



OFFICIAL NOTICE & AGENDA REGULAR MEETING

MEETING: Business Improvement District Board
DATE/TIME: Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at 8:00 AM
LOCATION: Wausau City Hall — Maple Room
407 Grant Street, Wausau WI, 54403

MEMBERS:
Mark Craig (C) Owen Jones
Robb Shepherd Hannah Dusso
Mark McKinley Christine Kaupie
Sarah Bangs Rylie Hutchinson
Laura Spaeth Maryanne Groat

1 Consideration of the minutes of the preceding meeting(s).

April 15, 2026 Regular Business Improvement District Board Minutes

2 Discussion and possible action.

a. Executive Director Report/Update

3 Adjournment.

Mark Craig, Chair

**NOTICE POSTED AT CITY HALL (407 GRANT STREET) AND
TRANSMITTED TO THE OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED NEWSPAPER**

DATE: 07/22/2026
TIME: 12:30 PM
POSTED BY: Kody Hart

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the City of Wausau will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities. If you need assistance or reasonable accommodations in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the ADA Coordinator at (715) 261-6622 or ADAServices@wausauwi.gov to discuss your accessibility needs. We ask your request be provided a minimum of 72 hours before the scheduled event or meeting. If a request is made less than 72 hours before the event the City of Wausau will make a good faith effort to accommodate your request.



City of Wausau
(715) 261-6500 | clerk@wausauwi.gov
wausauwi.gov



BID Board meeting
April 15, 2026 Minutes

In attendance: Mark Craig, Laura Spaeth, Mark McKinley, Robb Shepherd, Hannah Dusso, Rylie Hutchinson (Wausau River District)

Call to Order: 8:12am, Craig

1. Approval of October, 2025, Minutes – tabled
2. New members were sworn in and returning members signed their oaths.
3. Wausau River District Executive Director Hutchinson shared the work that has been completed in her tenure that's been just short of three months:

I. Meetings

A. Board Members

B. Sponsors:

1. Have secured the following sponsorships:

a) Solidified:

(1) Night Market- Stage Sponsor, Presenting Sponsor,
Community Sponsor

(2) Community Workshop - Festival Foods: May or July

(3) Media Sponsorship - Midwest Communications and NRG

b) Verbal Confirmations:

(1) Night Market - Community sponsors

(a) Game of skate with Central board shop

(2) Balloons Initiative - Roastar

(3) Community Workshop - Festival Foods, Aspirus, Thrivent

II. Events and Updates

A. Main Street Awards Reminder: March 19th

B. Children's Imaginarium Announcement

1. March 26th, 4:00 with snacks and light refreshments

C. State of the River District

1. April 20th, 4:00-6:00 at the Milk Merchant

2. Menu of Services being presented

D. Earth Day Clean Up

1. April 22nd 4:00-6:30 meet at the 400 block, partnering with Aspirus

E. Accreditation - Complete & Accepted

F. Monthly Report

G. FORD Program - Have our first member and will be launching in April

H. Committees had our first meetings this month

III. Executive/Organizational

- A. Goal: Strengthen organizational effectiveness and community presence through strategic growth and engagement.

1. Strategy 1: Manage & Diversify Organizational Funding
 - a) Pursuing sponsorships
 - b) Pursue Grant Opportunities
 - (1) Met with Community Foundation. Applying for Community Arts Fund - Due April 15
2. Strategy 2: Engage in Community Outreach
 - a) Operate FORD Program
 - (1) Launching Mid April
 - b) Reaching out to Optimist, Golden K, and Rotary
 - c) City Update
3. Strategy 3: Develop, Recruit, & Engage New Board and Team Members
 - a) New Board Members
 - b) Next Generation Board Member Program
 - c) Building Job Descriptions for Alex and Alyson
 - d) Team Members: Job Descriptions being created & looking into partnering with UWSP for a summer intern.

IV. Placemaking/Design

- A. Goal: Enhance the sense of place through thoughtful design, creative initiatives, and vibrant public events.
 1. Strategy 1: Strengthen the Sense of Place & Experience Through Design & Placement of Signage
 - a) Signage on the 300 block pointing down Washington needs to be updated
 - b) 400 block sign is being repaired this month
 - c) 300/500 block sign needs to be updated. Planning on a vinyl wrap or plastic map for ~2 year remedy while we work on app.
 2. Strategy 2: Promote Sense of Place within the District Through Creative Means
 - a) Sky art: Balloons Initiative
 - b) Painted Crosswalks: Aspirus sponsored and City is aware and awaiting proposals that we are constructing via committees
 - c) Rain Stencils - Moving forward via placemaking committee. Exploring the idea of an Art map that includes them.
 - d) Lights on the Trees will be coming down.
 - (1) Any construction company connections?
 - e) Purchased Amazon Signage stick to have TV screen in the window of the office. It will display monthly events, River District Branding, and more.
 3. Strategy 3: Promote Sense of Place Through Events That Activate Public Spaces
 - a) First event is Thursday, June 18th

- (1) Looking for volunteers for this event and the rest of the Night Market series - Aspirus' Joy Team is interested, so is BMO Bank

V. Promotion/Marketing

- A. Goal: Implement initiatives that celebrate local culture, while strengthening the district's branding and identity.
 1. Strategy 1: Host Events & Use Marketing Tools to Increase District Engagement & Visibility.
 - a) State of the River District Stakeholder Cocktail Mixer - Happening April 20th at the Milk Merchant
 - b) Hot Happenings Weekly Newsletter
 - (1) Re-vamped and updated to highlight more current events/promotions.
 - c) 12 Months CWA Video Ads
 - (1) Canceled our monthly payment for a still board
 - (2) Need an updated ad for video board
 - (a) Working with the City's videographer on that project. We created a strategic plan for this year and years to come via the Marketing Committee
 - (3) Signage Stick in our window display set up and is a possible opportunity for sponsorship.
 2. Strategy 2: Develop Content to Promote & Clarify the District's Brand & Identity to the Community
 - a) "Meet Your Main Street: Wausau River District" Marketing Campaign
 - (1) Need to restart this campaign in 2026
 - b) Take Professional Photos of the District/Events for Marketing Use
 - (1) Alex has been taking photos.
 - c) Recreated our sponsorship offerings for 2026 and sent out to sponsors.
 3. Strategy 3: Create & Promote Campaigns to Highlight the District's Unique Offerings & Accomplishments
 - a) ~~Wisconsin Main Street Awards Submissions~~
 - (1) WEDC has pinned down March 19th 2026 at the Grand Theater for the 36th annual main street awards ceremony.
 - (2) The Night Market Series won "Best Special Event" - not to be shared with the public yet.
 - (3) Meal/retail options within the district will be shared with all attendees. Additionally, some restaurants have provided discounts for attendees. We will send that out the week of the event.

VI. Community Development/Economic Vitality

- A. Goal: Foster community growth and economic vitality through strategic support, development, and engagement.

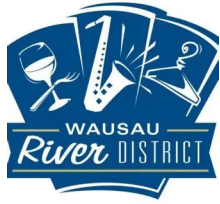
1. Strategy 1: Support River District Businesses with Targeted Education & Resources.
 - a) Business Workshop Series:
 - (1) Festival Foods is interested in hosting on Culture. Date TBD
 - (2) Thrivent Financial: Best Practices for Taxes and Finances in October. Date TBD
 - (3) Roundtable: May 6th on event optimization
 - b) Updated Business Resource Guide - Phase one complete at SORD
 - c) Operate the Sign Grant Program
 - d) Update the Website
 - (1) The website is still in the process of being updated. We are also doing research into launching an accessible app. This would hold Hot Happenings and be linked via our signs on the 300/500 block. This is a long term project.
2. Strategy 2: Advocate For Growth Through Targeted Development & Revitalization Efforts.
 - a) Advocate For Residential Development in and Around the District
 - b) Swag bags for the Foundry's new tenants
3. Strategy 3: Implement Events That Have a Direct Economic Impact in the District as a Destination
 - a) Night Market
 - (1) Making larger purchases for the night market that will be with us long term. The upfront cost will be about \$10,000, but will be sold to make money back. Alcohol sales, merch, etc.
 - (2) Projected vendor fees will be about \$13,000 in income.
 - b) River West Fest
 - (1) Any connections with car dealerships?
 - c) Holiday Makers Market
 - (1) Working with Lokre to have an expanded Holiday Makers Market
 - d) Galentine's Brunch Hop

4. Summer Event Schedule

- a. Shepard asked if there was anything that could be done to encourage overflow traffic to businesses not directly on third street.
 - i. Hutchinson said she will bring this to her staff. There was a short discussion about having sidewalk sales.

Adjourn

- a. McKinley moved to adjourn, Shepherd seconded, passed unanimously



Wausau River District
Executive Director Report
July 2026 BID Board Meeting

I. Meetings

- A. Board Members
- B. Sponsors:
 - 1. Have secured the following sponsorships:
 - a) Solidified:
 - (1) Night Market- Stage Sponsor, Presenting Sponsor, Community Sponsors, Game of Skate event + Fencing support from the city
 - (2) Community Workshop - Festival Foods July 13th
 - (3) Media Sponsorship - Midwest Communications and NRG
 - b) Verbal Confirmations:
 - (1) Balloons Initiative - Roastar
 - (2) Community Workshop - Visit Wausau, Aspirus, Thrivent, MCDEVCO - September 14th

II. Events and Updates

- A. Gold Tier Status Requirements Completed
- B. Bridge Street Mission Roundtable
- C. Event Optimization Roundtable
- D. Tourism Luncheon
- E. Chamber New Member Breakfast
- F. MCDEVCO Tour
- G. Kocourek Trailhead Foundation
- H. June Night Market Recap
 - 1. WEDC Event Impact Report
 - 2. Visit Wausau Report
 - 3. Survey Results
- I. Canned Alley
- J. Committee Meeting Update
- K. Social Media Statistics Update
- L. Email Update

III. Executive/Organizational

- A. Goal: Strengthen organizational effectiveness and community presence through strategic growth and engagement.
 - 1. Strategy 1: Manage & Diversify Organizational Funding
 - a) Pursuing sponsorships
 - b) Pursue Grant Opportunities
 - (1) Deposited \$5,030 from the Community Foundation
 - 2. Strategy 2: Engage in Community Outreach

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 13th, 2026 at the Dudley Tower 8th Floor Conference Room

- a) Operate FORD Program
 - (1) Now have 7 members
- b) Reaching out to Optimist, Golden K, and Rotary
- c) City Update
 - (1) Our event proposals were approved.
 - (2) Met the New City Clerk, Rachel
 - (3) Sent out permits that are necessary for summer to businesses
- 3. Strategy 3: Develop, Recruit, & Engage New Board and Team Members
 - a) New Board Members
 - b) Next Generation Board Member Program
 - c) New Committee Members/Volunteers:
 - (1) Recruited a member of WoodTrust to join our Placemaking committee
 - (2) Together Marathon County Update
 - d) New Team Member:
 - (1) Intern: Clara Krasselt has been hired and started June 1
 - e) Job Descriptions: Alex has confirmed her Job Description

IV. Placemaking/Design

A. Goal: Enhance the sense of place through thoughtful design, creative initiatives, and vibrant public events.

- 1. Strategy 1: Strengthen the Sense of Place & Experience Through Design & Placement of Signage
 - a) One Block Walk Signage is in the process of being updated
 - b) 400 block sign has been repaired
 - c) 300/500 block sign needs to be updated. Planning on a vinyl wrap or plastic map for ~2 year remedy while we work on app.
 - (1) Working with Finishing Touch Signs
 - (2) Gary Barden Update
- 2. Strategy 2: Promote Sense of Place within the District Through Creative Means
 - a) Activating empty storefronts:
 - (1) Connecting with CVA for some kind of window display and possible summer camper gallery
 - b) Sky art: Balloons Initiative and Umbrellas
 - (1) Need at least one more sponsor for balloons. Have Green Light elsewhere
 - (2) Umbrellas are up!
 - (3) Night Market Banners are up
 - c) Painted Crosswalks: Aspirus sponsored and City is aware and awaiting proposals that we are constructing via committees
 - d) Rain Stencils - Installed the ones left over from last year
 - (1) Exploring the idea of an Art map that includes them.

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 13th, 2026 at the Dudley Tower 8th Floor Conference Room

- e) Lights on the Trees came down
- f) Rise Up Mural
 - (1) Met with Mary, an artist looking for a place for her mural. Discussing internally how to connect businesses that may be open to murals with artists.
 - (a) Connecting with the CVA on this
- 3. Strategy 3: Promote Sense of Place Through Events That Activate Public Spaces
 - a) Night Market Series
 - (1) Looking for volunteers for August Night Market
 - (2) Need one more bartender for August
 - b) Canned Alley: Happy Hour event happening August 5th before the concerts on the square 4:00-6:00 pm

V. Promotion/Marketing

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 - 1. Strategy 1: Host Events & Use Marketing Tools to Increase District Engagement & Visibility.
 - a) State of the River District Stakeholder Cocktail Mixer - Happened April 20th at the Milk Merchant
 - (1) Menu of Services handed out and located on our website
 - (2) Awards listed on poster board and now displayed in the office window
 - b) Hot Happenings Weekly Newsletter
 - (1) Re-vamped and updated to highlight more current events/promotions.
 - c) 12 Months CWA Video Ads
 - (1) Canceled our monthly payment for a still board
 - (2) Need an updated ad for video board
 - (a) Working with the City's videographer on that project. We created a strategic plan for this year and years to come via the Marketing Committee
 - 2. Strategy 2: Develop Content to Promote & Clarify the District's Brand & Identity to the Community
 - a) Sent out Press Release for our Accreditation
 - b) "Meet Your Main Street: Wausau River District" Marketing Campaign
 - (1) Intern is working on this campaign currently
 - c) Downtown Day Out Campaign:
 - (1) 2 videos have been posted to Facebook
 - d) Take Professional Photos of the District/Events for Marketing Use
 - (1) Intern
 - e) Recreated our sponsorship offerings for 2026 and sent out to sponsors.

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 13th, 2026 at the Dudley Tower 8th Floor Conference Room

- f) Digital Window Signage:
 - (1) Being updated monthly and shared with Wausau Events
- g) USA's 250th Anniversary:
 - (1) Donated \$1000 to the city for 250th Banners
- 3. Strategy 3: Create & Promote Campaigns to Highlight the District's Unique Offerings & Accomplishments
 - a) ~~Wisconsin Main Street Awards Submissions~~
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 - (2) The Night Market Series won "Best Downtown Special Event"
 - (3) Meal/retail options within the district will be shared with all attendees. Additionally, some restaurants have provided discounts for attendees. We will send that out the week of the event.

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 - (1) Festival Foods is interested in hosting on Culture. Date Jul 13, 2026
 - (2) Thrivent Financial: Best Practices for Taxes and Finances in February. Date TBD
 - (3) Visit Wausau: Marketing. Date TBD
 - (4) MCDEVCO: Their loan options and more - September
 - b) Updated Business Resource Guide
 - (1) New Project for Rylie, Alex, and Alyson
 - c) Operate the Sign Grant Program
 - d) Update the Website
 - (1) The website is still in the process of being updated. We are doing research into launching an accessible app. This would hold Hot Happenings and be linked via our signs on the 300/500 block. This is a long term project.
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 - b) Swag bags for the Foundry's new tenants
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 - a) Night Market
 - (1) Currently have \$25,000 in income from the Night Market vendors and sponsorship. About \$12k in expenses

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predicted by the end of the series. Not including labor expenses.

(2) Lots of time was spent on the Night Market this month

(3) We are expanding down McClellan Street, totalling 5 more blocks than last year

(4) Results of roundtable discussion - Spray chalk

(5) Ongoing discussions with PD and PW to determine new plan for safety, shut down, and electrical plans

(6) Bull Falls Partnership

(7) Kids Market Update

b) River West Fest

(1) Focusing on RWF in July

c) Holiday Makers Market

(1) Expanding our Market over 2 days. A Saturday Night Market and Sunday Morning in the Jefferson Street Inn.

Thank you, Lokre!

d) Galentine's Brunch Hop

VII. Adjourn