

MEETING MINUTES
Berkley Downtown Development Authority
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Berkley Public Safety Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, January 11, 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:48 AM with Chair Alan Semonian presiding.

II. DETERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE:

Present: Matthew Baumgarten (8:48)
Diane Farrington
Alanda Knox
Karen Koerber
Matteo Passalacqua
Alan Semonian

Absent: Kathy Abrahamian – *excused*
Bridget Dean – *excused*
Lawrence Gallagher – *excused*
Ross Gavin – *excused*
Rob Onesko

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
RoseAnn Nicolai, Chamber of Commerce Liaison/Nicolai Events
Doug Penney, Resident
Dottie Popp, Planning Commission Liaison

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: On motion by Farrington and second by Koerber, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Regular Meeting of December 14, 2016: On motion by Farrington and second by Baumgarten, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

VI. CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE: Semonian announced that for the new year he was requiring that all Board members take on a responsibility outside of attending monthly Board meetings: either join/chair a DDA committee or be a DDA liaison. That would mean a commitment of about an additional hour's time per month.

VII. LIAISON REPORTS:

A. City Council Liaison: Baker reported that the new 15-member Citizens Advisory Group met at Council's Monday meeting. For the next two months, the group will study issues in three areas: the condition of Berkley's roads and sewers; options for the ice arena and community center; and the condition of municipal buildings such as City Hall, Historical Museum, DPW, and so on. Additionally, if it's determined to move forward after their studies are complete, they will look at a variety of funding options to make necessary improvements. He noted that if any require ballot issues for the August 2017 primary elections, they would need to make those decisions by April 2017. Koerber asked how the group members were chosen, and Baker said they were nominated by Council and the mayor after expressing an interest in joining. He also noted that the ice arena has hosted other events and uses since it can't currently be used for skating.

B. Planning Commission Liaison: Popp reported that she was unable to attend the last meeting in December and therefore had no report. The next meeting is scheduled for January 24.

C. Chamber of Commerce Liaison: Nicolai reported that the next Chamber Chat would be held at the Library on January 20 and the February Chat would be held at the Twisted Shamrock on February 17. They will be holding a joint meeting with the school district and City on February 22. The Art Bash has been scheduled for June 10 and the Street Art Fest for July 15, with locations to be finalized. Coolidge and 12 Mile locations have been determined but a location for West 12 Mile is still not finalized. They also plan to run shuttles to the different locations. The Chamber creates a welcome packet for new residents of Huntington Woods and Berkley and collects 300 pieces of information from Chamber business members that the cities distribute.

D. Beautification Advisory Committee: Deeds reported that the committee met in December to choose three residential winners of their Holiday Lights awards. He has plants already growing in the greenhouse for 2017 projects, which includes a 48-foot planting on the Coolidge turnaround median just north of 12 Mile.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Approval of Employment Agreement with DDA Manager: Baumgarten passed around a copy of the Berkley Downtown Development Authority Director Agreement reflecting the terms that he and Vivian Carmody had discussed and agreed to with input from the City Attorney. He had highlighted certain paragraphs of the agreement to call the Board's attention to them, including designation of Carmody's status as an independent contractor and not an employee, with no fringe benefits, and notice required to terminate the agreement (two weeks). Since the Board would be required to accept her resignation and terminate the agreement, there is the possibility that acceptance could be delayed until the Board meets, once a month. He noted that she will be paid by the month for the previous month's work. Council also needs to approve the agreement, and their next meeting was scheduled for January 23. If approved at that meeting, she can tentatively start February 1.

Passalacqua asked if it was too late to add language to the effect of "and other reasonable duties as assigned," but because she is not an employee but rather an independent contractor, that language would be unnecessary.

Farrington moved to approve the agreement as presented, Knox seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Board Member Vacancies: Semonian reported that there is interest in joining the Board, including Dottie Popp, whose business is on Coolidge. Baker said the owner of Lake Home Décor said she may be interested. Both would need to fill out an application form, available on the City Web site, to be formally considered.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Coolidge Action Task Force – Koerber reported that the group had one meeting to go over the old study of Coolidge, set goals, and get an overview of traffic and wayfinding issues. The upcoming meeting for January 12 had to be canceled.

B. Maintenance/Beautification Committee – Board members agreed that the holiday decorations were better than ever. Deeds reported that some of the lights weren't working, and Semonian said he should let Schueller know about it. Popp wondered why they were taken down so early as they brightened the city and made it look festive, but Farrington said people get tired of the holidays soon after Christmas. Popp said Birmingham uses more muted colors and leaves their lights up quite a bit longer. Semonian suggested they ask the company that puts up the decorations what it would cost. Baker noted that a newspaper reporter asked about the origin of the big Santa at 12 and Coolidge, but no one seemed to know his history. Koerber said she would ask her father who's been in Berkley for 80 years.

C. Promotions Committee: Nicolai passed out copies of their Hometown Holidays brochure. There will be an ad in C&G newspapers with a restaurant theme at the end of January. Ladies Night promotions are scheduled to begin in March.

D. Budget/Finance: In his absence, Semonian appointed Gavin to chair the Budget Committee, and Gallagher will probably want to continue on the committee.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 AM on motion by Koerber and second by Knox.