CHEYENNE DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2101 O'Neil Ave., Room 205
Cheyenne, WY 82001
(307) 433-9730
cheyennecity.org/dda

MINUTES

Thursday, August 21, 2025
City Council Chambers, City of Cheyenne Municipal Building
2101 O'Neil Avenue, Cheyenne, WY 82001

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Wendy Volk (Vice President), Brian Bau, Amber Nuse, Dave Teubner, Janelle Rose, Candice Wisdom, Linda Heath (Ex-Officio). **On Zoom**: Lorrell Bellotti

Members Absent: Councilman Scott Roybal (President); Jamie Winters.

Staff Present: Sophia Maes, DDA Executive Director **On Zoom**: Miya Debusk, DDA Social Media Assistant

Members of the Public Present: Jerry Watson, Sidles Co.; Pete Laybourn, City Council; Tracy Brosius, HealthWorks. **On Zoom**: Corey Loughry, Paris West; Amber Ash, Chief of Staff; Royce Fertig, 5R; Rahul Dhami, Property Owner Representative; Jennifer McClelland, City Council; Julie Tucker, Mayor's Council for People with Disabilities; Erin Fagan, Planner II; Charles Bloom, City Planning & Development Director

III. DISCLOSURES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

IV. MINUTES:

A. **July 31, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes:** Rose motioned to approve Minutes for July 31, 2025. Seconded by Bau. Minutes approved unanimously.

V. PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Maes introduced the item.

A. GIS/Engineering Intern Inventory: City Engineering interns updated the GIS inventory for downtown assets. Next steps will be coordinate with other groups and committees

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to understand what's working and what's not. Volk asked for clarification on the map color-coding. Maes stated they need to be cleaned up. Volk asked to see the southern DDA corridor and what the green and blue colors were for. Maes stated the green is tables, the red is pedestrian-scaled lighting, and the blue is benches. Maes noted the southern corridor was lacking in assets. Teubner applauded the effort of the inventory in a GIS model as a great first step.

B. 15th Street Experience: No updates.

C. 1600 (3 Alley) Project: Maes wanted to add a correction to the record. The 1600 Alley Improvements in the Plan of Development are different than the 4 Alley Project that the Engineering Department is leading. However, there are two alleys that overlap these projects, and all alleys are in the DDA District.

D. The Hynds & the Hole: Council adopted a resolution authorizing the City to enter an MOU with Cheyenne LEADS to be the fiscal agent of the Large Projects Gap Financing Revolving Loan Fund, which was created with $3.5 million in 6th Penny Funds. LEADS intends to use The Hole as a pilot project for this fund. Maes spoke with LEADS to offer any assistance the DDA can give. Teubner asked if the Hynds and the Hole can be added to the Land Use Focus Area updates even though it's not an official Plan of Development project and help facilitate as much as needed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Cost-Benefit Task Force

Maes introduced the item. The need for a cost-benefit task force came about from previous work sessions, particularly in regard to the City-DDA Work Program MOU and long-term operations. The staff report outlines the purpose and proposed timeline, with the goal of final recommendations delivered to the Board and the Governing Body by May 2026.

Bau stated this task force will create a path forward for the DDA, which is essential for its survival. Volk agreed.

Volk stated the plan would be doable and asked if the next step would be to vote or to appoint members to the task force. Maes recommended appointment.

Volk asked for volunteers. Teubner, Bau, Wisdom, and Volk agreed.

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Volk asked for a motion to formally establish a cost-benefit analysis task for and appoint Board members to serve on that task force throughout the fiscal year 2026. Bellotti motioned, Teubner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. July 2025 Financial Report

Maes introduced the financial report for July 2025. She stated the total assets as of July 31, 2025, were $1,482,656.29. The net income in July was $-82,705.21 due to the mill levy payments delay waiting for the Treasurer Bond. She stated some CIGs were paid. She stated the final number of operating days expenditures are 741.03 (policy requires 60 days), and the number was higher than fiscal year 2025 due to the fiscal year 2026 operating budget right sized. She gave updates on the Grants and Sponsorship Commitments: Double H Homes' CIG was paid in August. The FirsTier Sidewalk Improvement grant is pending payment until the City has invoiced the DDA. The DDF Downtown Putt Putt Tournament not been paid pending a W-9. Maes asked for a few motions:

1. Move to uncommit $1,688.11 for Double H Homes as they did not spend the entire committed $30,000.
2. Either wait for the DDF to submit a W-9 or move to uncommit $1,075 for the DDF Downtown Putt Putt Tournament

Bau motioned to uncommit $1,688.11 for Double H Homes Loans Capital Improvement Grant. Nuse seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Volk stated that she believed the DDA had a W-9 for the DDF on file. Wisdom stated that the previous W-9 was for Visit Cheyenne and not the DDF. Volk stated that the DDF should have had a W-9 previously. Maes stated she did not find it in the records and Volk suggested reaching out to Wally Erickson. The Board decided not to make a motion regarding these funds.

Nuse asked what the status was for the fiscal year 2026 budget and had concerns about the negative revenue and accounting journal entry for the June 2025 mill levy payment. Maes stated that the City Treasurer reviewed the July financial report and did not mention accounting errors, but she would follow up. She stated the fiscal year 2026 budget was approved in June and is published on the webpage. Nuse recommended that the revenue should be zero and not negative when approved. Teubner asked to postpone the financial report's approval until there was clarification from the Treasurer. Maes stated she was not sure if this could be done, but assumed it was a possibility since it needs to be approved by the Board and therefore could be tabled until the Board felt comfortable approving. Nuse motioned to table the approval of the July 2025 Financial Report. Bau seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B. CIG Application 25-3 408 W 17th Street

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Maes introduced the item submitted by Jerry Watson of Watson Properties, LLC for $9,500 or 50% of the estimated repair costs to repair a deteriorating external wall at 408 W 17th Street. The property is a contributing structure to the Downtown Historic District, and the wall was originally an interior common wall before the adjacent building was demolished for the Cheyenne Public Safety Center parking lot. Maes states that the proposal meets all review criteria for CIG funds.

Jerry Watson presented the project as the applicant.

Bellotti motioned to approve the CIG application for 408 West 17th Street for exterior masonry repair on the west side of the building and authorize the DDA President and Vice President to execute necessary agreements and easement documents. Bau seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B.2. CIG Application 25-4 506 W 17th Street

Maes introduced the item as the walk-on agenda item submitted by Tracy Brosius of HealthWorks for the maximum CIG grant amount of $50,000 for ADA sidewalk replacement at 506 W 17th Street. Maes stated that the proposal meets all review criteria.

Bau asked if there were any pictures of the improvements. Maes stated there is a site plan available and some handouts were supplied by HealthWorks. Volk asked if the applicant would present the project.

Tracy Brosius presented the project as the applicant. She stated they are excited to move the HealthWorks clinic downtown. She stated the sidewalk repairs for ADA compliance were a last-minute fix required by the City and believes the upgrades will be a major improvement to the entire site.

Volk welcomed HealthWorks to downtown. Nuse asked if there were DDA programs that could be layered to provide the maximum amount of support such as the CIG and the Sidewalk Improvement Grant. Maes spoke with Doug Klahn with 1% Construction to see if these programs could overlap. Klahn stated that the intent of the Sidewalk Improvement program was for high-priority sidewalks downtown that had smaller areas of repair. Maes stated that parameters of fund layering for single properties need to be discussed by the Board as there are no known guidelines or restrictions at this time.

Wisdom asked if there was a precedent being set that sidewalk improvements with a high-dollar amount would apply for CIG instead of the Sidewalk Improvement Program. Maes stated that the Sidewalk Improvement program covers 50% of the costs with no known cap per project. The concern is that larger cost sidewalk repair would expend the entire program budget with only a few projects and not spread it out to have the most impact. She stated that the Sidewalk Program is administrative, and the Executive Director does not need Board approval for the projects and that higher cost projects like the present CIG application should come before the Board.

Wisdom asked if an applicant could go through the CIG program instead of the Sidewalk 50-50 program and alleviate the need for a Sidewalk Loan Program. Maes stated that CIG could be used instead, but each grant program is still 50-50.

Volk stated her support to dedicate the Sidewalk Improvement Program to correcting trip hazards instead of major sidewalk replacement as part of a building renovation.

Teubner thanked Brosius for the investment downtown and spoke in favor.

Nuse stated it may be wise to put more restrictions and parameters around the Sidewalk Improvement Program, such as a cap on each grant at a later meeting.

Wisdom motioned to approve the CIG application as presented for 506 West 17th Street for the replacement of sidewalks around the building (in an amount up to $50,000) and authorize the DDA President and Vice President to execute necessary agreements and easement documents. Teubner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

C. 2025 IDA Conference – Travel Expense Approval

Maes introduced the item. The 2025 IDA Conference in Washington D.C. would be attended by Maes, Wisdom and the Operations Coordinator if hired in time. She stated that the conference was attended by Board members and previous staff in 2024 and was highly recommended for the Cheyenne DDA to attend again. Maes stated that Board approval was required for travel expenses over $5,000 per the DDA Purchasing Policy and asked the Board to approve up to $9,500 for the trip to cover any contingencies, with the belief that the actual costs would be much less.

Bau stated that the conference offered a ton of value in training and how to navigate the issues the DDA faces and is in support.

Bau motioned to approve the 2025 IDA Conference expenses as outlined by staff, not to exceed $9,500 (including contingency for a third airline ticket). Teubner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Downtown Stakeholder Mediation

Maes introduced the item as a response to feedback over the past few months to foster and heal relationships with the downtown community and help communicate the direction of the DDA and why.

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Maes stated that there was an email received by the Board from a stakeholder about the item. Volk acknowledged the receipt of this email. Maes stated that for any comments to be considered they must be made public for purposes of the Open Meetings Act.

Nuse asked if the goals of the Communications Plan would overlap with the goals of mediation, how much mediation would potentially cost, and if both parties were interested in mediation. She is hesitant to spend DDA funds for this purpose considering the Communication Plan. Teubner stated the Communications Plan is more of marketing and advertising, not as much relationship building but can touch on it during the process. He does believe there is a need to heal the tensions with a few key stakeholders but does not know if this is the solution

Bau asked who the facilitator might be and if any stakeholders had been reached out to. Maes stated that a few facilitators had approached her. She stated the DDA would solicit competitive bids, and the total amount would depend on the amount of mediation needed. Wisdom stated she sees the benefit of sitting down and understanding how the DDA can collaborate with different groups to get projects done in an effective way.

Rose stated she agrees with the comments and that a facilitator could be helpful. She believes these groups are concerned about bureaucracy and is concerned this would exacerbate this. She believes lack of implementation is one of the biggest sources of frustration, and targeting strategic planning professional and clear expectations around communications would be more helpful than mediation. She suggested a strategic planning committee or to incorporate this into the Cost-Benefit Analysis Task Force. She stated that she believes advocacy for business and property owners is part of the DDA.

Teubner referred to the Area Wide Plan and that it was identified that the DDA had a lot of reputation repair to do. Teubner recalled when the DDA split from Visit Cheyenne that no staff was retained and the DDA was effectively a startup. He agrees that the DDA needs to have meetings with partners and collaboration to implement.

Volk asked for advice from Heath. Heath stated that another committee or mediator may be another layer of bureaucracy, and what stakeholders want is to be listened to by those who make the decisions. She stated that she was not sure if tensions were high enough to require a mediator.

Bau stated Board members and the Executive Director should have more outreach focus groups in the community and these stakeholders should be the first stops. He stated it's important to be able to communicate what the DDA does and doesn't do, and that there are many constituents the DDA must respond to. He would prefer this method instead of the mediator.

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Volk asked how many Board members could meet without being a quorum. Maes stated that up to five Board members could meet, but ex-parte communications should be declared before votes are cast.

Teubner stated that a meeting with several of these stakeholders was being planned and opened it to another Board member if they'd like to attend.

Pete Laybourn, Council Member, made public comment. He stated there were some long sought improvements being made, including HealthWorks. He stated the City collaboration with the Hynds and the Hole should also be beneficial. He stated there were many ways to speak with each other, including mediation, but the cause of frustration should be taken into consideration. He stated that there were not enough attendees at the DDA meetings when decisions were being made. He stated the question of a quorum was not relevant, and many conversations should be had so they can be brought to the meetings for decision making. He emphasized the need for more coordination with the City departments. He reminded the DDA about the mill levy election coming up in two years, and how essential that funding is. He stated there are good things happening downtown, but there aren't enough. He stated the Board needs to start listening and communicating.

Bau stated the DDA Board is listening and felt Laybourn consistently approaches the DDA with an angry tone. Laybourn stated these concerns were serious and hopes the DDA listens to others that are angry.

Volk stated her main concern was supporting staff to ensure longevity. She stated she's proud of the current Board and staff, noting the high turnover in the past. She believes the DDA can reach out to the stakeholders and have constructive conversations.

Wisdom stated the question was mediation versus a strategy meeting. She stated the grassroots approach of reaching out directly to concerned stakeholders would be the best start. She stated that lack of implementation is one of the biggest frustrations and believes collaboration to get these projects done is critical. She also believes the Cost-Benefit Analysis Task Force could incorporate these conversations into its goals.

Wisdom motioned to table the item until Teubner and Bau have a chance to speak with downtown stakeholders. Bau asked Maes about her thoughts. Maes stated these tensions have been present for a while and exacerbated by recent analysis made by Maes, which she apologizes for. She stated that there has not been alignment with statutory purpose, and getting the DDA realigned will take time and boundaries, and some stakeholders may be upset. She agrees that attending stakeholder meetings with Board members would be helpful. She agreed with Councilman Laybourn that there isn't enough being done, but the DDA must go slow to make progress, including saying no to requests that don't align in order to execute a few projects well.

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She stated that once momentum is created then the DDA can begin to do more. She stated that a mediator should be postponed until it's shown that it's needed and that there would be a structure for it.

Volk stated that Maes should not be a punching bag. She stated that the number one goal is to support staff members. She believes the item should be tabled.

Health stated that it could be helpful for some Board members to be present if there is a contentious meeting. Teubner agreed, citing repetitive factors that cause turnover and burnout. He would like to see the DDA do more outreach with stakeholders.

Wisdom motioned to table the item until an assessment can be brought back to the board of where things stand. Bau seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Quarterly Board Meetings vs Monthly

Maes introduced the item for verbal discussion. She stated the monthly meetings have been a lot to prepare for and wanted Board to discuss having less frequent meetings with no less than one every three months to comply with the bylaws. She also stated that hiring a new Operations & Projects Coordinator within the month will require training, pulling time away from meeting preparation. She asked for consideration of cancellation of October, November, or December meetings, as well as frequency of meetings during 2026.

Volk stated that previous Executive Directors have also felt meeting preparation has been a source of overwhelm while trying to get traction on projects, even with more staff.

Bau stated he did not want grant applicants to have to wait too long, proposing bi-monthly regular meetings with work sessions the other months. Teubner agreed and would like to see more work sessions in 2026 so Board meetings can be constructive. He also stated he apologized for not speaking into the microphone but wanted it on record that he knows he should.

Wisdom complimented Maes for bringing this to the Board but does believe it's important for the Board to be able to hear requests in a timely manner and quarterly meetings may not be frequent enough. She would like flexibility to be able to call an emergency Board meeting if needed.

Volk asked Maes what would be manageable. Volk stated that September could be postponed or called only to approve financials. Maes agreed every other month would be manageable, and that an emergency meeting could be called. She stated that a high priority is outlining parameters and expectations for grant applications to ensure enough time for both parties. She suggested that work session goals could be set by Board Members.

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Heath stated the County uses DocuSign for the financials so payments can be sent, and the signatures are ratified at meetings.

Volk suggested Maes let the Board know if a September meeting would be necessary for approval for the Financial Report.

F. Sponsorship Parameters and Application

Maes introduced the item as a response to sponsorship requests for events. She stated the parameters and application is to ensure evaluation criteria are clear for applicants and the Board can evaluate applications in regard to alignment with goals. She intends to standardize the application process by creating an online application on OpenGov (the platform used for CIG applications). She also included a post-event report so the DDA can assess return on investment and effectiveness of DDA funds.

Volk stated she likes the application and report to be able to track the return of investment. Wisdom asked for clarification on who's financial burden insurance and permitting would be and whether that should be included in the application. Maes stated her understanding was that the insurance could not be funded by the DDA for the sponsorship request in July because the event itself was more private in nature as participants had to buy tickets to participate. She stated that if it had been open and free to the public, insurance could be funded by the DDA. She did state that she would follow up with the City Attorney to confirm this understanding. Wisdom asked if a clarification could be included in the application so applicants could understand if their event qualifies or not and why. Maes stated she could.

Volk stated that Visit Cheyenne had some documents and applications that the DDA may be able to reference. She also believes Visit Cheyenne released funds in two parts, one up front and one after the event was complete.

Wisdom motioned to adopt the proposed DDA Sponsorship Parameter and Application with modifications. Bau seconded. Motion passed unanimously

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS/STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. On-Street Parking Design

i. Maes thanked Teubner, Bau, and Wisdom for attending the Open House/Town Hall that was held on this topic. She stated she is putting comments together for the City Engineer's department to incorporate, with the hopes that the design will be approved soon. Paul Bellotti, City Project Manager, echoed the status that the design was in the Engineer's Department for approval. Bau

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asked if the City had found clarification in regard to the WYDOT owned areas for striping. Bellotti stated the City and the State are on the same page. He stated the state-owned highways were included in the design, and the question now is how to prioritize. Teubner asked about phasing and how those would be communicated. Bellotti stated that the correct authorities, likely City Council will likely decide prioritization. He stated once those were decided, phasing will be communicated to the public.

Wisdom asked about funding for the implementation. Bellotti stated that total costs have not been received. He believes the City will provide funding for the implementation, as this is a priority for the Mayor and City Council.

B. 2025 Planter Program

i. Maes stated there was some hail damage, but the majority are looking good. She stated there was some plant theft, and she explored putting signs up in the planters to deter theft. She stated they will start planning the 2026 program, hoping to have an RFP in October.

C. Interviews: Operations & Projects Coordinator

i. Maes stated interviews would take place with Bau and Roybal, with about 7 candidates.

D. Vacancy: Marketing Assistant

i. Maes stated the Marketing Assistant vacancy has been posted, stating Miya Debusk may not be able to return due to personal circumstances.

E. Vacancy: DDA Board Member

i. Maes stated the Board has a vacancy to fill Danica Mrozinksy's term, ending in June 2027.

F. DDA Outreach Campaigns & Events

i. Maes stated the Screen on the Green event was successful with a good turnout for the movie Planes on a Tuesday evening. She stated Choo Choo Moo sold ice cream, Western Vista donated popcorn, the Laramie County Library co-hosted through the movie license, and the Wyoming Aviation Heritage League co-hosted and had aviation themed toys. She wanted to have the Board think

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about next year and how it should look. Wisdom commented that Screen on the Green was great and would like to see that continue.

G. Halloween Trunk or Treat

i. Maes stated she will not be coordinating this event as she does not have capacity. She stated she has been approached by others and can offer some trick or treat bags they have in inventory. Wisdom stated this was a program done by the former DBC, stating that the response from the business community is very large. She stated that the DDA should reach out to DDF to see if this would be an event the DDA could co-sponsor with or come up with a smaller Board member committee to help with the event. She stated a lot of people come downtown for this specific event. Tracy Brosius stated that HealthWorks will be hosting a Trunk or Treat in its parking lot in collaboration with the police department. Lorrell Bellotti agrees the DDA needs to be involved and believes it would be important to be a part of this event as a public relations effort. Bau asked how the DDA was involved in 2024. Wisdom stated the DBC organized the merchants and the DDA purchased candy. She believes collaboration would be the best approach. Teubner agreed, and suggested funding the event to support the DDF if they are taking on the event. Maes stated a sponsorship of over $5,000 would require Board approval and therefore a September meeting.

H. Holiday Window Decorating Competition

i. Maes stated this was another event she did not have capacity to take on unless she had more Board support. She stated there may be some other, less demanding alternatives to support holiday decorating downtown. Volk asked if the merchant's association could be involved.

Teubner had a few announcements that the Wyoming Lottery had a ribbon cutting that he and Maes attended and was excited that they decided to stay downtown. He also was excited to see the Cheyenne Presents was planning a free winter concert series at the Civic Center and would bring traffic into downtown.

Volk announced that the Wallick and Volk business was almost fully occupied and was excited to see more business support in the east side.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Teubner motioned to adjourn, seconded by Bellotti. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am.