

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
APRIL 1, 2021  
APPROVED MINUTES**

Chairman Mark Sochocki opened the meeting at 8:01 a.m. and asked for a roll call.

PRESENT: Mark Sochocki, Bob Patterson, Jeff Mossel, John Miedema and Randy Ostrander

TARDY: Clinton Zimmerman

ABSENT: John Milan, Charlene Nowlin and Paula Robison

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

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

**Background of DDA's**

Downtown Development Authorities were allowed to be formed under PA 197 of 1975 and can be funded in a number of different ways. The City's DDA is funded through farmer's market fees, property tax millage levied on all properties in the district, and tax increment financing.

Reporting requirements were changed per Public Act 57 of 2018 for the DDA, TIFA, LDFAs, etc. These requirements did not become effective until 180 days after the end of the authority's fiscal year as of the effective date of this act.

The first of those changes is a transparency requirement.

- Authorities that receive tax increment financing shall utilize the existing municipality's website to grant public access to the following:
  - (a) Minutes of all board meetings.
  - (b) Annual budget, including encumbered and unencumbered fund balances.
  - (c) Annual audits.
  - (d) Currently adopted development plan, if not included in a tax increment financing plan.
  - (e) Currently adopted tax increment finance plan, if currently capturing tax increment revenues.
  - (f) Current authority staff contact information.
  - (g) A listing of current contracts with a description of those contracts and other documents related to management of the authority and services provided to the authority.
  - (h) An updated annual synopsis of activities of the authority.

- A second requirement is conducting not fewer than two annual informational meetings.
  - Notice of the meeting shall be posted on the website not less than 14 days prior to the meeting.
  - Not less than 14 days before the informational meeting, the board of the authority shall mail notice of the informational meeting to the governing body of each taxing jurisdiction levying taxes that are subject to capture by the authority.
  
- The third requirement is the completion of an annual financial report to be submitted to the governing body of the municipality, the governing board of the governmental unit subject to tax capture by the authority, and the Michigan Department of Treasury.
  - This report needs to have the bulleted information listed on this page.
  - It is a requirement that has not yet been fulfilled because it is due concurrently with the City's audit report at the end of this year.

At this meeting, the following questions were discussed:

1. What are the upcoming goals for the next year for the DDA?
  - Parking lot no. 4, behind Fairman building and Shooters to be reconstructed.
  - Beautifying the downtown with cornstalks, Christmas decorations, hanging baskets, planters, new banners and twinkle lights.
  
2. List the projects that the DDA hopes to undertake in the next year:
  - Beautifying the downtown with cornstalks, Christmas decorations, hanging baskets, planters, new banners and twinkle lights.
  - Parking lot no. 4, behind Fairman building and Shooters to be reconstructed.
  
3. Bottom Line: What is the TIF money going to be spent on?
  - Downtown decorations
  - Paving Parking Lots

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Development Authority, Mark Sochocki declared the Informational Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority adjourned at 8:19 a.m.

The regular meeting of the DDA was opened up at 8:19 a.m.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Motion moved by Randy Ostrander, seconded by Bob Patterson to approve the minutes of regular meeting, January 7, 2021. Motion passed unanimously.*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Aaron Kuhn presented the Quarterly Financial Status through March 25, 2021. The TIF increased due to taxable value rising. The TIF capture for the winter tax was received for the winter quarter. There was a quarterly support transfer to the DBA. Fund Balance was \$66,869.560.

The stimulus money received from the Federal Government can be used in 3 areas as designated by the enacted legislation.

1. Lost Revenue – U.S. Dept. of Treasury issue guidance
2. Hazard Pay - employee
3. Water/Sewer/Broadband Infrastructure

## PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA

Larisa Draves presented the outline of progress on The Hemlock Park Improvement Project. The overall goal is to increase improvement of park amenities, making it universal in design to “Welcome All”. The committee has worked closely with Tim Haist (Superintendent with the Big Rapids Middle School) on placement of basketball courts close to school property and parking lot. The committee has been working diligently to raise over \$450,000 at this point with the estimated project around \$1,144,000. Phase 1 will consist of Basketball, Pickleball, Tennis Courts and Kayak Launch is hoping to go out to bid in mid to late April. Phase II is the Splash Pad will not be starting until 2022 pending funding. Larisa asked the board to consider a donation of \$7,500 for 2021 and \$7,500 for 2022.

*Motion moved by Jeff Mossel, seconded by Bob Patterson to amend fiscal 2021 budget to donate 7,500 to The Hemlock Park Improvement Project. Motion passed unanimously.*

## BUSINESS

**Banners** – Heather presented the board with the quotes to replace the large banners at a cost of \$4,157.50. John Miedema, suggested we have a line item on the budget for the banners as we consistently replace them.

**Marihuana Businesses in the Downtown** – Paula Priebe informed the board that the Planning Commission is discussing (going to City Commission) 3 possibilities on how to zone the downtown area in regard to Marihuana locations.

1. Remove C2 zoning from the ordinance, allowing no additional stores to open downtown.
2. Add setback around the MOISD Transition Center as school facility (no facility within 500 ft of school facility)
3. Add a setback regulation where there must be a minimum distance between facilities.

The DDA stated their only real issue with the Marihuana facilities is that their behavioral issues be addressed.

**DBA** - Josh informed the committee that DBA is moving forward with many events, however due to Covid-19 restrictions many more volunteers will be needed to be sure to enforce all rules and restrictions.

**Other** – Mark Gifford informed the board that the new city realtor is Joe McNally and he has the Hanchett Property listed.

Mark also informed the board to keep in mind that the retaining wall at the housing commission property that was installed sometime around the early 70's needs to be repaired or replaced.

Next meeting of the DDA will be July 1, 2021.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Poulos  
Recording Secretary