DOWNTOWN LUDINGTON BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – June 6, 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, Julie Payment, Gail Lyons, Wayne Brown, Darla Keillor, Kathy Maclean, Ray Janish and Arlen McCloskey. Others Bill Kratz, Gary Castonia, John Shay and Mary Beutell.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Carpenter, seconded by Lyons to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Minutes

Moved by Lyons, seconded by Payment to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Public Comments

Richard Patterson, 214 W. Ludington Ave. Ludington. Mr. Patterson stated that he had five questions regarding the Friday Night Live event:

1. Mr. Patterson asked that the blocks for the event be clarified. Mr. Henderson stated that the event is planned for Ludington Avenue from James St. to Robert St.
2. Why can't the events be held in the parking lot? Mr. Patterson stated that by closing the street we are eliminating 18 parking spots in the 200 block of Ludington Ave. He stated that people are hesitant to park behind the building because there is only one way in and out. Mr. Henderson stated that in the future alternate locations could be explored but questioned whether some type of signage could be utilized to direct customers to alternate parking for the four planned events.
3. Mr. Patterson questioned where the traffic would be detoured? Mr. Henderson stated that traffic would be detoured south on James St. to Loomis St.
4. Mr. Patterson questioned why Friday nights were chosen? Mr. Henderson stated that the event is modeled after similar events held in different communities. He stated that Traverse City schedules its events from mid July until the end of August. Its events draw up to 3,000 people to the downtown. Mr. Patterson stated that his business suffers during events such as the Car Show and the Gus Macker. He stated that Traverse City's downtown is not on a main thoroughfare.
5. Mr. Patterson asked what would be involved in the event? He stated that he has been told that there will be beer tents and barbeques. Mr. Henderson stated that the event does not include a beer tent. The plan is to have entertainers working for tips set up along the streets. Area non-profits and downtown businesses are also welcome to set up displays in the area. Based on the list of participants, the area will be sectioned off to provide proper areas for each entertainer/booth.

Mr. Patterson stated that he would like to go on record as being opposed to the event. He provided two suggestions, move the event to a parking lot and change the night to midweek. Mr. Patterson stated that he is open every weeknight until at least 9:00 p.m. and that Fridays are one of his busiest nights. Mr. Patterson stated that his neighboring business, Lavendar Blue, is also

planning to stay open until 9:00 p.m. on Fridays, but questioned how many other business would be open.

Beutell stated that she has received phone calls from about five businesses who have supported the idea and agreed to keep their stores open until 9:00 p.m. during the events.

Maclean stated that she received an e-mail from Jeff Betz, Trailhead Bike Shop, stating that he fully supported the idea. Mr. Patterson stated that he spoke to Mr. Betz and that he has no intention of staying open past 6:00 p.m. on Friday nights.

Keillor questioned whether Mr. Patterson had any connections with boating companies that could provide him access to a display boat for the night of the event. Mr. Patterson stated that he could look into it, but is also considering doing casting demonstrations.

Mr. Henderson stated that the purpose of this event is to encourage people to rediscover the downtown. He stated that improvements and additions to the event would be made based on the success of this years event.

Mr. Henderson stated that a letter was also received from Gulf Shore Fine Jewelry, Francis Habermehl, stating her opposition to the event.

Bill LaForte, presented an idea to improve the empty storefronts on S. James St. He is proposing to place red, white and blue banners in the windows that read “Made in Ludington, Sold Worldwide” and include displays from area manufacturers. He said he would keep the project simple by only having daylight displays that would require no electrical use and only utilize three feet of space in the front of the building. Mr. LaForte already has a commitment from Tim Alley at Kwik Print to donate the banners. He has also talked to Whitehall Industries, House of Flavors and Harrington Tool who have shown interest in the project. Mr. LaForte stated that the manufacturers would only need access to the building once to set up their displays and that during this time any liability would be covered by the manufacturing companies insurance. Mr. LaForte stated that he would appreciate a letter from the board that he could use when contacting the manufacturers. Kratz stated that at the Chamber used to have a display at its last building with local manufacturers products. He will provide copies of the literature they used at that time. Mr. LaForte also stated that he will need assistance in contacting the owners of the vacant buildings.

Janish stated that the Buildings and Grounds Committee would work with Mr. LaForte and Bill Kratz to help make this project a reality.

Financial Report

Moved by Janish, seconded by McCloskey to accept the finance report as written.

Committee Reports

Buisness Recruiting and Retention

Beutell stated that Maclean and she have scheduled retention visits for Tuesday, June 7, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.

Special Events/Promotions/Activities

Lyons reviewed the general information meeting highlights. She stated that she believed the meeting went well and that retailers were happy with the information they received.

Lyons reported that Payment, Beutell and she met with representatives of the Jaycees on June 1, 2005 to discuss the Octoberfest event. Lyons stated that the revenues and expenses for the event would be split 50/50. Preliminary plans are to host a craft show in the tent from 10 am to 3 pm with food booths organized by Luciano's during this time. The booth fee for food vendors as well as crafters would be $30. In the evening, authentic German cuisine and specially brewed beer would be served. Area restaurants would also be asked to donate German inspired soup.

Building and Grounds

Nothing at this time.

Brand Identity/Marketing

Henderson stated that a resolution adopting the theme "Ludington on the Lake" will be taken to the City Council meeting on June 13, 2005. The plan is to announce the theme at the Carferry Festival. There is a dedication for the Coast Guard 44' scheduled at 11:00 am on June 18, 2005 that will be followed by the unveiling of the theme.

Special Projects

Friday Night Live

Payment stated that Henderson and she approached the Ludington Daily News about co-sponsoring a portion of the event. Details have not been finalized. Henderson stated that additional information was discussed during the public comments section.

Ex-Officio Reports

Economic Development

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

City Manager

Shay stated that the downtown streetscape project should begin in the next two weeks. The project has been delayed by the construction of One Ludington Place because of the weight of the T's that needed to be set.

Shay stated that the Ludington Harbor Terrace project is proceeding and that the goal is to have a model open by the end of the summer.

Shay stated that the City is proceeding with the necessary steps to obtain the Coast Guard Station and the lighthouse.

Chamber of Commerce

Carpenter encouraged people to come to the Visitors Center. She also stated that the Chamber of Commerce is looking for volunteers to staff the Visitors Center in the evening. If you are interested call Linda Zaydel at the Chamber Office.

Planning Commission

Castonia reported that two projects, the Bryant Road project and the Pere Pointe project, have been sent to the City Council for review.

New Business

Kratz introduced Matt McClelland, Otwell Mawby, P.C. and gave a short introduction of the project and plans for utilizing the grant funding for brownfield sites both in the City of Ludington and throughout Mason County. McClelland stated that he was happy that his firm was hired to oversee both the City and County Brownfield grants. The goal of the program is to complete outreach efforts in order to get ideas and thoughts on how to expand the brownfield project. He stated that the goal of the grant program is to remove the unknown from properties by completing environmental reviews to show potential problems and fixes. He presented a power point presentation that touched on five points: partners; goals; inventory; tasks and timeline; and public outreach. Mr. McClelland encouraged the board to attend either of the scheduled public forums in order to share their ideas of properties that should be considered for grant funding to complete environmental review.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Beutell for

Ray Janish, Secretary