

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
APPROVED MINUTES**

**January 7, 2021**

Chairman Mark Sochocki called the Downtown Development Authority meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

PRESENT: Mark Sochocki, John Miedema, John Milan, Bob Patterson, Randy Ostrander and Clinton Zimmerman

TARDY:

ABSENT: Charlene Nowlin, Paula Robison and Jeff Mossel

ALSO, PRESENT: Heather Bowman, Director of Public Works, Aaron Kuhn, City Treasurer, Josh Pyles, DBA Director, Paula Priebe Director Community Development and Mark Gifford, City Manager

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion moved by, John Milan, seconded by Randy Ostrander to approve the DDA minutes of the regular meeting of October 1, 2020. Motion passed unanimously.**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Aaron Kuhn presented the Quarterly Financial Status through December 31, 2020 for review.

**FARMER'S MARKET**

Josh informed the committee that overall, 2020 was a successful season. Farmer's Market will meet in February and discuss and finalize some rule changes. Josh will be attending a Farmer's Market Virtual convention in March to get all the latest information available to Farmer's Market. Anticipated opening Farmer's Market in May with all COVID-19 precautions in place.

**Downtown Decorations**

Heather announced even with the delay of the Veteran's Hero Banners going up a little late it had very positive feedback this year and hoping Artworks will continue this next year. DDA would like to recognize Bill Yontz for all his leadership in organizing of the banners. Mark Gifford stated that the DDA should be thinking about the future of the red banners and twinkle lights as they will need to start being replaced due to age. Mark also

mentioned DDA will want to keep in mind the future Parking Lot projects. Heather informed the city has placed the order for Downtown Flowers to be exact as last year as they looked so good.

### **HEMLOCK PARK UPDATE**

The Hemlock Park Committee has seen great response from the community, fundraising is already at \$375,380.00. The plan is going to be put into two phases, starting phase one in spring 2021 and completion in phase two in 2022. The plan is now expected to be around 1.2 million dollars. The City of Big Rapids, DDA and DBA all very excited about this as it will bring in more traffic to the downtown area. Heather may invite Jon Coles to the next DDA meeting to have DDA consider a donation.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mark Sochocki inquired as to where the DBA is standing with the number of marijuana shops in the downtown area. Josh stated it's a majority would like to see a cap on the number of shops allowed. Paula Priebe stated there will be a meeting January 20, 2021 @ 6:30p.m. open to the public for feedback on the marijuana shops, currently there are 5 shops open and 1 in the works.

Mark Gifford informed the board that results are back from the Saw Grant study and the wastewater/storm system results are calling for a 9-million-dollar sanitation improvement system which would include the main line downtown from Binney's to City Hall. It will have a great impact on the downtown area and will depend on grants and many other funding options.

### **OTHER**

Next meeting scheduled for April 1, 2021 @ 8:00 a.m.  
Will hold informational meeting then regular meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Poulos  
Recording Secretary