

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:31 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.
- II. ROLL CALL:**
- Present:* Andrew Agbay (from Berkley)
Matthew Baumgarten (from Berkley)
Scott Francis (from Oak Park)
Andy Gilbert (from Berkley)
Chris Gross (from Berkley)
Mitchell Moses (from Huntington Woods)
Matteo Passalacqua (from Berkley)
Ashley Poirier (from Berkley)
Razur Rahman (from Novi)
Brian Zifkin (from Berkley)
- Absent:* Donna Dirkse
Petro Drakopoulos
Ailya Siddiqi – *excused*
Wayne Wudyka
Garrett Wyatt – *excused*
- Also present:* Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Jennifer Foster, Catalyst Media
Torri Mathes, Community Engagement Officer, City of Berkley
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Erin Schlutow, Community Development Director, City of Berkley
Matt Trotto, Planning Commission
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** On motion by Zifkin and second by Francis, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- A. Regular Meeting of March 10, 2021**
On motion by Moses and second by Francis, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.
- V. TREASURER'S REPORT:**
Moses reported he would ask his questions when the Budget section was presented. Through April 2021, his report is similar to previous months. Revenues are projected to be over expenses by @\$35,000 and are currently @\$110,000 over.
- Passalacqua moved to receive and approve the Treasurer's Report, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- VI. ACTION ITEMS:**
- A. Adoption of a Resolution Affirming the local State of Emergency Resolution and Continuation of Electronic Meetings**
The resolution had been previously approved by City Council and extends the continuation of electronic meetings through the end of June.

Passalacqua moved to adopt the Resolution Affirming Local State of Emergency Resolution and Continuation of Electronic Meetings, Zifkin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. 2021/22 DDA Final Budget Approval

Baumgarten reported that the budget approved at this meeting would be sent on to City Council for review in mid-May, with final approval May 17. Revenues show a slight increase, estimated at \$39,000.00, with the TIF flat (@280,000, a slight decrease). Additional revenue will come from investment earnings, co-op advertising, and sponsorships. There will also be some State shared revenue of @14,000. The estimated operating budget is \$348,750.00

On the expense side, the fund balance planned use is @\$117,163, with an estimated \$242,668 fund balance. There are no grant applications currently in the queue. Passalacqua asked about the expenditure for the Plaza project, listed at \$53,000 rather than \$60,000, to bring the total for the three participating entities to \$180,000, close to the actual previous contractor quotations. MSOC tech funds of @\$7,000 could bring the DDA's contribution up to \$60,000.

The City and DDA split the cost of sealing 12 Mile stamped concrete at a DDA cost of \$25,000.

Zifkin asked about street furnishings (garbage cans, benches, etc.) budgeted at \$30,000 and noted there are currently none on the west end of 12 Mile. Baumgarten directed him to coordinate with the Executive Director on placement, as those should be distributed throughout the DDA district.

Passalacqua moved to increase the line item expense for the DDA's contribution to the Berkley Plaza Project to \$60,000.00 from \$53,000.00, Moses seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Francis moved to add \$25,000.00 to the Streetscape category to be used on the west end of 12 Mile improvements, Moses seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Zifkin moved to approve the final 2021/22 DDA Fiscal Budget and submit it to Council, Passalacqua seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VII. Discussion Items:

A. Coolidge Crosswalks

Passalacqua noted he supported reactivating the crosswalks on Coolidge and that the road was now easier for pedestrians to navigate since the lane reduction. There is already some infrastructure in place from the earlier trial to add safety (stanchions and pedestrian-activated lights). In support he noted that Main Street in downtown Royal Oak, a busier road, uses crosswalks with no additional signals, just signage. Gilbert strongly suggested that Public Safety be involved, enforcing the speed limit and having a presence that encourages compliance, such as an unmanned police car parked close by. Public education is also important.

Poirier also suggested a marketing campaign accompanying reactivation urging motorists to slow down and watch for pedestrians and also informing the public about safe crossing. Baumgarten can get additional information from Royal Oak about safety of their downtown crosswalks and compliance from motorists.

B. Safety Report: Coolidge Lane Reduction

Baumgarten reported that TIA will be doing new traffic counts in May, and the original matrix will be updated and the evaluation process restarted.

C. Wayfinding Signs Phase 2

Gilbert reported that the bases for the signs have been poured, and Baumgarten added that sign fabrication is in process and that signs should be installed by the end of April.

VIII. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Both student Board members were absent for State academic testing. Francis reported that the Superintendent is retiring, and three candidates have currently applied to fill his position, including Francis.

IX. STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Business Development Committee – Mitchell Moses

Moses reported that he could not attend the last meeting and had no report.

B. Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua

Passalacqua reported that the DIA and the committee are still working on their downtown mural project. The committee is undergoing some internal changes. Gilbert asked if Salon Simply Beautiful had applied to the Design Committee for their mural, and Passalacqua didn't think so; Baumgarten noted they had gotten approval from the ZBA. Zifkin reported that his neighbor, Armadillo, is either repainting their original mural or painting a new one.

C. Marketing & Promotions Committee – Ashley Poirier

Poirier reported that the committee is discussing events for the year. Traffic at events so far is down. The committee and events need more volunteers as well as more businesses. They are planning a night market sometime in August. Gilbert and Baumgarten applauded the efforts of the Marketing and Promotions committee and noted good comments from people in the community.

D. Organization Committee – Scott Francis

Francis reported they are solidifying the new attorney's contract so he can review the revised by-laws, but the committee did not meet.

E. West 12-Mile Improvements – Brian Zifkin

Zifkin reported his daughter is working on graphic ideas. One idea suggested for the West End is a small dog park adjacent to the A&W, as well as bike racks (location to be determined) and a small pergola on one of the vacant spaces. There are no trash cans on their end of 12 Mile.

X. STAFF & COMMUNITY UPDATES:

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported Council dealt mostly with procedural issues at their last, brief meeting. MML held a vaccine information seminar at their March 16 Capitol Conference and another about the spread of misinformation. Council has had conversations about dogs being allowed in Berkley parks and it is coming up for approval, and he noted the popularity of the dog park in Detroit near Shinola. Parks and Rec is very supportive and in favor of pocket parks around the city.

B. Planning Commission – Matt Trotto

Trotto had to leave the meeting prior to reporting, and Baumgarten reported the new art studio on west 12 Mile is under construction. The LaSalette project construction will start soon; Farina's is being redeveloped, and Vibe and Amici's are undergoing renovations.

Citizens Engagement Committee – Absent. No report.

C. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad had to leave the meeting prior to reporting.

XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS:

Baumgarten announced the vaccine clinic in partnership with Rite Aid that would be held at the Community Center April 15. Details are on the Parks & Red web site.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

XIII. Adjournment:
The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Passalacqua.