

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2018 – 8:00 A.M.  
Meeting Held at Avery Square – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Abby Baker  
Raymond Bell  
Debbie Jones  
Michelle LaJoie  
Scott Parker  
Les Townsend  
Oliver Turner  
Allison Youngs  
Justin Knepper

**Also Present:** Nick Nolan, Soo News  
Josh Billington, SBDC  
Mary Jo DuVall, Soo Events  
Jeff Holt, EDC Director

**Absent:** Marla Bunker and Ben Duff.

Director Knepper indicated that Ben Duff has resigned from the DDA Board due to family commitments.

***Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported Oliver Turner, to excuse the absent DDA Board members. The motion carried unanimously.***

**1. CALL TO ORDER.**

**2. ROLL CALL.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

- December 13, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes.
- December 12, 2017 Design Committee Minutes.

***Moved by Scott Parker, supported by Michelle LaJoie, to approve the December 13, 2017 Regular DDA Meeting Minutes, and the December 12, 2017 Design Committee Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.***

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

***Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported by Oliver Turner, to approve the Agenda of the January 10, 2018 DDA Board meeting, with the addition of Acceptance of Ben Duff's Resignation under Agenda Item 10 – New Business. The motion passed unanimously.***

**5. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST.**

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this time.

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

**Detail:** *Committee Chairs will present the priority lists for 2018 for review and acceptance by the DDA Board.*

- A. **Promotion Committee.** Allison Youngs, Chair of the Michigan Main Street Promotion Committee, went over the Promotion Committee Report that included marketing and promotion projects and a list of events prioritized by date of occurrence. The Promotion Committee did not add any new priority projects in an effort to focus on enhancing the DDA's annual events as they occur. Eleven DDA events were discussed, with each event to be overseen by a member of the Promotion Committee.

***Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by Michelle LaJoie, to accept the list of events, as prioritized by date of occurrence, submitted by the Michigan Main Street Promotion Committee. The motion passed unanimously.***

- B. **Retail Committee.** The Retail Committee will be meeting in February to establish work plans and appoint a Chair.
- C. **Design Committee.** Debbie Jones, Chair of the Michigan Main Street Design Committee, went over the December 19, 2017 Design Committee meeting minutes that included ten 2018 Design Committee Priority Projects. The Design Committee met again on January 9, 2018 on the second floor of Island Books & Crafts.

The first priority project listed is Downtown Cleanliness and Enhanced Maintenance. The Design Committee is hoping to have enough volunteers to do routine cleanings downtown every week. The plan is to find volunteers through United Way-People Power and New Hope House, who would work directly with the DDA for downtown maintenance.

Debbie also indicated that Michigan Main Street, with the City's Community Development Department, is hosting a Building Workshop Basics Program tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:30 p.m. (location to be announced). This is a great opportunity for contractors and business owners to ask questions and receive information prior to the 2018 building season.

Other priority projects include:

- Downtown Summer Flower & Plants Project
- Downtown Garden Maintenance & Enhancement Program
- Downtown Public Art Program – focus on metal sculptures
- Quality Store Front Improvements
- Vacant Store Front Improvements

- DDA Façade & Sign Grant Program
- Streetscape Improvements – banner system interchanged for holidays
- City Leaders/Design Committee Downtown Walk-thru
- Fight Blight Project – work in conjunction with City’s Community Improvement Committee

All of the ten priority projects are led by a Design Committee member, who will oversee the project and will be providing a draft work plan for each project.

***Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by Allison Youngs, to accept the list of priority projects submitted by the Michigan Main Street Design Committee. The motion passed unanimously.***

D. **Economic Vitality Committee.** Josh Billington, Chair of the Economic Vitality Committee, indicated that this Committee has met twice. He went over the Committee’s four 2018 priorities with objectives:

- Downtown Properties. Objective: Increase tax base, connect retail corridors, and offer new housing and commercial space
- Property Improvement / Grant Programs. Objective: Offer incentives to businesses from other businesses downtown to improve properties
- Business Recruitment. Objective: Recruit business to the downtown
- Economic Gardening. Objective: Identify needs for relocation, expansion, staffing, or other business goals, facilitate same

Josh indicated that some of the above priorities will overlap with the Retail Committee and the Design Committee.

***Moved by Scott Parker, supported by Debbie Jones to accept the list of priority projects submitted by the Michigan Main Street Economic Vitality Committee. The motion passed unanimously.***

E. **Organization Committee.** The Organization Committee has yet to meet, but is planning to meet in February.

## 7. FINANCE REPORT.

**Detail:** *Financial statements for DDA funds are included in the agenda packet for review.*

Director Knepper went over the DDA Fund Detail Revenue with Comparison to Budget for the 6 Months Ending December 31, 2017.

- PSD Special Assessment Revenues are coming in as expected.
- Sidewalk Plowing-Business Contributions – sidewalk plowing bills to business owners have just been mailed out.
- Event Income - \$24,410 has come in, with \$26,000 budgeted.

- Music in the Park Donations year-to-date actual is \$6,098, with \$15,000 budgeted.
- DDA Main Street Donations year-to-date actual is \$3,133, with \$5,500 budgeted.

Director Knepper went over the DDA Fund Detail Expenditures with Comparison to Budget for the 6 Months Ending December 31, 2017.

- Supplies year-to-date actual is over budget at \$2,716, with \$2,500 budgeted.
- Contracted Services year-to-date actual is high at \$13,093, with \$13,300 budgeted.
- Travel year-to-date actual is at \$1,045, with \$7,000 budgeted. Keeping in mind the expense of several people attending the Michigan Main Street National Training in Kansas City, Missouri on March 26-28, 2018.
- Printing and Advertising year-to-date actual is over-budget at \$5,729, with \$4,200 budgeted. The Board discussed the DDA doing their own design and printing in-house and agreed to look into printing savings.
- Events year-to-date actual is at \$19,277, with \$19,500 budgeted.
- Building Rent year-to-date actual is over-budget at \$2,528, with \$2,500 budgeted.

***Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported by Oliver Turner, to accept the Financial Statements for DDA funds. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **8. MAIN STREET REPORTS.**

**Detail:** *Michigan Main Street requires monthly reports to be submitted each month. Reports for October, November and December are included in the agenda packet.*

- October Report: 2 buildings sold in Main Street Area, 11 full-time jobs lost, and approximately 1,500 people participated in the Halloween Spectacular (\$0 event revenue), and 6 volunteer hours put in by the Main Street Board.
- November Report: 2 buildings sold in Main Street area, 1 business closed (Jump UP), 1 full-time job lost, 192 people pre-registered for Restaurant Week with \$1,550 net event revenue, approximately 1,000 attending the Parade of Lights, with \$2,500 net event revenue, approximately 300 people participated in Small Business Saturday (\$0 event revenue), and 20 volunteer hours put in by the Main Street Board.
- December Report: 1 façade and exterior renovation (North of Chicago Pizza) in the Main Street area, 1 public improvement (Corps of Engineers Christmas lights) in Main Street area, approximately 450 people participated in Downtown Open House, 180 people participated in Bright Lights Shopping Night, with \$0 event revenue for both, and 62 volunteer hours put in by the Main Street Board.

***Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Michelle LaJoie to accept the Michigan Main Street reports for October, November and December. The motion passed unanimously.***

**9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

**10. NEW BUSINESS.**

**A. New Item – Resignation of Ben Duff.**

***Moved by Scott Parker, supported by Oliver Turner, to accept Ben Duff's resignation and send a letter to thank him for his service. The motion passed unanimously.***

At the February DDA Board meeting, Director Knepper will discuss Ben Duff's replacement and make a recommendation to the City Commission.

**B. Main Street National Training – Kansas City, MO.**

**Detail:** *Discuss what board members will attend the Main Street conference in Kansas City, MO during March 26-28, 2018.*

*Event details can be found at:*

<https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/mainstreetnow/now2018>  
<https://eventmobi.com/mainstreetnow18/>.

Michigan Main Street will pay for one person's registration; the DDA will provide travel and lodging. Early registration for the training ends on January 12<sup>th</sup> at a cost of \$400. Allison Youngs, Abby Baker, and Josh Billington have committed to attending the training. Director Knepper is hoping that 2 or 3 more DDA Board members will attend. He will be working on logistics; driving (1 ½ days) versus flying, accommodations, etc. Anyone who would like to attend can e-mail Justin.

**C. Main Street Building Basics Training.**

**Detail:** *The Design Committee has established the date of February 20, 2018 to host the Main Street Building Basics workshop, which opens the door for complimentary architectural design services to be offered to properties Downtown.*

**Recommendation:** *Approve the Building Basics workshop date and authorize a mailing to be sent to all property owners Downtown, inviting them to the workshop, as well as a budget for food, drinks, etc.*

It was suggested by the DDA Board that this event could take place in the lobby of City Hall. Director Knepper will look into this as an option.

***Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Scott Parker, to approve the Building Basics workshop date and authorize a mailing to be sent to all property owners, downtown, inviting them to the workshop, as well as budget for food, drinks, etc. The motion passed unanimously.***

**D. Meeting Locations.**

***Detail:*** Discuss new meeting locations for the DDA Board in 2018; Danna Sanderson has invited the Board to host their February meeting in her recently renovated building at 559 Ashmun Street.

**E. Director's Evaluation.**

***Recommendation:*** Schedule evaluation for Director Knepper's 2017 performance review.

***Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported by Debbie Jones, to appoint DDA Board members Allison Youngs, Raymond Bell, Scott Parker and Oliver Turner to serve on the DDA Director Evaluation Committee. The motion passed unanimously.***

The City Manager's office will be sending out DDA Director Evaluation forms via e-mail. When all forms are received, an Evaluation Committee meeting will be scheduled.

**F. Board Members Terms Expires.**

***Board members Scott Parker and Michelle LaJoie's terms have expired. Both board members are eligible to serve a second term.***

***Recommendation:*** Request the City Commission reappoint Scott Parker and Michelle LaJoie to a second term on the Downtown Development Authority Board.

***Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by Allison Youngs, to request that the City Commission reappoint Scott Parker and Michelle LaJoie to a second term on the Downtown Development Authority Board. The motion passed unanimously.***

Oliver Turner thanked Scott Parker and Michelle LaJoie for their continued service on the DDA Board.

**11. DIRECTOR'S STATUS REPORT.**

**A. Power Canal Trail Patronicity Fundraiser.**

**Detail:** *The Power Canal fundraiser has completed with donations totaling more than \$65,000.*

The DDA Board discussed the next Patronicity fundraiser. Possibilities included the Soo Theatre - digital equipment to run movies, or downtown splash pad. Director Knepper will provide a list of projects for the next 5 years, with a maximum of \$50,000 donated for each project. All projects have to be approved by Patronicity. A list of projects will be distributed to the DDA Board at the next board meeting.

## **B. Events and Festivals.**

- *Wish List Week – December 11-15, 2017.* The DDA will continue to work to promote this event in 2018.
- *Bright Lights Shopping Night – December 15, 2017 (evening hours).* There was not a good turnout for this event, although Portage Street was busy with diners, etc. The DDA will continue to work to promote this event in 2018.
- *New Year's Eve Ball Drop – December 31, 2017.* This was a huge success. Approximately 500 people were downtown to watch the ball drop, despite the popular New Year's Eve celebration at Kewadin Casino.

## **12. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

## **13. BOARD COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

- The Board discussed the status of the Side Street Salon Mural.
- Director Knepper is working on the first draft of a RFP for the parking garage arm/gate. Walker Parking will be helping with the RFP by providing technical specifications. The first draft will be reviewed by the City Clerk and the City Attorney.
- Allison Youngs indicated that the volunteer portal is open on the United Way website. Volunteers will be needed for outhouse races, rail jam, etc.
- Abby Baker reported on plans for the 2018 Beer Fest. She is hoping to book the band *Crane Wives* for a 3-hour set (at \$1,500, plus \$500 for local cover band) during the Beer Fest and is looking for sponsorships. The *Crane Wives* are an American/Folk band founded in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and they are quickly filling up their 2018 schedule. Abby would like to book them and get a contract as soon as possible. The DDA will be working on budget amendments later this month to include this sponsorship.

***Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Scott Parker, to approve sponsorship of the Crane Wives and a local cover band at a cost to be determined. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **14. ADJOURN.**

***Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by Scott Parker, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

RAYMOND BELL, DDA Chair

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