

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**October 6, 2022**  
**APPROVED MINUTES**

City Manager Mark Gifford opened the meeting at 8:07 a.m. who asked for a roll call.

PRESENT: Bob Patterson, Jeff Mossel, John Miedema, Clinton Zimmerman, Paula Robison and John Milan

ABSENT: Charlene Nowlin and Mark Sochocki,

ALSO, PRESENT: Heather Bowman, Director of Public Works, Carla Staffen, City Treasurer, Josh Pyles, DBA Director, Paula Priebe, Director of Community Development, Mark Gifford, City Manager, Tim Haist Big Rapids Public Schools Superintendent and Jessie Black, Community Economic Development Specialist.

**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.
  
2. List the projects that the DDA hopes to undertake in the next year:
  - Beautifying the downtown with new signage.
  - Parking lot lights repaired.
  - Donation to Patio's for Schuberg's, Fatty C's and Artworks
  
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 Gifford declared the meeting of the Downtown Development Authority adjourned at 8:06 a.m.

The regular meeting of the DDA was opened up at 8:07a.m.

## VOTING IN OF CHAR AND VICE CHAIR

Board discussed Mark Sochocki will remain the chair and Jeff Mossel will be Vice Chair until the completion of this term ending June 30, 2023.

*Motion moved by John Milan, seconded by Clinton Zimmerman to appoint Jeff Mossell as Vice Chair for the remaining term ending June 30, 2023. Motion passed.*

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Motion moved by Jeff Mossel, seconded by Clinton Zimmerman to approve the minutes of the Special meeting, April 7, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Carla Staffen presented the Quarterly Financial Status through June 30, 2022. At the present time the revenue is at \$77,185.39, Expenditures of \$70,906.88 with end fund balance of \$63,589.19.

## PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA

## BUSINESS

**Ed Mallett** – Ed shared with the board Tuba Bach is in its 17<sup>th</sup> season of bringing world-class music to Big Rapids, with all concerts being free of charge. There are over 20 concert events, as well as several educational community outreach programs. Ed requested DDA for financial support. After deliberation they voted on a \$1,000 Gold Sponsorship. Ed also shared with the board Tuba Bach just purchased a new concert Grand Piano at the price of \$60,000.

*Motion moved by John Milan, seconded by Jeff Mossell to approve the donation of \$1,000 for Tuba Bach Gold Sponsorship. Motion passed unanimously*

**Twinkle Lights** – Heather informed the board the new twinkle lights have been installed. The city is very happy with the new improved lighting. Zoro will be returning to do two remaining downtown trees. Zoro will also be returning to light up the large Spruce Tree at Osceola Park for Christmas Season. Mark Gifford would like to see an event planned for the “Grand Lighting” of the tree.

**Farmer’s Market** - Josh announced the Tuesday season has ended and the Friday season will end on October 28. There will be a Holiday Market on November 18, 2022. Josh mentioned they will be having an end of the season meeting to try to come up with new ideas to get more farmers at the Tuesday markets.

**Downtown Flowers** – Heather shared with the board the flowers have been taken down by the force of the mother nature. The flower received more compliments this year and many were sad to see them come down.

**Fall/Winter Activities** – Josh informed the board of the upcoming events Chili Cookoff, Fall Fest, Pumpkin Roll, Veterans Day Parade, Festival of Lights Parade, Home for the Holidays Shopping, Foam Frenzy, Artworks Gala and Our Brothers Keeper Fundraising Event. Heather mentioned the Veteran’s Flags that were done in the past were done by Artworks and they are no longer going to be doing this.

**Festival of the Arts (FOTA)** - Heather shared with the board the Invoice/Request for donation from FOTA. The request is for \$250. FOTA is currently working with an artist Joey Salamon to place art on the window that are boarded up on the Simonds Building on N. State St./Pine St. Joey does abstract work.

*Motion moved by Clinton Zimmerman, seconded by Paula Robison to approve the donation of \$250 for Festival of the Arts (FOTA). Motion passed unanimously.*

**Jessie Black – Downtown Survey Report** – Jessie shared the results of the survey that her team put together on One’s favorite aspects of downtown, current spending habits in downtown shops, and recommendations for improvement in the area. Jessie stated many feel events are not advertised enough. Jessie highly recommends that a full time DDA Director be hired to promote all events and do the marketing for the city. The link to review the report is located under the Community Development page on the city’s website.

**Other** – Jessie informed the board she will be hosting community feedback on Economic Development Strategy on October 25 & 26 2022 and would love to have the members be part of sharing their visions/vibes for the future of the city.

Next meeting of the DDA will be January 5, 2023 @8am.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Poulos  
Recording Secretary