



## Evart Downtown Development Authority

Chair, Alan Bengry  
Treasurer, Lynn Salinas  
Mark Sochocki  
Dan Boyer

Vice-Chair, Gary Hartsock  
Secretary, Brian Youngs  
Cory Juliano  
City Manager, Pepper Lockhart  
Director, Todd Bruggema

[www.evartmainstreet.com](http://www.evartmainstreet.com)

(231) 734-0185



## EVART DDA REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2025 @ 4:00pm

Community Room at the Depot located at 200 S. Main St.  
Evart, MI 49631

1. Meeting called to order at 4:01pm by Youngs
2. Attendance:  
Present: Lynn Salinas, Brian Youngs, Pepper Lockhart, Corey Juliano, Mark Sochocki, Dan Boyer, DDA Director Todd Bruggema  
Absent: Alan Bengry, Gary Hartsock
3. Introduction of Guests: Angela Hunter
4. Approval of Agenda – Update of Evart Housing Commission’s 101 S. Main Street project added to “Old Business”. Community Branding added to “New Business”. Agenda approved with the two additions.
5. Approval of Minutes of Aug. 12, 2025, regular meeting – Moved by Salinas, supported by Boyer  
Ayes: 5  
Nays: 0  
Results: Carried
6. Approval of vendor list – Moved by Lockhart, supported by Juliano to approve the vendor’s list in the amounts of \$10,747.29 for the DDA and \$9,198.17 for the farmer’s market  
Ayes: 5  
Nays: 0  
Results: Carried
7. Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Salinas referred to the monthly financial/bank statements for the current account balances. She also disclosed that she may have misspoke at last month’s meeting when she reported funds had been received during the previous month for the purchase of one military veteran banner. Lynns disclosed that the funds may have been received from the Rosser Family for their purchase of a bench to be installed on Main Street (or a combination of the two).
8. President Comments – None

## 9. Committee Updates

### **Economic Vitality and Design**

- a. Farmer's Market: Angela Hunter reported total revenues in August totaling \$25,752. She also reported that revenues for the Labor Day weekend totaled nearly \$8,000. Angela reported that \$1,222 was taken in during August via Food Assistance. Angela also reported that 81 children took part in the kid's crafts activities in August. She also informed the group that Amanda, the person who ran the kid's crafts activities, was given a booth at no cost in appreciation for her efforts. Angela reported that an average of 20 booths per Saturday were rented in August. Angela reported that the local Amish choir performed in August and that it was well received.
- b. Pop-Up Building: Juliano reported that he had been contacted by another realtor who may have a prospect interested in purchasing the pop-up building. This prospect is considering putting a laundromat in the building and is currently exploring what types of grants may be available for the proposed project.

### **Promotion and Organization**

- a. Shop Local – Todd pointed out that two new signs had been erected highlighting local retail/service businesses within the City of Ewart. The signs are located on US-10 near Pearl's Car Wash and on south Main Street at the trail crossing.
- b. Board Recruiting – Todd reminded the board to be thinking about who could be invited to join the DDA board. He reminded the board that any new board candidate must be the owner of a business within the DDA district.
- c. Volunteers – Nothing new to update

## 10. Old Business

- a. 101 S. Main St. project update – Mark Sochocki reported that the Ewart Housing Commission has begun the two-part design approval process. The design must first be approved by both the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service. Mark has received verbal approval from SHPO and official/written approval from the National Park Service. Part two of the approval process involves SHPO approving the physical design of the proposed structure. Mark stated that \$700k in block grants are available for projects of this nature and that the City of Ewart would need to be the entity who would need to apply for the grant. Pepper stated that the City is aware of this requirement and is planning to make the application. Mark stated that the total project cost is anticipated to be \$3.8MM. In addition, Mark informed the group that the Ewart Housing Commission is also renovating all of their existing 109 units with construction planned for 36 new rental units.

## 11. New Business

- a. Todd asked the group for ideas on how to recognize participants/volunteers for efforts to maintain the Main Street bump-outs this summer. The idea of giving them a T-shirt was proposed. Inviting the bump-out volunteers to attend either a City Council meeting or a DDA meeting for the T-shirt presentations were both offered as suggestions.
- b. Todd pointed out that a new wayfinding sign had been erected along south Main Street at the rails-to-trails intersection. The sign maps out current retail/service businesses in the city and is designed to be amended as needed to keep the map current.
- c. Todd reported that this year's Monster Mash would take place on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>.
- d. Todd informed the group that he has begun to put together this year's Impact Report. He asked for photos from board members to be included in the report.
- e. Todd reminded the group that a meeting with the National Main Street accreditation team has been scheduled for November 19, 2025, at 3:30pm at The Depot and requested that all DDA board members plan to be in attendance.
- f. Todd polled the group on whether they'd prefer to continue to hold the monthly DDA board meetings at 4pm or possibly move them back to 8am. The group unanimously chose to move the meeting time to 8am. Todd said that he would communicate this meeting time change to the absent DDA board members and make the changes on any/all City and/or DDA web sites. This meeting time change will go into effect in October.
- g. Mark Sochocki reported that the Ewart Housing Commission initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP) to several marketing firms to create marketing materials highlighting opportunities and pointing out "good things" about the Ewart community. Mark's opinion is that the City of Ewart and Ewart DDA should be included in this process.

12. Director Comments:

- a. Todd reported that the Cadillac DDA is considering taking part in the Michigan Main Street program and that several of their board members are planning an Evert visit to meet with Todd and learn about the program.
- b. Todd informed the group that he, Alan and Corey all plan to attend the Michigan Main Street conference in Grosse Pointe, MI on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

13. City Manager Comments:

- a. Pepper reported that there is currently an open position on Evert's City Council.
- b. Pepper reported that preparations are being made for this year's Christmas in a Small-Town event. She stated that this year's event will be held on Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup> with festivities beginning at 7:00pm.
- c. Pepper reported that the City of Evert has begun working with the Michigan Tax Commission regarding matters pertaining to property use reclassifications.
- d. Pepper reported that several grants are being applied for/considered for various street, sewer and sidewalk projects within the City of Evert. She also reminded the group that MDOT will be removing and replacing pavement on 7<sup>th</sup> Street through the City with new lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks and sewer line replacement all being part of this significant improvement project.

14. Citizen Comments:

- a. Michael Wespinter attended the DDA meeting. He attended solely to introduce himself and see what the DDA was all about. Michael is a Broker for RokFinancial who specializes in commercial finance/lending activities.

15. Adjournment – Moved by Boyer, supported by Sochocki to adjourn

Ayes: 5  
Nays: 0  
Results: Carried

Meeting adjourned at 4:47pm.

Submitted by Brian Youngs, Secretary