

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
APRIL 7, 2022
APPROVED MINUTES

Chairman Mark Sochocki opened the meeting at 8:05 a.m. who asked for a roll call.

PRESENT: Mark Sochocki, Bob Patterson, Jeff Mossel, John Miedema and Clinton Zimmerman

ABSENT: John Milan, Charlene Nowlin, Paula Robison and Randy Ostrander

ALSO, PRESENT: Heather Bowman, Director of Public Works, Aaron Kuhn, City Treasurer, Josh Pyles, DBA Director, Paula Priebe, Director of Community Development, Mark Gifford, City Manager, Dani Haynes, Director Public Safety and Fred Guenther, Mayor.

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?
 - Signage, welcoming into Big Rapids on Perry Ave/Northland Dr.
 - Music in downtown area to possibly have a longer season.
 - Market for music to have an additional day of the week.

2. List the projects that the DDA hopes to undertake in the next year:
 - Beautifying the downtown with new signage.
 - Parking lot lights repaired.
 - Twinkle lights replaced.
 - Donation to Hemlock Park Project.

3. Bottom Line: What is the TIF money going to be spent on?
 - Signage
 - Music

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Development Authority, Mark Sochocki declared the meeting of the Downtown Development Authority adjourned at 8:25 a.m.

The regular meeting of the DDA was opened up at 8:26 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion moved by Jeff Mossel, seconded by Clinton Zimmerman to approve the minutes of regular meeting, January 6, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Aaron Kuhn presented the Quarterly Financial Status through March 31, 2022. At the present time the revenue is at \$71,845.55 (Aaron is expecting a couple thousand more with the upcoming farmers market fees), Expenditures of 50,942.04 with end fund balance of \$78,214.19.

PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA

Fred Guenther commented on the question of having Hope Network clients returning to work downtown, however the board feels with the rise in the fee (fee is now \$9,000) and the request to work fewer hours there just isn't enough need for this. The city has been maintaining since the pandemic and hasn't received any complaints. There are also many citizens in need of community service hours.

BUSINESS

Downtown Handicap Parking – Heather shared with the board the need to address the two-hour parking order, the lack of handicap parking downtown and the repair of some of the parking lot lights. The two-hour parking is now harder to enforce with law enforcement unable to mark/chalk the tires. The board discussed E. Meters however feel these would not be welcomed by the city residents. The Department of Public Safety will try to monitor more closely with the help of their interns. The codes on handicap accessibility state you must have a ramp therefore parallel parking would not be attainable due to the curbs.

Twinkle Lights – Heather informed the board she is working on putting the cost of the twinkle lights into an RFQ, Heather also stated the need to look at the tree's as there is an over grown Maple that will need to be removed.

Farmer's Market - Josh announced the upcoming Vendor's Meeting on April 15, 2022. Josh believes this year there may be a few more vendor's and we should have a better year with the regulations of Covid-19 are subsiding.

Downtown Flowers – Heather shared with the board the flowers have been designed by Marlies Manning and are ordered.

Downtown Fountain- Heather inquired as to whether or not the fountain should be put back out this year as it has not been out since the Covid-19 pandemic. Everyone agreed that it should be out.

Other – Heather commented that the street sweeper will be coming on and starting at FSU starting in the next week or so pending weather.

Heather reported that the pole that was damaged last year in front of Horizon Bank is still on back order due to Covid back logs and the city may try to find a new vendor.

Josh Pyles presented the board with the possibility of more monetary support (\$5,000) to the DBA from the DDA. This would be for marketing among 3 radio stations.

Motion moved by Jeff Mossel, seconded by John Miedema to authorize the increase of funds to Downtown Business Association for marketing Project. The fund will be given in increments of \$2,000 for 2021 fiscal year and a \$3,000 for 2022 fiscal year. Motion passed.

Next meeting of the DDA will be July 7, 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Poulos
Recording Secretary