DOWNTOWN LUDINGTON BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – February 7, 2005

John Henderson called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. at the City Municipal Building Community Room. Members present were John Henderson, Jane Carpenter, Gail Lyons, Wayne Brown, Ray Janish, Magee Johnson and Julie Payment. Others: Bill Kratz, Gary Castonia, John Shay and Mary Beutell.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Peterson, seconded by Brown to approve the agenda with the addition of the Arts Train presentation. Motion carried.

Artrain Presentation

Derrick Heimerdinger gave a short presentation and showed a video clip on the Artrain. The Artrain is scheduled to be in Ludington Memorial Weekend. The theme of the Artrain from 2004 to 2007 is Native American art. Glen Zaring, Little River Band, stated that the tribe believes this is a way of educating and bringing people together. The total cost of the event is $50,000, $20,000 of which needs to be raised locally. Additional information on the event was provided to each of the members. The Artrain Committee asked the DLB to consider sponsoring a downtown event to coincide with the Artrain project.

Minutes

Moved by Peterson, seconded by Carpenter to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

Public Comments

None.

Financial Report

Moved by Brown, seconded by Lyons to accept the financial report as presented. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

<u>Business Recruiting and Retention</u>

- Shay spoke to a representative from Fashion Bug regarding the need to relocate the store due to the Lowe's construction. Shay questioned whether Fashion Bug would consider a downtown location. The representative stated that it is not their policy to locate downtown, that they prefer strip malls. Shay stated that he will follow-up with the corporate office, but does not believe there is a good chance that they will move downtown.

<u>Special Events/Promotions/Activities</u>

- Lyons stated that the committee met on January 31, 2005 to discuss potential projects for 2005. Lyons summarized the ideas from the meeting notes.
- Carpenter provided the board with information on the proposed Carrom Festival. She asked that the board be a cooperative entity in the project. Henderson stated that this is a good opportunity to showcase the history of the Carrom board and Ludington. Carpenter stated that the proposed location is the Acker's Building, but if this does not work she will work with Muzzin to determine a new location. Moved by Janish, seconded by Keillor to collaborate with the Ludington Area Arts Council on the Carrom Festival.

Building and Ground

- Nothing at this time.

Marketing/Brand Identity

- Henderson stated that a group of people met with Dr. Anderson to discuss the steps necessary to adopt and market a theme for downtown Ludington. At this point the committee is working towards getting an inventory of current maritime assets. Once this is completed a presentation will be developed and presented to area groups that will be instrumental in assisting with developing and marketing the theme. Carpenter suggested that the Yacht Club and the Power Squadron may be good sources for input and ideas.

Cool Cities

- Henderson reported that according to information received from the State, Ludington is not eligible for the Cool Cities Catalyst Grant in 2005. Eligibility requirements include a designated historic district and a 2 to 4 year institution of higher learning. A local group of citizens previously tried to institute an historic district downtown, but was met with a lot of opposition due to the perceived restrictions of district formation. Whether or not WSCC would qualify as an institution of higher learning for the City is questionable. Beutell stated that looking at the list of eligible communities she does not believe there is necessarily a college within all of the city's boundaries.

Special Projects

None.

Ex-Officio Reports

Economic Development

Kratz provided members with the January 2005 Mason County Economic Scorecard. He reviewed the projects that were included on the report.

Kratz stated that the Brownfield opportunities have proven to be a vital tool for downtown redevelopment.

City Manager

Shay reported that the Brownfield opportunities have led to downtown properties changing hands and potential developments. He stated that a proposed plan for Rath Ave. condominiums is in the works. The proposed property is located in the 400 block of S. Rath on the east side.

Shay reported that the City is hoping to see movement on the 200 Block of W. Ludington Ave. (south side) this spring. Bob Neal has purchased a majority of the property for redevelopment.

Shay reported that 2005 will be a busy construction year in the City. Streetscaping, paving and construction projects will be taking place surrounding the 200 Block of S. William in conjunction with the construction of condominiums on the old city hall property.

Chamber of Commerce

Nothing at this time.

Planning Commission

Nothing in regards to the downtown at this time.

New Business

Henderson discussed a letter received from Keith Kolfage regarding downtown vandalism. He stated that it is unfortunate that business owners that have put time and effort into improving their storefronts have to be victims of vandalism. Kolfage's letter urged downtown businesses to set up a reward fund for people who supply information regarding downtown destruction. Kolfage provided a $50 check to start the fund.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Beutell for

Ray Janish, Secretary