray – Yes, for this year. And Jason and I will have a call in February with the Great Lakes Water Authority to see what the future rates are. Do water and sewer stay the same for 2026?

Jason Mayer – I think they both do.

Spencer Schafer – What are other communities doing? Have they talked about leaving WRC?

Supervisor Gray – No other Township that I have talked to. The unique thing is that we have our own wastewater treatment plant, which a lot of folks do not have. We are a very large customer of WRC, probably #2 or #3.

Jason Mayer – We also own all our water, sewer, and treatment plants.

Supervisor Gray – So, nobody I've talked to is looking to move away from the County, but it was a move we thought we needed to make to get out from underneath the County's thumb.

Item 7: Engineer's Report

Engineer Mayer –

- Springs at 5 & Main – We're just waiting on as-builts for that. We've coordinated with the new operator to have their meters on hand when they need them for the buildings that are going up.
- Dort Credit Union – They basically finished all their site work within a week, so we're not really looking at anything on utilities there.
- Haggerty Pump Station Abandonment – They got the open cut gravity sewer all the way to the corner of LaFontaine. The contractor had some concerns about crossing the wetland with how wet it is. We are working with the geotechnical engineer to see if they're able to drill under that, or if we might have to move that line. That is to be determined. So, they're not working onsite right now until we figure that out.

Item 8: Planning Director's Report

Dave Campbell, Township Planning Director –

- Speaking of that traffic signal at Pontiac Trail, Walnut Lake and Pinewood Avenue, my understanding was the electrician doing the job for the Road Commission was supposed to start today with setting the poles. I haven't been by, but my hope is they're out there working as we speak. And again, the idea is that the new signal will be up and running by the end of January, weather permitting, of course.
- We had a pre-construction meeting with Jason and his team on the Taco Bell that's being built next door to Sonic. It's a Taco Bell that was probably way more complicated than it needed to be, but we finally got to the point where they're going to want to break ground in the Spring. One of the things I like about that project is DTE is going to have to move some of their overhead utility poles because part of them would have landed in the middle of Taco Bell's drive-through. So, since they had to move the poles anyway, they're going to bury everything underground. I'm sure Taco Bell is going to pay some of the bill for that. But hopefully what that means is some of those poles and the big heavy utilities at that corner are all underground so it will clean things up and declutter it a little bit.

David Smith and Dave Campbell discussed the lighting on the M-5 pedestrian bridge. Dave Campbell also noted that an inappropriate banner had been hung from the pedestrian bridge over the weekend. Fortunately, it was blown over by the wind where nobody could see it. Deputies removed the banner Monday morning.

Item 9: Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee –

- 1) 2025 DDA Amended Budget
- 2) 2026 DDA Budget Final

Susan Spelker – Because it is year-end, we have to move things to next year that did not close as we had anticipated. Molly highlighted changes to the budget regarding Parcel J. This is nothing new or different or unusual. It's just a matter of cleaning things up at the end of the year.

Director Watson – Yes, we already approved the budgets back in October. They went to the Township Board in November, and the Board actually just approved them last Tuesday. We always do a reapproval after Township Board. I think we can do a motion for both items if there are no questions.

MOTION by Mirkin, supported by Spelker, to approve the 2025 DDA Amended Budget and the 2026 DDA Budget. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. Public Relations Committee – Jose Mirkin – Nothing new to report. I just want to say, Happy Holidays to everybody!

C. Marketing Committee – David Smith – I think we have discussed everything. We will address items further at a Marketing Committee meeting. I wish everyone Happy Holidays! I do have a question. Is this a good time to refinance, or are we just locked into the bonds forever?

Director Watson – The bonds do have to mature. I asked Molly about that recently. She also said that even if we could refinance bonds, the current rates are still much higher than what she had locked in for us.

Attorney Martella – She locked in some great rates.

Item 10: Approval of Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons, Revenue & Expenditure
MOTION by Mirkin, seconded by Spelker, to approve the Warrants and/or Carryovers, Add-ons and the Revenue & Expenditure Report. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Item 11: Other Matters

Brian Winkler – Steve, I have two items. The first is that I'm going to miss the February and March meetings next year.

David Smith – I will be missing the February meeting also.

Brian Winkler – The other item is, I think most of you know, Deb Watson has been the Recording Secretary for the Planning Commission for as long as I have been on the Commission which is 18 years. The Planning Commission as well as Dave Campbell, we have a gift for Deb for her efforts over the past year. This past year, she has written hundreds of pages of meeting minutes for the Planning Commission.

Dave Campbell – It's like a transcription.

Brian Winkler – Yes, and over those 18 years, thousands of pages. So Deb, thanks for your efforts. Hopefully we'll see you next year.

Director Watson – Thank you, Brian. I'll be back.

Dave Campbell – Deb loves those meetings!

Director Watson – I do. I live for my meetings.

Item 12: Adjournment

- Next regular meeting is January 20, 2026.

MOTION by Mirkin, seconded by Spelker, to adjourn the meeting at 12:51pm.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech
DDA Secretary

INVOICE APPROVAL (BY INVOICE) FOR COMMERCE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

EXP CHECK RUN DATES 12/16/2025 - 12/16/2025

POSTED AND UNPOSTED OPEN AND PAID

BANK ACCOUNTS: DDA

Invoice Number	Bank Account	Description	Amount
DAWDA DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW			
518060	DDA	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THROUGH NOVEMBER 2025	3,002.50
Total For: DAWDA MANN COUNSELORS AT LAW			
			3,002.50
WATSON DEBORAH WATSON			
NOV/DEC 2025	DDA	DDA DIRECTOR 11/13/25 - 12/11/25	3,472.00
Total For: DEBORAH WATSON			
			3,472.00
DTE DETROIT EDISON			
01/05 2579 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1100 5	22.81
01/05 2581 LIBRARY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1086 6	1,117.01
01/05 2660 OAKLEY	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1065 0	215.91
01/05 3106 MARTIN	DDA	ACCT# 9100 077 1076 7	255.84
Total For: DETROIT EDISON			
			1,611.57
GIFFELS GIFFELS-WEBSTER ENGINEERS			
136387	DDA	DDA GENERAL ENGINEERING	204.60
Total For: GIFFELS-WEBSTER ENGINEERS			
			204.60
Report Total:			
			8,290.67

