

**Downtown Development Authority  
Meeting Minutes**

5:30 PM, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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, Rick DeSana, John Jarjosa, Scott Jordan, Patt Slack

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Bryan Kozinski, Anne Majlinger, Leo Stevenson, Norm Walker

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA:**

Minutes from March 2022 Meeting and Agenda for May 2022 Meeting

**Motion by S. Jordam, Supported by P. Slack, to approve the Minutes from the March 2022 DDA meeting and the agenda for the May 2022 DDA meeting. All in favor, Motion carried.**

**MONTHLY REVENUE/EXPENDITURE REPORT:**

**Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports:**

Periods Ending March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 and April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Mr. Jordan questioned the \$5,040.00 worth of miscellaneous revenue recently recorded in these periods. Director Gruber informed him that \$40.00 came from the sale and distribution of Downtown Dollars, and the remaining \$5,000 came from Michigan Legacy Credit Union as a sponsorship for the Markets of Downtown Wyandotte.

**Motion by S. Jordan, Supported by P. Slack, to accept and approve the Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Periods Ending March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 and April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.**

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

**ONGOING PROJECTS & BUSINESS**

- 1. Markets of Downtown Wyandotte:** Director Gruber provided an update regarding the new Markets of Downtown Wyandotte which are a new indoor retail market concept in the former Chase Bank space. This gives the DDA an opportunity to promote and support small businesses, entrepreneurs, makers and creators of all kinds, giving them access to

the Downtown Wyandotte they may not otherwise get. With a limited number of vendors registering for the Markets, the Markets were located inside, which also gives the city the ability to provide a year-round climate-controlled marketplace and as the season progresses and weather improves, and most importantly, as more vendors sign-up to join our Market, the DDA will gradually buildout our traditional outdoor markets to expand and enhance the indoor Markets.

**2. Brownfield Plan No. 23: The Federal Building and the Downtown East Alleyway**

**Project:** Director Gruber reported that the City Council recently approved two final pieces of documentation for Brownfield Plan No. 23. The Developer Reimbursement Agreement outlines the way in which the developer, city and DDA will be reimbursed by the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for the eligible and approved brownfield activities in the Plan. The Local Brownfield Revolving Fund (LBRF) Loan Agreement outlined a \$1,242,000 loan for the developers, approved by the BRA, using funds originally granted to the City of Wyandotte by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the Labadie Park Project which has now been revolved back into the community to support the environmental and approved brownfield activities of this major redevelopment project. With these two pieces of documentation, Brownfield Plan No. 23 for the Federal Building Redevelopment and the Downtown East Alleyway Project becomes locally, administratively approved. From here, the Plan will go onto the Michigan Strategic Fund Board for final approvals of the State incentives. This will then complete a major portion of the economic development incentives for the project. Director Gruber provided a reminder that the project involves two stories of new construction.

Mayor DeSana asked how long it would take to get the final approvals, to which Director Gruber replied approximately 60-90 days, or end of July, or mid-July.

**3. Downtown Infrastructure Project Update:** Director Gruber elaborated on the DDA's portion of the Brownfield Plan No. 23, which is the East Alleyway Project, which is a major portion of the broader Downtown Infrastructure Project. The DDA is proposing to package three blocks worth of infrastructure improvements that are considered eligible activities into the Brownfield Plan which provides additional financing and the allowance of the Wyandotte DDA's capture of State-levied taxes that are otherwise exempt from capture, specifically to support this redevelopment, which without that project, the DDA would not have the opportunity.

Director Gruber reviewed the project overview provided by the consultants at Wade Trim, highlighting that the East Alleyway Project equates to approximately \$3,000,000 of improvements. He provided several updates regarding potential funding sources to

support this project, including Wayne County Economic Development Department's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) Grant Program. Director Gruber again discussed other potential revenue sources including the DDA 2-mil levy which is not currently levied, a Special Assessment District, and perhaps the largest source of funding, a DDA Revenue Bond which would be used to provide upfront capital to deliver the project.

## **NEW PROJECTS & BUSINESS**

- 1. DDA Finance Committee: 2022-2023 Budget:** Director Gruber noted that the DDA Design and Promotions Committees would be meeting prior to the DDA Finance Committee. Committees should meet to discuss programs and projects they would like to conduct in the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Director Gruber also noted that in addition to short-term planning, the DDA Finance Committee would be giving a presentation at the upcoming June meeting to discuss long-term financial planning, specifically as it pertains to the DDA Capital Improvements Plan and Downtown Infrastructure Project.

Director Gruber commented that two additional professional consultants and advisors who work with the City of Wyandotte would be providing technical assistance with the financing portion of the project, including Bobby Bendzinski, Municipal Financial Advisor and Pat McGow, Attorney and Bond Counsel who also supported the DDA and TIFA with the recent plan amendment processes. Together with Wade Trim and the Brownfield Consultants, the DDA and their supporting agents will package all the potential revenue sources and schedules for financing and delivering the improvements.

- 2. Downtown Maintenance Staff and Volunteers:** Director Gruber noted that the DDA has hired two additional Downtown Maintenance Staff people to help Maggie Molnar: Alice Ugljesa, Beautification Commissioner who has supported the DDA and the City for many years as a dedicated volunteer; and Julie Kromrei, an avid gardener and dedicated professional. Director Gruber extended a tremendous thank you to the Jo Brighton Skills Center and the Worker Transition Program who helped provide maintenance and landscape support through their program. Director Gruber requested that the community and members of the Citizen's Advisory Council to notify the DDA if they spot areas around town that need more maintenance.

Director Gruber informed the Board that Ken Milewski of Miles Power Washing has again volunteered to power wash the Downtown District sidewalks. He extended a strong thank you to Miles Power Washing. Director Gruber informed the Board that Corporate Mall Services would also be providing power washing services to the two dumpster enclosures Downtown as well as trash removal services for the Social District trash cans.

**Miscellaneous:** Chairwoman Slack inquired about the status of the Wyandotte Industries Sculpture Project. Director Gruber provided a detailed update regarding Keith Coleman, Weld Art Studios constructing a stall sculpture comprised of five steel rings welded together, with an appearance of being stacked and balanced, and will be installed at the corner of Elm Street and Biddle Avenue in front of Nanna's Kitchen. Director Gruber continued to explain that the steel materials require a dry climate to prevent rusting during the sculpting process and that the materials must be polished and coated almost immediately upon their construction. The artist has been working in challenging conditions with wet weather which has made it difficult to complete. Director Gruber noted that City and DDA has been working with architect Tom Roberts and professional engineers to ensure the sculpture is structurally sound and safe. Director Gruber also noted that City and DDA has been working with the Szpondowski family, the donors of the funds for the project, and incorporating their ideas and recommendations into the design process, specifically the water/well/fountain component of the sculpture. Late June is the target date for installation and operation of the new sculpture and fountain.

Director Gruber concluded by referencing his March business report that highlighted 21 new and expanding businesses within Downtown Wyandotte during the 2021 calendar year, citing a tremendous amount of local business activity.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:** 6:07 PM, June 14th, 2022

This meeting will serve as (a) the first of two required public information meetings, (b) the first of two required Downtown Development Area Citizen Advisory Council (DACAC) Meetings, (c) and a public/stakeholder engagement session for the Downtown Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and Infrastructure Project.

**Motion by J. Jarjosa, supported by R. DeSana, to adjourn the meeting. All in Favor.**  
**Motion Carries.**

**ADJOURNMENT:** 6:23 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Gruber, DDA Director