



## Cheyenne Downtown Development Authority

(307) 433-9730 • administrative@downtowncheyenne.com • 2101 O'Neil Ave., Room 202, Cheyenne, WY 82001

### WORK SESSION MINUTES

Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Western Vista Conference Room  
1920 Thomes Avenue, Cheyenne, WY 82001  
[YouTube Video Link](#)

#### CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 10:03 AM

#### ROLL CALL

**Members Present:** Dave Teubner (President); Wendy Volk (Vice President); Brian Bau (Secretary); Lorrell Bellotti (Treasurer); Candice Wisdom; Stan Hartzheim; Jeff White (Council Appointee). **On Zoom:** None.

**Members Absent:** Jamie Winters; Janelle Rose; Linda Heath, LCC; Amber Nuse.

**Staff Present:** Sophia Maes, DDA Executive Director; Miya Debusk, DDA Marketing Assistant; Cass Raffa, DDA Programs Coordinator.

**Members of the Public Present:** Lawrence Wolfe, City Councilmember; Charles Bloom, Director of Planning & Development. **On Zoom:** Garrett, Architect; Paul Bellotti, City of Cheyenne Application Platform Administrator.

#### DISCLOSURES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

#### WORK SESSION ITEMS

##### IV.A. 5-Year Strategic Plan (Operation Plan & Financial Plan)

**(4:15)** Maes introduced the Board Member worksheet for members to complete, beginning with a review of Board priorities for FY2026. The Board discussed the DDA's effectiveness in accomplishing these priorities over the past year. Overall, members agreed the DDA made strong progress on many goals, with less progress on the New Year's Eve Winter Events goal, while recognizing there is still room for growth.



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White noted that the 15th Street Experience is expected to move forward in the coming months, and the Reed Rail Corridor is anticipated to be finalized within the next 12–18 months. Teubner added that a missing priority from past years was organizing grant program resources and compiling data on grants awarded over the last one to two years.

**(20:30)** Maes introduced the next discussion topic, asking Board members to identify projects the DDA should lead that may not be explicitly listed in the Implementation Matrix but align with the Plan of Development goals. Members praised staff for the Weekly Wins updates and suggested sharing them externally, in addition to internally. Discussion focused on priorities such as highlighting success stories, improving sidewalks, and strengthening relationships with partners through networking and presentations.

Members discussed the importance of communicating the value of the mill levy by connecting DDA success stories to taxpayer investment, helping stakeholders better understand how funds are being used effectively. Members also noted the need for tools such as pitch decks, elevator speeches, presentations, and benchmarking data to ensure consistent messaging and improve communication with the community, particularly with the new website launching soon.

Teubner emphasized the importance of sharing not only successes, but also challenges, to authentically communicate what the DDA is working through. Maes suggested assigning each Board member a partner portfolio to help strengthen engagement, and Hartzheim noted the importance of staying coordinated with partners to avoid duplicating efforts.

**(44:40)** Discussion continued on priorities identified in the Plan of Development Implementation Matrix. Bau discussed catalyst projects and the importance of maintaining momentum through ongoing communication, including the need for an anchor tenant in the Downtown District. Wisdom agreed, noting the importance of anchor tenants, such as a grocery store, particularly with new residential development underway. Brief discussion was also held regarding the Lincolnway Tunnel Project.

Maes discussed the DDA's potential role in development work, including a recent conversation with Dan Dorsch of Habitat for Humanity. The Board discussed opportunities for development-related projects, potential TIF funding, and diversifying DDA funding sources. Teubner emphasized the importance of focusing on existing priorities and executing them well before expanding into development, while allowing the private sector to lead development efforts with DDA support. Bau agreed.

Maes stated she would compile the discussion into a revised priority list for presentation at the next Board meeting. During this discussion, Board members Wisdom and White left the meeting; White rejoined virtually approximately 20 minutes later.



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**(59:40)** Maes introduced the next discussion topic, focusing on financials. The Board discussed using reserve funds for FY2027 operations and projects versus preserving reserves for a major future project, as well as how the DDA would operate if City Council did not approve the next MOU. Several Board members expressed hesitation about using reserves for operations due to concerns about maintaining sufficient funding for future large-scale projects. Maes clarified that the budget does not include personnel costs currently funded by the City. Members agreed that the DDA would face significant challenges if the MOU was not approved and the organization became independent from the City.

Teubner noted the increasing pressure on the DDA to perform while budgets continue to decrease, creating a significant challenge. Councilman Wolfe commented that he believes there is strong support for keeping DDA staff as City employees and agreed that using reserves for operational costs is a difficult decision. Hartzheim discussed the distinction between operational and administrative costs, noting that several increasing budget line items are controllable. Maes referenced the DDA's five-year plan and the importance of determining which financial decisions best align with the organization's long-term strategy.

**(1:25:00)** Following a five-minute break, Bau asked White about City Council's support for keeping DDA staff as City employees and maintaining DDA office space within the City building. White stated this may depend on the outcome of the 6th Penny election and the future of the building remodel. He said he would continue communicating to Council members the importance of keeping staff as City employees and noted he had not heard significant opposition from other Council members. He also stated he does not anticipate the City reducing DDA funding to zero. Additional discussion followed regarding the DDA's final budget hearing at that evening's City Council meeting.

Maes discussed the potential need for an Administrative Assistant, noting that while the contracted CPA provides valuable support, additional staff capacity would improve operations. Members discussed the DDA's historical staffing levels. Maes emphasized that the five-year financial and operational plan is intended to guide current decisions and ensure the organization is positioned to meet its long-term goals. Hartzheim suggested exploring the AmeriCorps program as a potential source of additional support.

**(1:38:25)** Discussion was had about revenue diversification, including applying for new grants and TIF funding, among other ideas, as well as utilizing potential resources and people, such as the City grant writer. Bau encouraged staff to set aside the anxiety of where the DDA staff will be housed for now, in order to focus on priorities.



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### **IV.B. Board Member Recommendations for FY2027 (Discussion)**

**(1:46:40)** Discussion was held regarding Board member recommendations to the Mayor, as several Board positions will become available in the coming months, and the potential for stakeholder input in the selection process. Members expressed interest in recruiting individuals who demonstrate enthusiasm, active participation, and a strong commitment of time, as well as increasing representation from the downtown retail sector. The Board also discussed the possibility of appointing a member who serves on the Downtown First Board, pending review of any legal considerations.

Bellotti emphasized the importance of onboarding new Board members and being transparent about the expected workload. Teubner offered to create a handout for prospective Board members outlining Board expectations and the role of the DDA. Hartzheim suggested reaching out to individuals completing terms on partner organization boards as potential candidates.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 12:07 PM