

# Board Meeting Minutes



Date: May 21, 2026

Time: 7:30 AM

Location: Salina Downtown Inc. - Board room

---

## 1. Call to Order

1. Meeting called to order at: 7:30 AM
  2. Presiding: Aaron Wedel
- 

## 2. Roll Call (Checked = Present)

### Board Members

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hank Boyer      | <input type="checkbox"/> Kelli Webb                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laurel Driskell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christi Nuding    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Gillig           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erica Kruckenberg |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Hendrick              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Austin Walker     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Reber                 |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eric Montoy     |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aaron Wedel     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Matt Pestinger             |   |

### Staff / Others Present

- Leslie Bishop (Executive Director)
  - April Rickman (Marketing & Events Coordinator)
  - Dian Gebhardt (Aesthetic Specialist)
- 

## 3. Approval of Agenda & Minutes

- Motion: Montoy
- Second: Boyer

---

## 4. Old Business

---

## 5. Action Items

1. Study Session: 2027 Budget Presentation: Unique selling point is the economic impact - Presented by April - Meeting scheduled for June 8
2. Display Sales Holiday Decorations - Quote total \$34,945.00 - Motion to approve by Boyer. Second by Kruckenberg. Approved.
3. April Flexible Work Schedule Agreement - Motion to approve by Nuding. Second by Boyer. Approved.

---

## 6. Staff Reports

### Executive Director Report - Leslie Bishop

#### Highlights

1. The 2026 Salina Downtown Trash Corral Art Project artists have officially been approved by the SAC CAD Committee.
2. First Friday on May 1 was highly successful, with strong attendance downtown for shopping, artist receptions, live music, and SDI's May Day Basket activity.
3. Blue Beacon Employee Appreciation Day generated \$25,100 in downtown spending through SDI gift certificates.
4. The Farm & Art Market is prepared to open May 16 with 22 vendors participating this season.
5. GAMZA mainstreet downtown award submission - \$150 Application Fee - Video being worked on with Fili

#### Meetings, Media & Professional Development

1. Leslie met with Colleen Mars for a tour of the KBT building and discussed opportunities for KBT to become more involved in supporting SDI.

2. Leslie attended the SAC CAD Board meeting to support the Trash Corral Art Project artist proposals. The committee approved the artist submissions for the 2026 project.
3. Leslie attended the Community Marketing Initiative meeting and received an update on the new Visit Salina website. An open house unveiling will be held June 4 in the Chamber Annex.
4. Leslie attended the Directors Roundtable meeting, where organizations shared updates on upcoming programs and events.
5. Leslie participated in the Kansas Main Street Open Office Hours Zoom meeting, which included discussion and recap of the Main Street Now Conference in Tulsa.
6. Leslie participated in radio interviews on KSAL on May 13 and Eagle Radio on May 16 to promote the Farm & Art Market and upcoming downtown events.
7. Leslie will participate in the Kansas Tourism Huddle on May 13.
8. Leslie will attend the North Central Kansas Tourism meeting on May 28 in Cottonwood Falls.
9. Leslie will attend Kansas Main Street training in Ottawa on June 24.
10. SDI will attend an AI Conference at Kansas State University Salina on May 27.

## Programs & Events

1. During First Friday on May 1, SDI hosted a May Day Basket Making Project. This was the first year for the activity and it was very successful, with 28 children participating between 4:00-5:30 PM.
2. Leading up to SculptureTour Salina, SDI wrapped 24 sculptures for the 2026 exhibition.
3. On Saturday, May 2, SDI helped host the STS Artist and Sponsor Reception. New this year, The Cellar offered Bloody Marys and mimosas, adding an exciting new element to the event. Attendance was among the strongest in recent years.
4. The Farm & Art Market opens May 16 in its temporary location and will run through October 17.
5. Leslie worked the opening Farmers Market and assisted with downtown flower pot planting.
6. SDI celebrated Small Business Appreciation Week May 4-9. Pathway Financial and First Bank Kansas sponsored the sale of \$25 SDI gift certificates for \$20.
7. Blue Beacon hosted an Employee Appreciation Day during Small Business Week and purchased \$100 SDI gift certificates for employees to use on May 6, generating \$27,200 in downtown spending.

## Community Engagement & Operations

1. Leslie will host graduates from Salina Education for a downtown tour of SculptureTour Salina, followed by a group discussion at Barolo Grille with Vaughn Kresin.
2. SDI will be closed May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.
3. Jaydn will join SDI following the Memorial Day holiday.

## Staff Report: April Rickman

1. May first Friday went well! The band was great and we hosted May Day baskets at SAC for the first time since it was May 1<sup>st</sup>. Was well attended.
2. I worked on Placer and pulled some attendance numbers for FF. Average attendance in 2024 was 6.5K and 2025 was 6.9K. Average dwell time was 113 minutes.
3. The budget presentation is DONE and ready for the commission. Will send it over to the city following the meeting this morning.
4. Farmers Market was a success! All vendors that were slated, showed up and minimal grumbling. I did pull Placer numbers for this as well. In 2025, 718 attendees and 2026 571 attendees on opening day. Some things to note: this year opening day was on graduation weekend and last year we opened one week later. So attendance may have been affected by that. It seemed full and busy and many vendors sold out.
5. June First Friday is a British invasion band called Across the Pond. The rest of June is pretty slow for SDI sponsored events except the market.
6. I am currently working on Jigsaw Jam info for July. Tickets on sale June 1. It will work the same as January so no real updates there.
7. July will have no first Friday because it is typically really slow downtown.
8. July 18th 5-8? PM. We will be hosting America 250 Red, White, & BBQ. BBQ meal by Seraphim tickets \$15 BBQ sandwich or \$5 brat plus a kids option for \$5 mac & cheese, face painting, yard games, Canyon Cocktails, Bibliophiles cupcakes, Cash Hollistah 5-7pm and Everyday Lights 7-9pm. Tickets on sale June 1.
9. Meet with RHZ Wednesday to discuss Great Escape. Will be similar to previous years but may add a patriotic element for America 250.
10. Back to School Bash will be back in Campbell Plaza. Cash Hollistah will DJ again. Schools are IN! They will help pay for this event.
11. We chatted with an "influencer" Steven Kimmi. Potential to work with him on promoting downtown shopping in slow times. Working through this and looking at prices. Seems very invested in Salina and was excited to work with us.
12. We also talked with KJIL radio station at the possibility of air time with them. This would be a totally different market than our local KSAL and Eagle stations.

They are Christian based but also a non-profit so their prices are much lower than other stations. Will hit a demographic we don't reach in our other marketing streams. No contract but in talks with them.

## Staff Reports: Diane Gebhart

### 1. Spring Spruce-Up

Successful - Thanks Eric Montoy and Larry Bunker for showing up and helping with our graffiti removal. We had roughly 50 volunteers totaling 120 hours of labor. Achieved our goals.

### 2. Irrigation

Downtown irrigation was checked and repaired. Irrigation was repaired again after melted tubing from smoldering cigarette butts affected three pots.

### 3. Beautification

Santa Fe pots are planted. Volunteers included Leslie, Crystal Hammerschmidt, Larry Bunker and Gary Martens.

Plaza pots- 4 large pots are prepped and ready for planting. Hanging Baskets - Mostly prepped and planting has begun. Pots will be hung early June.

### 4. Equipment - New pump is being installed. Tank is in good shape. New hoses are needed.

### 5. Vagrancy

There has been an uptick in the number of unhoused pedestrians downtown. We have had some reports of panhandling and belligerence. Increase in trash and abandoned bedding etc. especially in the alleys. We are taking steps to help mitigate this issue.

### 6. General - Jady is set to start after Memorial weekend.

### 7. Business as usual