

**Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes**

5:30 PM, November 1st, 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, Bryan Kozinski, Anne Majlinger, Scott Jordan, Patt Slack

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Rick DeSana, John Jarjosa, Leo Stevenson, Norm Walker

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: Christ Doulos, Owner, Vault Restaurant. Mr. Doulos approached the Board with a follow-up inquiry from his last presentation at the previous DDA Board meeting in September regarding events, road closures and a Downtown survey.

Chairwoman Slack answered stating that the promotions committee had met and that they were still developing a format to the survey, which because it was a large survey, they wanted to include more content and questions beyond just events, but about other promotions and Downtown activities, and that by the next DDA meeting, the Board would have a draft product to review that is more useful

Mr. Doulos reiterated that it is not the festivals alone that concern him, rather the street closures and that he hoped the survey would be done before the 2023 plans are finalized. Chairwoman Slack noted that the DDA new fiscal year began in October 2022 and that while that budget is set and things are already planned, anything can change, and that there is no overnight solution. She stated that DDA will likely address road closures on a month-to-month basis. She highlighted a few solutions already implemented to date including relocating the music stage and utilizing parking lots. She again stated that the solution is not to cancel events, but to strategize to make it easier for businesses to operate.

Mr. Doulos asked that Director Gruber provide him an update regarding upcoming street closures, specifically plans for the New Years Eve event as it will greatly impact his business. Director Gruber responded that he was not aware of any final decisions or confirmed plans of New Year's Eve. Mr. Doulos stated that if the road was closed, he would close on New Years Eve, because there was no point to be open. Director Gruber reiterated that the event company is exploring different options for the event due to logistical challenges with contractors and vendors, and he told Mr. Doulos that at this stage he would not anticipate that he should close his restaurant, as Director Gruber recalled that Mr. Doulos had previously stated that New Year's Eve was his single most successful day in his restaurant's brief history. Mr. Doulos ended by stating that the community should reconsider hosting the Zombie Pub Crawl on Sweetest Day.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES & AGENDA:

Revised Meeting Minutes from June 2022, Meeting Minutes from September 2022, and Meeting Agenda for November 2022 Meeting.

Motion by S. Jordan, Supported by Mayor DeSana, to approve the Revised Meeting Minutes from June 2022, Meeting Minutes from September 2022, and Meeting Agenda for November 2022 Meeting. All in favor, Motion carried.

MONTHLY REVENUE/EXPENDITURE REPORT:

Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report: Periods Ending September 30th, 2022 and October 31st, 2022

Motion by A. Majlinger, Supported by Mayor DeSana, to accept and approve the Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Reports for the Periods Ending September 30th, 2022 and October 31st, 2022. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.

INFORMATION TO RECEIVE & PLACE ON FILE: None

ONGOING PROJECTS & BUSINESS:

Downtown Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and Infrastructure Project: Since the DDA last met, the City Council approved the recommended bid from the low bidder, Wade Trim for infrastructure survey services. They will begin work immediately and should be completed within 45 days as stated in the contract. Following the Survey phase, the DDA will proceed with the Design phase. Director Gruber noted that the Design RFP for the Downtown Infrastructure project was published on the MITN on November 1st, and that bids would be opened on Monday, December 5th, 2022. It is plausible that a contract for design services would be awarded before the end of the year. Once design is completed, the DDA will go out to bid for construction services, and once a construction contractor has been selected, the DDA will proceed with financing measures and the DDA Revenue Bond process. He noted that while it is an ambitious timeline, it is not totally out of reach to be under construction at the end of Summer 2023.

Eureka Road Viaduct – Phase 2 Planting: Director Gruber provided an update that the DDA's \$25,000 America in Bloom Grant award was successfully finalized and helped deliver the second phase of planting which installed 30 new trees and several hundreds of feet of ground covers and flowering shrubs.

NEW PROJECTS & BUSINESS

- 1) DDA Grant Committee: Joseph R. Peterson: Downtown Grant Extension Request: District 142:** Director Gruber read a letter from the developers of the District 142

requesting an extension on the deadline of their \$75,000 grant award to the end of February 2023. The extension request is due to many supply chain issues, labor shortages, and cost increases, jumping from \$600,000 to a revised budget of \$1,400,000. Construction and redevelopment are well underway. Director Gruber highlighted that the proposed project is to build a new private event center and concert venue that will be a major benefit to Downtown.

Motion by P. Slack, Supported by B. Kozinski to accept and approve the Joseph R. Peterson Downtown Grant Award Extension Request with a new revised deadline of March 1st, 2023 with all other terms and conditions remaining the same. Roll Call. All in Favor. Motion carried.

- 2) **DDA Promotions: Publicity highlights and events:** Director Gruber shared an update that the DDA has been working with a professional publicist Matty Lee, to generate positive publicity and press surrounding various Downtown events and seasonal happenings. This included visits with Fox 2 news in-studio, WXYZ Channel 7 remote and WJR Radio interviews to promote the Markets of Downtown Wyandotte, Halloween Events, and the Zombie Pub Crawl. Other events that happened in the past month include the Witches of Wyandotte retail event, the Detroit River Cocktail Showdown and the 80's vs. 90's Halloween Party and Pub Crawl. Director Gruber noted that Matty Lee would continue working with the DDA to help promote Small Business Saturday in November.

Chairwoman Slack noted that the press was wonderful and that the Promotions Committee should again meet to discuss and finalize the Downtown Survey. Director Gruber concurred, and stated that the upcoming DDA meeting in December would be a good opportunity to review, discuss and refine the Downtown Survey as it will coincide with the Development Area Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting and the Public Information meeting, and that the survey should remain open for 30-45 days. Director Gruber noted the last comprehensive outreach and engagement survey was collected in 2014 during a broader Downtown Strategic Planning Process, and that this is a good time to again conduct a survey.

Mayor DeSana asked if the survey will be for all residents in Wyandotte or primarily the business owners downtown. Director Gruber shared his professional opinion that the survey should include many different topics including events, housing, public art and that the DDA wants to capture broad audience. A. Majlinger added that the survey should have a specific event focus. Director Gruber clarified that the survey will have a strong focus on events Downtown, while also having other questions and information pertaining to other topics of interest. The survey will be designed in a way that the person taking the survey will be directed to questions most specific to them as a person, as some questions

do not pertain to all parties. Director Gruber stressed that the survey must be broad and all inclusive so that the data collected is not too greatly skewed in one direction and so that the information collected can be useful to the DDA.

Chairwoman Slack offered a remembrance and condolences for the passing of Gib and Arlene Rose, noting that they were dedicated community stakeholders, business owners and contributors to the downtown for many years.

Mayor DeSana ended the meeting by offering Jim Lange, member of the Downtown Citizen Advisory Committee, a public recognition for this hard work and dedication to Bishop Park, landscaping and beautification. Mr. Lange approached the Board to provide an update of his efforts.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: 5:30 PM, Tuesday December 13th, 2022 - *this meeting will serve as a Development Area Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting and the second annual public information meeting.*

Motion by B. Kozinski, supported by A. Majlinger to adjourn the meeting. All in Favor. Motion Carries.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:01 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Gruber, DDA Director