

**MEETING MINUTES  
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Wednesday, September 14, 2022, 8:30 AM  
Berkley Public Safety, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room**



**I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:33 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.

**II. ROLL CALL:**

*Present:* Matthew Baumgarten  
Donna Dirkse  
Scott Francis  
Andy Gilbert  
Chris Gross  
Jenna Hance  
Matteo Passalacqua  
Ashley Poirier  
Garrett Wyatt  
Brian Zifkin

*Absent:* Tim Barnes – excused

*Also present:* Steve Baker, City Council Liaison  
Desiree Dutcher, DDA Board candidate  
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director  
Lisa Kempner, Planning Commission Liaison  
Uli Laczkovich, DDA Board Candidate  
Mike McGuinness, DDA Executive Director  
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Passalacqua requested that the agenda be amended to move Action Items E. through J to Discussion Items because he believed the Design Committee had not yet reviewed them and made a recommendation. McGuinness was temporarily absent from the meeting.

Gross made the motion to amend the proposed agenda, moving Action Items E through J to Discussion, Dirkse seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

After discussion, with McGuinness present, McGuinness noted items E through J could be moved back to Action Items to be voted on by the Board at the current meeting.

Baumgarten moved to remove the amended agenda moving Action Items E through H to Discussion, Hance seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Zifkin moved to approve the agenda (original), Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting of July 13, 2022**

On motion by Gross and second by Passalacqua, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

**V. LIAISON REPORTS**

**A. City Council – Steve Baker**

Baker reported that Council's previously scheduled regular meeting was a closed session to handle administrative issues.

**B. Community Development –Kristen Kapelanski**

Kapelanski deferred her report to later in the meeting when relevant development issues would be discussed.

**C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner**

Kempner reported that the Commission had approved the Woodward Avenue cannabis business plan (in the former Firehouse Sub location) and previously approved the Vinsetta Garage parking plan and the second floor addition to America's Stamp Shop.

**D. Public Works – Shawn Young and Ric Chalmers**

Absent – no report.

**E. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad**

Murad reported the Chamber's support for the upcoming Oakland Irish Fest. They are trying to decide on a location for the State of the City breakfast meeting as their regular location, Farina's, had closed.

**VI. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

**A. Financial Reports for July 2022**

**B. Financial Reports for August 2022**

Gross made a combined report for July and August 2022. After expenditures for flower planting, façade grants, DDA events, marketing, public art, streetscape improvements, and a reduction (adjustment) from the previous fiscal year of \$8,000.00, the ending balance as of August 31, 2022 was \$356,000.00.

Hance moved to receive and accept the combined Treasurer's report for July and August, 2022, Zifkin seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**VII. ACTION ITEMS:**

**A. Annual Election of Board Officers**

- 1. Board Chair**
- 2. Board Vice Chair**
- 3. Board Treasurer**
- 4. Board Secretary**

The DDA bylaws require an annual election of officers. They are one-year terms.

Dirkse moved to nominate Andy Gilbert as Board Chair, Zifkin seconded, Gilbert accepted the nomination, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Hance moved to nominate herself as Board Vice-Chair (until the next election in 2023), Passalacqua seconded, Hance accepted the nomination, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Dirkse moved to nominate Chris Gross as Board Treasurer, Poirier seconded, Gross accepted the nomination, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Dirkse nominated Baumgarten for the Board Secretary position, Poirier seconded, Baumgarten accepted the nomination, and the Board approved the nomination unanimously.

**B. Recommendations for Board of Directors Appointments**

1. Yvonne Rakestraw
2. Uli Laczkovich
3. Desiree Dutcher

There were two Coolidge vacancies and one 12 Mile vacancy to be filled. McGuinness noted that Yvonne Rakestraw had temporarily withdrawn her name from consideration for personal reasons, leaving Laczkovich (4-year seat) and Dutcher (3-year partial term) the recommended candidates to fill the Coolidge vacancies

Francis noted both have backgrounds in Berkley and have served on DDA committees. The Organization Committee felt that their experience and commitment to the city and the DDA's goals made them appropriate candidates to be appointed to the Board. At his invitation, both introduced themselves and spoke about their interest in serving on the Board.

Hance moved to appoint Uli Laczkovich and Desiree Dutcher to the Board, Passalacqua seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**C. Rad Hatter Marketing Social Media Management Proposal**

McGuinness had included the proposal from Rad Hatter Marketing in the packet presented prior to the meeting. The proposal submitted covered 12 months, but McGuinness asked the Board to consider a 6-month term at the proposed rate instead. Shortening the term gives the DDA the opportunity to review the social media results as well as the amount of original content marketing materials stockpiled.

Gross moved to approve Rad Hatter Marketing proposal to provide social media management services to the DDA in the amount of \$4,200.00 per month for six (6) months, Dirkse seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board, with Poirier recusing herself from the vote.

**D. LeClerc Display Co. Inc. Holiday Lighting Contract**

McGuinness included LeClerc's proposal to install holiday lights in the DDA district in the Board's packet. The gazebo is included in the contract for 2022, and the nearby candle wreaths in the top three windows of the old village hall won't be included. DTE will test the poles where lights need power to make sure all are working correctly. Different colored lights that had been discussed aren't feasible this year due to supply chain issues. LeClerc is open to that change in future years.

Passalacqua moved to approve LeClerc Display's Holiday Lighting lease proposal in the amount of \$32,317.00, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**E. MHG Jewelers Mural Program Application**

Included in the information packet sent to the Board prior to the meeting was a rendering of the mural that the building/business owner, Matthew Gross, made application to have painted on the rear wall of his building at 2689 Coolidge, and he is applying for a \$2,500.00 grant.

There was discussion about the placement of the mural on the rear wall of the building, which borders a narrow alley behind the block's buildings. For the money the DDA would be investing, many felt there wouldn't be much visibility to the general public.

Passalacqua moved to send the application back to Gross and discuss with him any other placement options he would consider, noting the Board is flexible about considering other options, Hance seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**F. Anticipate Resale Mural Program Application**

Included in the information packet sent to the Board prior to the meeting was a rendering of the mural to be painted on the exterior wall of the garage structure at 3833 Twelve Mile. The mural is projected to cost \$2,200.00.

**G. Council Resale Mural Program Application**

Included in the information packet sent to the Board prior to the meeting was a rendering of the murals to be painted on their three side doors at a completion cost of \$2,400.00. They have connected with the artist who completed the mural on the Berkley Public Library side door.

**H. Grill & Curry Mural Program Application**

Included in the information packet sent to the Board prior to the meeting was a rendering of the murals to be painted on the exterior side of Grill & Curry and the rear of the adjoining business, Eleven 21 Mixology. The location is anticipated to be a future activity space. The projected completion cost for both murals is \$5,000.00

Passalacqua made a blanket motion to approve F. Anticipate, G. Council Resale, and H. Grill & Curry's mural program applications, Francis seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**I. Alice's Perfect Fit Alterations Mural Program Application**

Baumgarten moved to table a vote and send Alice's Perfect Fit Alterations' mural program application (location of Robina and 12 Mile) back to the Design Committee for review and approval at the next available Board meeting, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**J. Eleven21 Mixology Façade Grant Application**

McGuinness reported that timing issues required the owners to complete façade improvements before the Design Committee and Board had an opportunity to review and approve the application, and therefore the façade improvements were ineligible for the grant. Poirier asked if new businesses were given any kind of summary of programs that might benefit them, such as the façade and mural grants, and McGuinness noted it was something he had in mind but hadn't finalized yet.

Hance moved to deny Eleven21 Mixology's Façade grant application, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Downtown Development Authority Revised Bylaws Approved**

McGuinness included a copy of the revised bylaws previously approved by the Board and also approved by City Council.

**B. Robina North Public Space Enhancements Design Concepts**

Passalacqua reported that the PEA Group had considered input from the Board regarding renderings of their previously submitted concept ideas and would make a presentation to the Board of their revisions, probably at the DDA's October meeting or by e-mail. The next step, if the Board approves, is to request that PEA develop a bid package.

**C. Downtown Design Guidelines Progress**

Kapelanski reported that the draft ordinance would be forwarded to the Planning Commission at the end of September, followed by an October public hearing, and then finally to City Council. She anticipates final approval by or before the end of the year.

**D. Downtown Master Plan Formal Adoption Progress**

The plan is expected to be formally adopted by City Council the following week. An RFP for the requested joint Parking Study has been sent out and some bids already received.

**E. Coolidge Crosswalks Activation, Enhancements Progress**

McGuinness reported the formal letter from him and the Board Chair stating the DDA's desire to see the crosswalks reactivated has been sent to the City Manager. All stakeholders have met and discussed next steps to activate the crosswalks. The city's engineering firm, HRC, will request any tweaks (striping, signage, and other options) they believe should be made to the plan, which will then need Public Safety's approval. For the long term, a center pedestrian island at the crosswalks will likely be approved. "Yield" signs are already on board. Kapelanski expects HRC to send their draft memo and any tweaks recommended the following week, and then McGuinness will bring hopeful good news back to the Board at the October meeting.

**F. ArtSpace at Coolidge and Catalpa Progress**

McGuinness reported the name "ArtSpace" has been approved by all three parties. DTE will investigate installing night lights at the location. Student art will be arriving soon, and Francis reported that the Berkley High graduate who is sculpting the signature piece should be finished by early November. Wyatt reported that his fellow high school students use the space and lunch there often.

**G. BOO!KLEY Season Initiatives Throughout Downtown**

McGuinness reported that skeletons and window ghosts will be installed and painted around town for business sponsors. Their committee will help interested businesses decorate their locations and skeletons. Restaurant Week is scheduled to begin Oct. 1, Ladies Night Out will be held Oct. 13, Oct. 21 is the "ghost chase," Oct. 29 is trick or treating and Monster Mash, with Coolidge closed, and theater troupes will be performing around downtown in character. Sponsorships have raised @\$3,800.00 so far.

**IX. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES**

Wyatt reported that school activities have started up quickly with sports teams in action and doing well. The students will be holding a Climate Change March to City Hall the following week.

**X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:**

**A. Art & Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua**

Passalacqua said he had no further report.

**B. Business Development Committee – Jenna Hance**

McGuinness reported two development sessions have been held.

**C. Downtown Events Committee –**

The committee has been focused on BOO!kley and the Holiday Lights parade.

**D. Marketing Strategies Committee – Ashley Poirier**

Poirier reported the committee hasn't met since the last report.

**E. Organization Committee – Scott Francis**

Francis reported their committee has focused on Board vacancies and reviewing candidates.

**F. West 12-Mile Committee – Brian Zifkin**

Zifkin reported about demolitions in his section of the downtown. The new art gallery construction is moving along well. The tattoo shop owner near him is closing the business and moving to "the boondocks." The owner of the nearby vacant property has reached out and has lowered his asking price to \$200,000. Baumgarten is interested in "dressing up" the space as it awaits sale. McGuinness reported the building owners on both sides of the space would like to have murals done.

**XI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES**

McGuinness reported that Tootie and Tallulah's has been sold, and he believes a medical or spa business will be taking the space. Two new businesses, one a non-profit and one a salon, will be

opening downtown. The proposed bar business at Dorothea and Coolidge (Sugar Kisses' old location) has seemingly fallen through as the property is listed for sale again. Monger's will be expanding into the space vacated by Peninsulas. The 12 Mile Mexican restaurant has final approval issues to resolve with the Liquor Control Commission.

**XII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS:**

Gross reported that Berkley Common is restructuring its operating procedures, and responsibilities are changing with the involvement of their new chefs as operating partners.

Poirier would like to see downtown snow removal and a downtown social district added to upcoming meeting discussions.

**XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** The opportunity for public comment was offered, and there were no in-person requests to address the body. Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

**XIV. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:13 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Poirier.