

**Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes**

5:30 PM, May 9th, 2023

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Rob DeSana, Rick DeSana, Scott Jordan, Anne Majlinger, Patt Slack, Leo Stevenson, Ron Thomas

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Jarjosa, Bryan Kozinski

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA:

Minutes from April 11th, 2023 Meeting and Agenda for May 9th, 2023 Meeting.

Motion by S. Jordan, Supported by A. Majlinger, to approve the Minutes from April 11th 2023 Meeting and Agenda for May 9th, 2023 Meeting. All in favor, Motion carried.

MONTHLY REVENUE/EXPENDITURE REPORT:

Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report: Period Ending April 30th, 2023.

Motion by L. Stevenson, Supported by S. Jordan, to accept and approve the Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Period Ending April 30th, 2023. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.

INFORMATION TO RECEIVE & PLACE ON FILE: None

NEW HIRE: Kelly Johnson of Wyandotte was hired to serve as the Downtown Markets Manager as well as a Downtown Planning Manager. K. Johnson expressed gratitude for the Board and Director for the opportunity to work with the DDA.

ONGOING PROJECTS & BUSINESS

Downtown Infrastructure Project: Director Gruber provided an update regarding the planning and engineering progress for the project noting good progress with Municipal Services utility planning. L. Stevenson commented that he would like to encourage state of the art planning and installations, with the very best of the best infrastructure enhancements to ensure the project is designed and built with the most long-term future in mind, while trying to maintain a healthy balance of the DDA fund balance. S. Jordan questioned if the DDA could continue applying for more grants for this project. Director Gruber responded with several active leads from state and

county agencies regarding more grant funds, specific to the infrastructure project but also related to other supportive projects like parks, sidewalks, transportation and bikeways. L. Stevenson recommended that the DDA and TIFA join forces in planning efforts, and that a subcommittee be formed to help drive the infrastructure project and these other major planning efforts.

DIA PiPA Mural: Director Gruber reported that the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) Partners in Public Art (PiPA) mural project has been finally and officially approved by the City of Wyandotte Planning Commission. The mural rendering will be posted online, and it will be installed mid-June and will take approximately 3-4 days to paint. L. Stevenson offered thanks to Dr. Marla Price for providing use of her building to permanently house the building. Director Gruber provided a detailed overview and description of the approved mural design.

Wyandotte Industries Sculpture: Chairwoman Slack inquired about the status of the Wyandotte Industries Sculpture. Director Gruber provided a progress report regarding the site prep and infrastructure work that is actively underway, while noting that some outstanding design work still needed to be completed. Chairwoman Slack provided a detailed overview and description of the approved sculpture design. Director Gruber noted that the best-case scenario would be to have the sculpture installed by Street Fair or shortly after.

NEW PROJECTS & BUSINESS

DDA Grant Committee: Si's Bar: Director Gruber provided an overview of a request from owners Rick DeSana and Les Salliotte for the Downtown Grant Program to help support the construction of a new pizza shop and bar to be located in unit #7 at 166 Oak Street, the former Post Office redevelopment project, a 2,117 sq.ft. unit with an estimated start date of May 22nd, with a 2-month estimated construction time of July 30th, 2023. The total cost of eligible activities within the proposed project is \$281,986 which includes architectural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, HVAC and general contracting. A 20% requested match for the project from the DDA Grant amounts to \$56,397. Director Gruber mentioned that the DDA Grant Committee met and did not have a strong reception for this grant request. The W Suites & Lofts project also located at 166 Oak Street, the former Post Office redevelopment project, has already been awarded a Downtown Grant Award in the amount of \$180,000 which included the creation of six new commercial businesses. Secondly, the Grant Committee noted that the Downtown Infrastructure project would be very costly and require the DDA to contribute its funds toward that as well.

Les Salliotte addressed the board citing challenges regarding the installation of HVAC during construction of Si's Bar because of the multistory building above the unit which created tremendous new challenges. R. DeSana questioned the Board if all grants are being put on hold. L. Stevenson affirmed that the DDA Grant Committee is recommending that all grants be put on hold in order to ensure the DDA can deliver its infrastructure project unless a new spectacular project. Rick DeSana stated that he disagrees with the Committee's position that because the developers received a grant that he as the business owner should not be awarded a grant. L. Stevenson verified that it was the official opinion of the DDA Grant Committee that the grant be

held in abeyance until the infrastructure project nears completion. R. DeSana then shared an overview of past DDA Grant Awards and stated he wants to ensure the Board is being clear in its delivery of the grant program and the project it awards. He questioned what the term “abeyance” meant for this grant. Director Gruber responded that abeyance means it is not approved or denied but that it would be considered at a later date. Director Gruber then explained that all the grants referenced by Mr. DeSana were uniquely different than the grant in consideration by the board this evening, noting the difference between grant awards for developers versus business owners and tenants of developments that have already been awarded grants. The board discussed different redevelopment project criteria and differences of opinions regarding the grant program noting that the committee should revisit the application requirements and eligibility requirements.

Motion by L. Stevenson, Supported by P. Slack to hold the Downtown Grant Request for Si’s Bar in abeyance until further progress is made on the Downtown Infrastructure Project. Roll Call, All in Favor, R. DeSana Abstains, Motion Carries.

2023 Downtown Events Updates: L. Stevenson shared a proposal and recommendation to rename the alleyway adjacent to Frank’s Pizza as “Patt Slack Way” in honor and recognition of DDA Chairwoman and Downtown business owner Patt Slack for her decades of service to Wyandotte and the downtown business community. A ceremony will be held on Thursday, June 15th.

Motion by L. Stevenson, Supported by S. Jordan, to request City Council to approve of dedication and naming of the alleyway adjacent to Frank’s Pizza as “Patt Slack Way” in honor and recognition of DDA Chairwoman and Downtown business owner Patt Slack for her decades of service to Wyandotte and the downtown business community. Roll Call, All in Favor, P. Slack Abstains, Motion Carries.

Maggie Molnar is retiring from the DDA and businesses throughout town are making donations and contributions to a gift for Maggie. On Saturday, May 20th will be a celebration and luncheon will be held for Maggie Molnar’s retirement party.

Tuesday, June 13th will be a Luau-themed Ladies Night Out Celebration held by UPNDOWN and multiple businesses throughout Downtown.

Rick DeSana brought forth the W Suites & Lofts Grant Award for consideration of the Board. He Stated that because the developers have completed their project and that one single business remains to be completed, he recommends the DDA submit the final reimbursement payment for the developers. Director Gruber made the technical point that the Grant Guidelines state that the grant shall be reimbursed upon successful completion of the project and once the business is open for regular business. Mr. DeSana asked where this guideline is stated. In addition to being on the grant guidelines of the application, Director Gruber stated it was in the multiple award letters sent to the developers, which were sent after the DDA Board agreed to amend the

reimbursement schedule outside the normal scope of the program. Mr. DeSana asked what the point of this provision is, to which S. Jordan responded is to ensure that the job is completed and the business is able to open before the award gets paid. Director Gruber provided an overview of the past and current reimbursement schedules and agreements approved by the DDA Board for the W Suites & Lofts Project, which state how the developers will receive repayment for their eligible activities. The Board concurred that the grant stipulations and guidelines should be revisited as a whole.

Motion by Rick DeSana to approve the final reimbursement of the remaining DDA Grant Award for the W Suites & Lofts Project due to the completed development project. Motion Denied.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: 5:30 PM, Tuesday, June 13th, 2023

Motion by S. Jordan, supported by A. Majlinger to adjourn the meeting. All in Favor. Motion Carries.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Gruber, DDA Director