

**Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes**

5:30 PM, January 10th, 2023

Hybrid Meeting Held In-Person at City Council Chambers, 3200 Biddle Avenue and
Via the Zoom Audio-only Virtual Platform

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Rob DeSana, Bryan Kozinski, Scott Jordan, Patt Slack, Leo Stevenson (virtually), Ron Thomas

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Rick DeSana, John Jarjosa, Anne Majlinger, Norm Walker

OTHERS PRESENT: Joe Gruber, DDA Director, several members of the Downtown Development Area Citizen's Advisory Council

PUBLIC COMMENT:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA:

Meeting Minutes and Public Information Report from December 13th, 2022 Meeting, and Meeting Agenda for January 10th, 2022 Meeting.

Motion by S. Jordan, Supported by Mayor DeSana, to approve the Meeting Minutes and Public Information Report from December 13th, 2022 Meeting, and Meeting Agenda for January 10th, 2022 Meeting. All in favor, Motion carried.

MONTHLY REVENUE/EXPENDITURE REPORT:

Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report: Periods Ending December 31st, 2022

Motion by P. Slack, Supported by S. Jordan, to accept and approve the Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Period Ending June. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.

INFORMATION TO RECEIVE & PLACE ON FILE: None

NEW APPOINTMENT TO THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY: Mayor DeSana has appointed, and the City Council has approved the appointment of Ron Thomas to Downtown Development Authority Board as a resident, business owner and property owner of the DDA District. The Mayor offered a warm welcome and brief introduction. Mr Thomas addressed the board as well. Chairwoman Slack offered kind words and gratitude for the former DDA Board member, Norm Walker for his service prior to his resignation.

ONGOING PROJECTS & BUSINESS:

Downtown Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and Infrastructure Project: The Bid Opening for Infrastructure Design Services was held on Monday, December 5th, 2022. The city received three proposals were being reviewed by the City Engineering Department and vary quite drastically in terms of cost, scope of work proposed and experience of bidders. The City and DDA committees will be reviewing design proposals and interviewing the firms who submitted bids to clarify cost, scope of work and ensure bids accurately reflect the intended project outcomes. Director Gruber hopes for a contract award and approval by the end of February.

Director Gruber provided an update that the City Council recently approved an intergovernmental agreement with Wayne County, that if approved by the County Commission, would provide an allocation \$3,950,000 worth of American Rescue Plan Act funding to the City of Wyandotte DDA for the Downtown Infrastructure Project, which should be approved by the end of February.

Public Outreach and Engagement Campaign: Director Gruber provided an overview of recent discussions which have evolved the desire for a community and business survey into a comprehensive update of the 2014 Strategic Plan which was the last major outreach and engagement process.

NEW PROJECTS & BUSINESS

- 1) **2023 Downtown Events:** Director Gruber provided a draft schedule outlining 14 events being hosted by WOW 360 events, not including the City's events like the Street Fair, Parades or Tree Lighting. He noted that some on the list were approved while some still needed City Council approval. The list captures the agreements from 2018-2022 and all subsequent changes, amendments and relocations, and consolidates them into a list that will be vetted by Wyandotte's Department Heads and approved by City Council at a later date.

To make matters more exciting, Director Gruber acknowledged that the new District 142 event center and concert hall would be opening in the new year, which will serve as an exclamation point on the event scene that WOW 360 has helped develop in Downtown Wyandotte.

- 2) **2023 Downtown Public Art Projects:** Director Gruber shared an update on three public art projects that have been in the works for several years.
 - a. **Detroit Institute of Arts: Partners in Public Art (PIPA)** was first awarded to Wyandotte in 2019, was derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and has been an ongoing project and was finally regaining momentum for mural design and installation which he hoped would be delivered in the summer of 2023. Mr. Stevenson inquired about the site, which Director Gruber noted was Dr. Marla

Price's Eye Clinic at the Northwest corner of Oak and 1st Street. The artist selected is a local Wyandotte resident and prominent muralist throughout Southeast Michigan, known as Fel 3000ft. The project is being funded entirely by DIA funds.

- b. **Painted Animal Sculptures** have become a regular feature of Downtown Wyandotte in partnership with WOW 360's Fire & Flannel Festival. The carvings are carved by chainsaw as a form of entertainment, hand-painted by local artist, Con Lustig, and mounted on custom-built concrete block pedestals. There are an existing 7 sculptures with another 12 in production that will be installed throughout Downtown in the early spring time.
- c. **The Wyandotte Industries Sculpture** is being sponsored by the Szpondowski Family, created by artist Keith Coleman of Weld Art Studios, and will be installed at the corner of 1st and Biddle Avenue by Nanna's Kitchen. Director Gruber described the sculpture as a series of stacked rings, welded to appear as if they're balancing, with a fountain and uplighting feature. He hopes for the project to be installed in the late spring time.

Director Gruber provided a budget amendment request to the Downtown Fixtures budget to account for these art projects that were originally budgeted in the 2021-2022 fiscal year and not the current 2022-2023. The budget amendments would help deliver the Wyandotte Industries Sculpture in the amount of \$21,000 and the Painted Animal Sculptures in the amount of \$10,464. Both projects contain funding for unforeseen changes and contingencies.

Motion By B. Kozinski, Supported by P. Slack, to approve the budget amendment request for the Downtown Fixtures Expense Account #499-200-850-544 in the amount of \$31,464 to be allocated from the DDA Fund Balance for several Downtown Art Projects. Roll call, All in Favor, Motion Carries.

- 3) **2023 Downtown Maintenance:** Director Gruber provided an overview of upcoming regular maintenance projects the DDA is responsible for, including landscaping the Eureka Road Viaduct, Fort Street Sign, Downtown Streetscape, and cleaning of dumpsters and social district footprint. The DDA contracts with P&P Landscaping for regular maintenance at the Viaduct and Fort Street Sign, and some additional Downtown projects. The DDA also contracts with Corporate Mall Services for power washing dumpsters, sidewalks and cleaning the Social District. Director Gruber noted that all three Downtown maintenance staff will be returning in Spring 2023 as well.

Mayor DeSana inquired about a recent letter Director Gruber sent to the railroad companies requesting additional support with landscaping and maintenance at the Eureka

Road Viaduct. He provided background into recent conversations about maintenance, repairs and improvements to the bridges which did not result in any promises of action. However, the railroad company promised to maintain the vegetation overgrowth inside and growing from their right-of-way in accordance with their standard policies and practices. This will help the overall appearance of blight at the Viaduct.

- 4) 2023 Downtown Promotions and Destination Marketing Campaign: Director Gruber noted that 2022 was a very positive year for positive press and publicity. The publicist Matt Lee has helped deliver the spotlight from multimedia outlets and news stations, to the point where organic and unsolicited media hits are being offered to Wyandotte. Director Gruber noted that 2023 would also be a very good year and work with Matt Lee would continue. The DDA looks forward to Restaurant and Retail week in April.

Director Gruber offered thanks to Wyandotte ConneX and Wyandotte Cable Studio for helping to broadcast the Downtown Wyandotte commercial produced by SEMCOG, which aired on many different outlets.

Mr. Stevenson inquired with Mayor DeSana if the TIFA has been engaged to support or partner with the DDA on the infrastructure project, connecting the parks and museum campus more with the Downtown. Director Gruber noted that the design phase of the project is a perfect opportunity to explore partnerships for installations, features or connecting routes that may take place outside the DDA and inside the TIFA.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: 5:30 PM, Tuesday, February 14th, 2023

Motion by B. Kozinski, supported by S. Jordan to adjourn the meeting. All in Favor. Motion Carries.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Gruber, DDA Director