

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2017 – 8:00 A.M.  
Meeting Held at Avery Square – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Ray Bauer  
Raymond Bell  
Greg Collins  
Michelle LaJoie  
Les Townsend  
Oliver Turner  
Justin Knepper

**Also Present:** Nick Nolan, Soo News  
Tony Haller, Chamber

**Absent:** Marla Bunker  
Scott Parker

**1. CALL TO ORDER.**

**2. ROLL CALL.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

- January 11, 2017 regular meeting minutes.

*Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by Les Townsend, to approve the January 11, 2017 regular meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.*

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

*Moved by Michelle LaJoie, supported by Les Townsend, to approve the agenda for the February 8, 2017, DDA Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously.*

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

None were indicated.

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

**A. Michigan Mainstreet Program Select Level Application.**

**Background:** *The official presentation in Lansing is scheduled for 1:30pm on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The Main Street steering committee is organizing attendees and a presentation. The trip is planned to leave early in the morning and return late the same day.*

Approximately 30 local people will be attending the Michigan Mainstreet presentation in Lansing on February 14<sup>th</sup>. A panel of 17 state employees and state legislators will judge the City's Michigan Mainstreet Program Select Level Application, which includes the presentation. Two other Michigan communities, Charlotte and LaPeer, will be presenting, as well.

Attendees from the Soo include 10-12 high school students, members of the Steering Committee and the DDA Board. Two City vehicles and a LSSU shuttle bus will depart at 6:30 a.m. from the Moloney's Alley parking lot and transport the attendees to Lansing; arrival back in town will be approximately 10:00 p.m. A practice run of the presentation is scheduled for Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. in the City Commission Chambers.

**B. Principal Shopping District Renewal.**

**Background:** *The Principal Shopping District renewal process has begun. The public hearing of necessity is scheduled on February 20th.*

The Principal Shopping District's special assessment generates approximately \$28,000-\$30,000 for the DDA. Director Knepper asked DDA Board members to attend the Public Hearing of Necessity at the February 20<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting, to show support of the renewal of the Principal Shopping District.

**C. DDA Executive Director Evaluation.**

**Background:** *Director Knepper met with City Manager Turner to discuss various budgetary issues regarding compensation changes.*

The DDA Director Evaluation Committee, Oliver turner, Les Townsend, Greg Collins, and Scott Parker, met to discuss compensation for the DDA Director. The last raise in salary for the DDA Director was in December 2015 with an annual raise of \$2,660, bringing Justin's salary to \$50,500. In comparison with other DDA Director salaries Justin is still below the average and compared with other internal City Department Heads, he is paid the lowest salary. In light of Justin's accomplishments in the development of the DDA District since hired in 2011, and the fact that the DDA Director duties have expanded and the position has been transformed, the DDA Board agreed to move forward with further examining the DDA budget to effectuate a fair salary increase for the DDA Director in the next few years and bring Justin up to par with other area DDA Directors.

***Moved by Greg Collins, supported by Raymond Bell, to move forward with further examining the DDA budget to effectuate a fair salary increase for the DDA Director in the next few years and bring Justin up to par with other area DDA Directors. The motion passed unanimously.***

**D. Downtown Signage for the Snowmobile Trails.**

**Background:** *Snowmobile signage has been temporarily installed by DDA staff at the I-500 track, on West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and on M-129.*

The 2' x 4' snowmobile signs are similar to the downtown wayfinding signs. Once the snow melts, frames will be made for the signs and they will be placed in the ground in a more permanent nature.

**E. Parking Garage Lighting Upgrade.**

**Background:** Lighting RFP is being drafted.

**F. Easement for Up North Nutrition & Gym 906 at 327 Ashmun Street.**

**Background:** *City staff is discussing how best to handle the easement request. The City needs to survey the lot at a cost of approximately \$750, in order to determine the exact area for sale or for easement to Up North Nutrition & 906 Gym.*

**Recommendation:** *Discuss how to best cover the cost of surveying the parking lot behind Up North Nutrition & 906 Gym.*

At the January 11, 2017 DDA Board meeting the DDA voted unanimously to request the City Commission's approval of an easement on a small area (12' x 12') owned by the City at the rear of the building at 327 Ashmun Street to allow for ventilation and dumpster placement, at a cost of one dollar to the property owner, Phil Woolcocks. Before going to the City Commission for approval, there has been discussion among City staff as to whether a construction variance from the building code would be more appropriate than an easement on the small area that the City owns, and perhaps disposing of the property through sale to Mr. Woolcocks. In all three instances the property/parking lot would have to be surveyed at an approximate cost of \$750 to determine the exact area for sale or for an easement to Up North Nutrition & 906 Gym.

**Moved by Greg Collins, supported by Oliver Turner to move forward with the survey and use a portion of the parking fund to cover the charge for the 12' x 12' area owned by the City behind 327 Ashmun Street. The motion passed unanimously.**

**7. NEW BUSINESS.**

**A. Resignation of Carl Stutzner.**

**Background:** *Carl Stutzner announced his resignation in February 2017.*

**Recommendation:** *Accept Carl Stutzner's resignation and sign letter recognizing him for his service on the Board.*

DDA Director Knepper indicated there are several citizens who have indicated an interest to serve on the DDA Board. At the March DDA Board meeting the DDA Board will go over applications to fill Carl Stutzner and Johann Ingold's seats on the

Board, which will then proceed for appointment by the Mayor and City Commission approval.

**B. Events and Festivals Review.**

- Ice Festival Review
- I-500 Review

Beginning with the Ice Festival on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> and through the following weekend (I-500), downtown businesses experienced great attendance. Next year, to coincide with the City's 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the DDA would like to see these events grow with new ideas, etc.

The Pub Crawl was a huge success, with 650 T-Shirts sold, and a profit to the DDA of approximately \$3,000. The Pub Crawl started a few years back with 12 downtown businesses participating and this year there were 16. The overall consensus was that it was a relatively calm night, and the taxi companies, along with the Ramada Inn shuttle, safely transported people around town. The cab companies expressed a desire for a designated cab stand with a couple of parking spaces for cabs to park and wait for passengers. The DDA will be looking into this in the future. On the morning of the I-500 Race there were 30-40 people who took advantage of the cab shuttle to and from Moloney's Alley to the Race.

**C. Upcoming Events and Festivals.**

- Outhouse Race. Scheduled for Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at the Templeton lot on Portage. There are currently 10 teams participating in this event. Bird's Eye Outfitters is sponsoring a kayak pull after the outhouse race. There will be a Sault schools band fundraiser at 1668 Winery and Lockside Brewery featuring brats and pizza.
- "Lockside Rail Jam."

**D. Proposed Event for Lockside Rail Jam on February 17th.**

**Background:** *Director Knepper reached out to Searchmont to host a "rail jam" in downtown Sault Ste. Marie. The concept would be that Searchmont will provide volunteers, promotion, music, and a team to build the run as well as perform. The date has been moved to March 9<sup>th</sup>.*

**Recommendation:** *Approve the purchase of an insurance policy for the Lockside Rail Jam through the City insurance carrier for approximately \$350.*

Volunteers will build the Lockside Rail Jam on the evening of Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>; snow will be brought in and placed in the street in the 100 block of Ashmun Street. The snow will be removed by Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup>.

***Moved by Oliver Turner, supported by Michelle Lajoie, to approve the purchase of an insurance policy for approximately \$350 for the Lockside Rail Jam taking place on Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. on the 100 block of Ashmun Street. The motion passed unanimously.***

**E. 2017 Board Retreat and Goal Setting Session.**

**Background:** *The DDA Board holds an annual goal-setting session each year. This year, the goal setting session could be combined with a Board retreat to allow time for identifying mission and vision statements, discussing budget items, as well as the potential transition to the Main Street.*

**Recommendation:** *Schedule retreat and goal-setting session for February 2017.*

The 2017 DDA Board Retreat and Goal Setting Session is scheduled for Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Greg Collins' office located at 215 Ashmun Street.

**8. DIRECTOR'S STATUS REPORT.**

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Tony Haller, Executive Director of the Sault Chamber of Commerce, reminded the DDA Board of the Business After 5 event on Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at Penny's Kitchen and the annual Chamber Award Banquet on Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. cocktails, and 7:00 p.m. dinner at Kewadin Casino.

**10. BOARD COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

**11. ADJOURN.**

***Moved by Michelle Lajoie, supported by Les Townsend, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:00 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

RAYMOND BELL, DDA Chair

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