

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:31 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.
- II. **ROLL CALL:**
Present: 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)
Razur Rahman (from Novi)
Ailya Siddiqi (from Lathrup Village)
Wayne Wudyka (from Berkley)
Garrett Wyatt (from Huntington Woods)
Brian Zifkin (from Berkley)
- Absent:* Andrew Agbay – *excused*
Donna Dirkse
Petro Drakopoulos
Ashley Poirier – *excused*
- Also present:* Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Jennifer Foster, Catalyst Media
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Erin Schlutow, Community Development Director
- 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 February 10, 2021
On motion by Moses and second by Zifkin, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.
- V. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**
Moses reported that his report is the same as in previous meetings, with little spending. Originally, the fund balance was expected to be reduced by \$165,000, but it has actually increased by \$83,000. He expects the Wayfinding expenditure to be completed soon as signs are going up, and that will bring the fund balance down closer to projections.
- Zifkin moved to receive and approve the Treasurer's Report, Baumgarten seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- VI. **ACTION ITEMS:**
A. 2021/22 Fiscal Budget
Baumgarten reported that the DDA budget that will be submitted to Finance is largely unchanged from what was presented to the Board at the February meeting. The final figure on expected Revenue is still unknown, but he expects that the expenditure for tax tribunals will be lower than in some years because fewer property owners are contesting their assessments.

Moses moved to approve the draft 2021/22 Fiscal Budget and submit it to Finance, Zifkin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board. The Board will be asked to approve the final Budget in April before it is presented to City Council.

Francis asked if updated amounts for the Holiday Lights, the Berkley Plaza, and Façade grants are included in the draft budget, and Baumgarten said they were tentatively included, waiting for final approval when revenues are confirmed in April.

B. Agreement to Hire New DDA Attorney

Francis reported that Finney and the Organization Committee met with Jeff Kragt and reviewed his credentials. He presented them with an agreement for services, and they are in favor of it. His per hour fee is \$125 and he has extensive experience working with other DDAs. The committee is recommending to the Board that his contract be approved.

Baumgarten moved to approve the contract offered to Jeff Kragt as the DDA attorney, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VII. Discussion Items:

A. Updated DDA By-laws

Francis reported that the updated By-laws will not be presented to the Board until they are reviewed by the newly hired DDA attorney.

VIII. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Wyatt reported that the District is reviewing a proposal to have all grades, K through 12, return to classes 5 days a week, beginning April 12, with the same hybrid schedule.

IX. STANDING COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Business Development Committee – Mitchell Moses

Moses reported that he missed the last meeting and has no report, and no other committee member was able to report.

B. Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua

Passalacqua reported that their meeting was postponed to consider a proposal from the Detroit Design Center to place a new sculpture of their creation at some downtown Berkley location. They are able to “reverse engineer” their design to fit the DDA’s budget. Appropriate locations would need to be identified.

Zifkin suggested pausing consideration of their proposal until the Plaza project expenditure is finalized. Moses and Gilbert agreed. Zifkin suggested finding a corporate sponsor, and Baumgarten noted that the Partnership could be utilized to assist in fundraising. Passalacqua said he would have more conversation with the Design Center. Rahman was in favor of exploring the proposal in more detail, and Passalacqua said he’d share their web site with the Board.

C. Marketing & Promotions Committee – Ashley Poirier

In Poirier’s absence, Foster (Catalyst Media) reported that March Into Berkley is underway and that Ladies Night Out is also going forward, April 1 and 2, but both events need more merchants participating. They’ve had balloons printed with participants’ names. Art and About night market is tentatively scheduled for August 19. The co-op advertising program with the DDA matching 50% is underway. They plan a March 17 media outreach, and the new branding agency is meeting with local merchants. The committee will be doing their March e-blast soon.

Zifkin noted that when events are planned the calendar should be checked to make sure that Jewish holidays are taken into consideration.

D. Organization Committee – Scott Francis

Francis reported the committee worked on getting the new attorney on board and reviewing his proposed contract.

E. West 12-Mile Improvements – Brian Zifkin

Zifkin reported that he's engaged with residents and customers and it was brought to his attention that the west end of 12 Mile needs bike racks. He has space on his property to install one but wondered if rules would allow the DDA to pay for that on private property rather than on the right-of-way. Baumgarten thought it would be allowed but noted the new attorney can weigh in. He also noted that a place on the rack for branding (identifying the DDA as sponsor) should be included, as it can and should be on benches installed in the district. Gilbert asked if the Master Plan update mentions branding benches and bike racks, and Baumgarten wasn't sure.

X. STAFF & COMMUNITY UPDATES:

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported mostly procedural work done on 3/1/21, including the second reading of the revised lawn sign ordinance. They received the Library annual report, which was very positive, and he gave credit to the work done by Matt Church and his staff to respond to pandemic conditions. Work is planned for the Public Safety entrance and lobby. The Ad Hoc Dream Cruise committee is considering possibilities noting state requirements governing large gatherings. Berkley will potentially receive a one-time influx of @\$1.5 million through the CARES Act. He personally hopes that reactivating Coolidge crosswalks will come up for renewed discussion. The Road Commission did put two un-signalized crosswalks on 12 Mile (four lanes of traffic).

Moses asked about the expected Coolidge traffic report, which was scheduled to be given by now, and Baumgarten said it hasn't been done but might be available by April. Crosswalks discussion will be on the April meeting agenda.

B. Planning Commission – Matt Trotto

Trotto reported the Commission approved a special land use for Info Tech Realty on Robina just north of 12 Mile. He noted crosswalks have been briefly mentioned in Master Plan meetings. The LaSalette project is in pre-construction mode, with groundbreaking planned in Spring when the weather is settled. Gilbert noted that concrete is being poured for Wayfinding signs.

C. Citizens Engagement Committee – Absent. No report.

D. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad reported the Chamber prepared two versions of its budget depending on what events they will be holding. For now the Art Bash is on their schedule for September and the Street Art Fest for the first Saturday in August.

XI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS: None.

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 9:17 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Baumgarten.