

MEETING MINUTES
Berkley Downtown Development Authority
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Berkley Public Library
Wednesday, November 9, 2016

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:04 AM with Chair Alan Semonian presiding.
- II. **DETERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE:**
Present: Matthew Baumgarten
Bridget Dean
Lawrence Gallagher
Alanda Knox
Karen Koerber
Matteo Passalacqua
Alan Semonian

Absent: Kathy Abrahamian – *excused*
Diane Farrington – *excused*
Ross Gavin – *excused*
Rob Onesko

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
RoseAnn Nicolai, Chamber of Commerce Liaison/ Nicolai Events
Dottie Popp, Planning Commission Liaison
- III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** On motion by Dean and second by Gallagher, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
A. Regular Meeting of October 12, 2016: On motion by Gallagher and second by Baumgarten, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.
- V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.
- VI. **CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE:** Semonian reported that the issue of a DDA Web site needs to be addressed. Baumgarten said that the city is in the process of updating its entire Web site and would have a page or tab for the DDA. Nicolai said the site currently has a page but the information on it is outdated and/or incomplete. She has been putting information about DDA sponsored events on social media. Baumgarten said he expects the update to be done by or close to the end of the year.
- VII. **LIAISON REPORTS:**
A. City Council Liaison: Baker thanked all the election staffers who had worked on the Nov. 8 election and thanked Semonian for his representation of the DDA at the State of the City luncheon. The city has hired a new Finance Director, Sabrina Lilla, who has over a decade of municipal finance experience. The next Council meeting will be held November 21.

B. Planning Commission Liaison: Popp reported that their October meeting was full. They appointed Michele Buckler to be liaison to Parks and Recreation and reviewed Roberts Rules of Order for attendees in an effort to make meetings more civil. She noted that ever since June, residents who attended were mainly concerned with removing references to multi-family dwellings from the master plan amendment of 2015. Commissioner Dean Smith took it upon himself to write a revision of the 2015 amendment to cover those objections, and the amendment was sent to Council. During the last part of the meeting citizens were still angry about the agenda changes. Smith also talked to the reporter from *Woodward Talk*, whose article, Popp noted, was again one-sided. She also noted that all Commission members had been interviewed by the Oakland County Sheriff's Department. Koerber commended the commissioners for the work that they do and being willing to listen to so much complaint from Berkley citizens and take action about them.

C. Chamber of Commerce Liaison: Nicolai reported that the next Chamber Chat would be held 11/18 at the Berkley Schools administrative office, a joint meeting with the schools, with area realtors being invited to familiarize them with Berkley, Huntington Woods, and Oak Park and their attractions. The annual members-only holiday party is scheduled for December 7 at Crispelli's. Semonian volunteered to be the new liaison to the Chamber as it is difficult for Knox to attend because of the meeting time.

D. Beautification Advisory Committee: Absent – no report.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. DDA Manager Presentations/Interviews: The search committee (Passalacqua, Baumgarten, Semonian, and Knox) had previously reviewed resumes from 12 applicants and narrowed the number of applicants to interview to four. Two candidates stood out, and Baumgarten said the committee had chosen one that they wanted to offer the position to and begin contract negotiations. The DDA has actually worked with the applicant in the past so there is familiarity with the city and the direction it's moving. That person exhibited a great deal of enthusiasm for the position and the opportunity to see a project through to completion. This applicant has an excellent record of project management skills and in providing customer service. The manager position is a contractual one. Passalacqua said that he had spoken to a person he had previously worked with who knew the applicant well and spoke highly of her.

Baumgarten noted that the applicant asked about the Board's vision, and he strongly suggested a "retreat" format for Board members to meet in January to set priorities and establish goals that would enable them to evaluate the manager's performance, which will be outcome based. Semonian noted that the position is full time and they expect to pay in the neighborhood of \$42,000-\$50,000. That doesn't include what it will cost to establish office space, perhaps in City Hall, the Library, or some other office location that wouldn't be too expensive. The idea of having the Chamber (which has no office space either) and the DDA manager share a space is being considered. Gallagher asked about the length of the employment term, and Semonian said it would probably be a 2-3 year commitment.

Gallagher moved to approve the chair and/or City Manager entering into contract negotiations with the candidate for the position of DDA Manager, Koerber seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Beautification Donation: Baumgarten reported that Deeds had approached him to ask for a \$150.00 donation to expand his beautification/gardening efforts along Coolidge, but Baumgarten said he would prefer to see more detailed plans with locations before bringing the request to the Board for approval. Passalacqua suggested that the new DDA manager would be the best first contact for such requests. Gallagher was highly supportive of Deeds' efforts in the city and wanted to make sure he is encouraged to continue. Koerber added her support and noted the importance of keeping a positive spin on his efforts and not discouraging him. Passalacqua suggested developing a template/protocol for such proposals, that wouldn't need to be burdensome, so that all such proposals would be subject to requirements, a standard protocol.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Robina/12 Mile Project: Traffic Study Test – Baumgarten reported that the barriers closing Robina would be removed that day (November 9). Dean thanked him because there are several shopping events in the area scheduled for the weekend. Separate surveys will be going out to residents and businesses in the area to gather feedback. Semonian said it was good that they'd received a lot of feedback on the closing, but not all of it was positive.

B. Board Member Vacancies: Regarding Onesko's appointment to the Board, it was determined, with the assistance of Councilman Baker's research on the DDA charter, that he could serve until a successor was appointed. Onesko's Berkley bank branch closed, and there was a question of whether he was still eligible to serve on the Board. The three open seats should be filled by Coolidge business people. Twelve Mile Board members are Knox, Semonian, Abrahamian, and Farrington.

Dean, Gallagher, Gavin, and Passalacqua are at large. Until Logsdon resigned, technically the Board was in violation of its charter because five members were at large. Baker said he had talked to the owner of Lake Home Décor who seemed interested but wanted to know more.

Baumgarten reported that the LaSalette school property had been sold and the new owner was looking to buy adjacent residential property. He didn't know what kind of development is being considered for the space. The old Berkley Front location on 12 Mile is being developed into a bar/restaurant (first floor only, because an elevator needs to be added for the second floor space to be open to the public).

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Coolidge Action Task Force – Gavin (the only remaining committee member) was absent. Koerber volunteered to serve on the committee.

B. Maintenance/Beautification Committee – No report (no meeting held).

C. Promotions Committee: Nicolai reported that the Hometown Holidays event December 3 will start a little earlier and attractions have been expanded. There will be more participation from Coolidge businesses as well as stores on the west end of 12 Mile. They've picked up an additional sponsor (The McCarty Team). An after-party will be held at Patrick J's. There will be carolers, two trolleys, and two brass bands performing. There will also be carriage rides during the day (for a fee), but the route is being worked out with Public Safety. Nicolai reported that the additional advertising money included in the 2016/17 DDA budget will enable them to buy additional advertising with a monthly theme, as well as the holiday theme promoting Hometown Holidays.

Koerber announced the annual seniors Christmas lunch will be held at Farina's on December 8 and asked for volunteers to help the seniors, clean up, and other easy work.

D. Budget/Finance: No report.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 AM on motion by Koerber and second by Dean.