

**Downtown Development Authority  
Meeting Minutes**

5:30 PM, March 9, 2021

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE DDA

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Scott Jordan, Bryan Kozinski, Anne Majlinger, Patt Slack, Leo Stevenson (virtually), Rick DeSana (virtually), Norm Walker

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Mayor Pro Tempore Rob DeSana, John Jarjosa

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joe Gruber, DDA Director

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None present

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA:**

Minutes from January 2021 Meeting and Agenda for March 2021 Meeting

**Motion by S. Jordan, Supported by N. Walker, to approve the Minutes from the January 2021 DDA meeting and the agenda for the March 2021 DDA meeting. All in favor, motion carried.**

**INFORMATION TO RECEIVE & PLACE ON FILE:** None

**MONTHLY REVENUE/EXPENDITURE REPORT**

**Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports:** Periods Ending January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 and February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Motion by L. Stevenson, Supported by A. Majlinger, to accept and approve the Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports for January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 and February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.**

**ONGOING PROJECTS & BUSINESS:**

**Commissioner Disclosure Forms:** Director Gruber again instructed all DDA Board Members to submit their disclosure forms to the City Clerks Office as required by the City of Wyandotte.

**Michigan Legacy Credit Union: Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Award:** The Grant reimbursement is being withheld until Michigan Legacy until the final design and construction features are approved by the City of Wyandotte Design-Review Board. Director Gruber explained that the design and color of exterior lighting on the new facility that was not approved by the Design-Review Board and that these issues must first be resolved before the Grant award is reimbursed to Michigan Legacy Credit Union.

**W Suites & Lofts: Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Award:** The Grant deadline for W Suites & Lofts is requested to be extended from December 2020 to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 citing challenges with the construction timeline due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The initial Grant Award from June 11, 2019 offered a 12-month deadline for the first phase commercial project to be completed June 11, 2020. The first grant deadline extension was requested June 2020; awarded by the DDA July 14, 2020; deadline extended to December 2020.

**Motion by L. Stevenson, Supported by S. Jordan, to accept and approve the second grant deadline extension request from the W Suites & Lofts Project from December 2020 to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.**

**Former City Hall Redevelopment – Rise Above Ventures:** Director Gruber provided an overview of the recent City Council Approval from February 22, 2021 given to Rise Above Ventures having successfully achieved the Developer Responsibilities outlined in the Summary of Findings submitted before the deadline of December 31<sup>st</sup> as stipulated in the October 2020 Right of Entry and Access Agreement. City Council has reviewed and accepted Rise Above Ventures Summary of Findings and has granted authority to the DDA Director to continue pursuing a redevelopment of the former City Hall 3131-3149 Biddle Avenue as proposed by Rise Above Ventures. The next phase of this agreement initiates another 120-day period for Rise Above Ventures to develop and execute a development agreement. After these 120 days, and upon the submission of an acceptable and attractive development agreement to the City, Rise Above Ventures will initiate the final 30-day phase of drafting and executing a purchase agreement for the property. Director Gruber shared that the project will bring a major and positive impact to Downtown Wyandotte with over 30 units of residential and 10,000 sf of commercial retail space. The project had been well-received by the Mayor and City Council and the City’s Administration.

**2021 Eureka Road Viaduct Maintenance Contract Bids & Proposals:** Director Gruber provided an overview of the recent City Council Approval from February 22, 2021 given to Grosse Ile. Lawn and Sprinkler for the Eureka Road Viaduct and Maintenance Contract following the formal public bidding process that again resulted in Grosse Ile. Lawn and Sprinkler being identified as the lowest, best-value bidder. This annual maintenance proposal includes an annual renewal option for an additional five years (until 2026) with a gradual annual rate increase for landscaping and maintenance services.

**2021 Holiday Lighting Contract Proposal:** Director Gruber provided an overview of the recent City Council Approval from February 22, 2021 given to Grosse Ile. Lawn and Sprinkler for the Downtown Holiday Lighting Contract following the City Council’s formal waiver of the public bidding process. The request for Council Action cited a long history of repeated bidding of the Holiday Lighting Contract and the continual awarding of the Holiday Lighting Contract to Grosse Ile. Lawn and Sprinkler. They have constantly and consistently provided a tremendously valuable and unique service for the community. This annual maintenance proposal includes an

annual renewal option for an additional five years (until 2026) with a gradual annual rate increase for Downtown Holiday Lighting and Decoration services.

**Downtown Social District Operations and Updates:** Director Gruber offered an update regarding Downtown Social District Local Maintenance and Operations Plan including pertinent information that has been uploaded to the City's Website. Director Gruber outlined the contents and public information including a list of licensed & permitted establishments; a map of the district; and the entire Local Maintenance and Operations Plan in a very prominent and publicly accessible location. The first three active licensed & permitted establishments are Captain's Bar & Grill, Joe's Hamburgers and Grand Dad's Pub. Mr. Stevenson inquired about the approval timeline for Bars & Restaurants.

**Ralph Wilson Jr. Foundation: Design & Access Fund Application:** Director Gruber is awaiting results from the DDA's Ralph Wilson Jr. Foundation: Design & Access Fund Application in the amount of \$50,000 for Design-Build-Finance planning services for the Downtown Capital Improvements Plan.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Mr. Stevenson as a member of the DDA Grant Committee and Director Gruber provided an overview of three Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Applications.

**DDA Grant Committee: Dwellings Real Estate Grant Application:** Dwellings Real Estate is a regional real estate firm that has opened a new satellite office located at 2932 Biddle Avenue. Their original Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Application was submitted June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 during a time when the DDA placed a moratorium on reviewing and approving new grants due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the new Business Incubation Grants issued through the Wyandotte Business Appreciation Program. The DDA Grant Committee first reviewed the grant on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and made the official recommendation to deny the requested \$11,000 grant citing multiple non-conforming costs and improvements, including an electronic changing sign, as well as approximately \$24,000 of ineligible expenses.

**DDA Grant Committee: Franks Pizzeria Grant Application:** Franks Pizza is a longstanding business in Wyandotte having served delicious pizza and Italian food since 1952. New owners and proprietors have purchased the business and the building and will retain the original name, recipes, with some major updates. Their original Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Application was submitted September 25, 2020 during a time when the DDA placed a moratorium on reviewing and approving new grants due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the new Business Incubation Grants issued through the Wyandotte Business Appreciation Program. The DDA Grant Committee first reviewed the grant on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 made the official recommendation to approve a Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Award in the amount of \$25,000. Their total eligible project cost (which does not include the cost of the business, real property or other soft costs) \$203,500 and their original request was for \$40,000. The project includes a complete interior renovation, brand new kitchen facilities and equipment, revived

outdoor seating and façade improvements. Josh Cade, Partner at Franks Pizzeria was present at the meeting and offered some background information and history behind his new partnership, the new restaurant, construction details and operation details.

**DDA Grant Committee: District 142 Grant Application:** District 142 will an. New owners and proprietors have purchased the business and the building and will retain the original name, recipes, with a few major updates. Their original Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Application was submitted January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 during a time when the DDA placed a moratorium on reviewing and approving new grants due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the new Business Incubation Grants issued through the Wyandotte Business Appreciation Program. The DDA Grant Committee first reviewed the grant on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 made the official recommendation to approve a Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Award in the amount of \$75,000. Josh Cade, Partner at District 142 was present at the meeting and offered some background information regarding the intended use and programs at a new event center and music venue in Downtown Wyandotte, citing the WOW 360 event company as a major contributor. He cited national data supporting major economic impact from event centers and musical concert venues.

**Motion by L. Stevenson, Supported by N. Walker, to concur with the recommendation of the DDA Grant Committee to (1) to deny the Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Application in the amount of \$11,000 for Dwellings Real Estate; (2) to the accept and approve the Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Application in the amount of \$25,000 for Franks Pizzeria; and (3) to accept and approve the Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Application in the amount of \$75,000 for District 142. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.**

**Downtown Dollars: Downtown Gallery and Gift Squad – #LuckOnTheAve.:** The Gallery and Gift Squad is a collection of Downtown Wyandotte retail businesses, shops and salons that are joining forces to host a retail shopping event and business generator. #LuckOnTheAve. will be a Saint Patrick’s Day-themed scavenger hunt taking place inside several Downtown Wyandotte retailers. Incentives and giveaways will be gifted to participating shoppers. The Downtown Promotions Committee reviewed the request and made the official recommendation to approve the request.

**Motion by P. Slack, Supported by B. Kozinski, to concur with the recommendation of the DDA Promotions Committee to accept and approve request of the Gallery & Gift Squad in the amount of \$300 Downtown Dollars to be distributed during the March 13th #LuckOnTheAve. retail shopping event. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.**

**Downtown Dollars: Restaurant and Retail Week 2021:** Director Gruber offered a brief overview of the upcoming Restaurant and Retail Week scheduled for April 17-24, 2021. The Special Events Office will be managing the promotion, marketing, event planning and execution

of Restaurant and Retail Week. The DDA will be contributing Downtown Dollars to participants, diners and shoppers throughout the duration of the week. The DDA will also be contributing to marketing and promotions where needed.

**Downtown Development Authority Plan Amendments 2021:** Mr. Stevenson and Director Gruber offered a brief update on the Downtown Development Authority Capital Improvements Plan and provided an overview of the scope of construction, estimated cost of improvements, potential financing measures and the overall need to extend the life of the DDA beyond its current sunset of 2034 until approximately 2056 (to be determined). Director Gruber echoed support from the City Administration to pursue the extension of both the DDA and TIFA lifecycles. The DDA plan amendments will include both a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan that outlines projected captured tax revenue over the life of the DDA as well as the Development Plan that will outline a detailed list of desired and needed Capital Improvements within the DDA District. Mr. Stevenson and Director Gruber will be engaging with the

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:** 5:30 PM, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Regular Meeting

**ADJOURNMENT:** 6:15 PM

**Motion by P. Slack, supported by S. Jordan to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Gruber, DDA Director