

**Sault Ste. Marie
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
July 8, 2015**

MINUTES

Present: Raymond Bell
Greg Collins
William Karr
Michelle LaJoie
Les Townsend
Oliver Turner

Absent: Ray Bauer, Johann Ingold, Scott Parker and Carl Stutzner.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

2. **ROLL CALL.** Attendance was taken as noted.

3. CONSENT AGENDA.

- **Approval of Minutes: June 10, 2015 regular meeting.**

Moved by Raymond Bell, supported by Michelle LaJoie, to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2015 DDA regular Board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

4. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS.

A. **Superior Entertainment, Inc. Superior Fest Concert. Recommendation: Authorize DDA to apply for a liquor license for use at Superior Fest in Aune Osborn Park on August 8, 2015.**

- It was agreed at the June DDA Board meeting that Director Knepper move forward with booking a concert in the parking lot behind Moloney's Alley. This would include the DDA obtaining a temporary liquor license, with the sale of beverages projected to generate a profit for the DDA. Due to logistical issues and space requirements, Superior Entertainment, Inc. is now interested in holding the concert in Aune Osborn Park / Lacrosse Field instead of Moloney's Alley.
- At the Monday, July 6, 2015 City Commission meeting the Commission authorized an agreement with Superior Entertainment, Inc. to allow Aune Osborn Field to be used for an outdoor music concert on August 8, 2015. The Commission further authorized the sale of liquor at this event.

- The DDA Board reviewed the Letter of Agreement between Superior Entertainment, Inc. and the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Under *General Provisions* the agreement states:

“Superior Entertainment, Inc. and/or any other businesses or organization associated with that agreement will provide liability and event insurance (during the entire period of the event) per each occasion in the amount of \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) and name the City of Sault Ste. Marie as an additional insured on said policy with a copy to be provided to the City Clerk a minimum of one (1) week prior to the event.”

There were questions and concerns regarding the City’s liability in that the DDA would be the liquor license holder for this event. Also questioned was that this event is not being held in the DDA District. Director Knepper indicated that there are other entities in the City that may wish to administer the liquor license and work the beverage tent in an effort to raise money for their fundraising effort; specifically the LSSU Blue Liners Club or Lincoln Elementary School.

Moved by Greg Collins, supported by Michelle LaJoie, to offer someone else the opportunity to apply for a Liquor License for the concert event on August 8, 2015 at Aune Osborn Field. The motion passed unanimously

- B. **Façade Grant Application for Das Gift Haus. Recommendation: Review grant application from Das Gift Haus for re-roofing and painting of building.** Bell Tourist Enterprises is undergoing a major renovation to Das Gift Haus, which will include painting the exterior and sign letters and a new roof. The total cost of this project is approximately \$17,000. The maximum the DDA can contribute through the façade grant is \$2,500. Three downtown businesses applied and received façade grant funding for their renovations; Harmony Health (\$1,800), Atto building (\$2,500) and 221 Ashmun Street (\$269). Director Knepper indicated that there is \$5,431 left in the local façade grant fund.

Moved by Greg Collins, supported by Les Townsend to allocate \$2,500 to Bell Tourist Enterprises, in accordance with the façade grant program for renovations to the exterior of Das Gift Haus. The motion passed (1 vote abstained due to conflict of interest).

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

- A. **Placemaking Implementation Grant. Review grant proposal from the Michigan Municipal League.** At the June 10, 2015 DDA Board meeting the DDA Board voted to accept the Michigan Municipal League’s \$7,500 matching grant offer to complete detailed renderings and cost estimates for three development sites: Shawn Atto’s building and lot, Pat Cleary’s buildings on Ridge Street, and the Templeton lot on Portage Avenue.

Director Knepper provided copies of a proposal by Kuntzsch Solutions regarding the Sault Ste. Marie PlacePlan Implementation. At the request of MML, Kuntzsch Solutions proposes to provide professional project development and communications services to the City of Sault Ste. Marie, working with MML project staff, to develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) document as well as marketing materials for three sites included within the Moloney Alley PlacePlan. The DDA and City staff will begin working with Kuntzsch Solutions within the next month or two.

B. ParkMobile Implementation. Andrea is working with ParkMobile to prepare for launching by August 1, 2015. At the June 10, 2015 DDA meeting the DDA Board approved the signing of a contract with ParkMobile for FY 2015/16 to expire on June 30, 2016. The DDA is working on cleaning and painting the meters, if needed. ParkMobile decals will be placed on each meter; the decal will have ParkMobile's mobile app and a toll free number which will activate the parking session.

C. Michigan Mainstreet Program Training. Discuss outcomes of the Grayling conference and review select level grant application.

- 1) Director Knepper, along with DDA Board members, Michelle LaJoie and Les Townsend went to Grayling on June 18th for Michigan Main Street Program training titled *Main Street in Practice*. The training included examples of successful Selected Level communities, and how they achieved the status of a Selected Level community. (Grayling being a Selected Level community in April 2014).
- 2) The training in Grayling on June 18th also focused on moving forward to the Michigan Main Street Program Selected Level and the application process. Director Knepper provided the 32-page Selected Level Application that included:
 - Overview of the Main Street Four-Point Approach, i.e., Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring.
 - The Ten Standards of Performance requirements, developed by the National Accreditation Standards of Performance.
 - An overview of the Selected Level Application, along with required supporting documents.
 - Selection Criteria (point system): Main Street Area, Need, Want, Historic Preservation, Readiness, Capacity, and Broad-Based Community Support.
 - Michigan Main Street Checklist.
 - Deadline date: December 4, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

D. **South Ashmun Streetscape – 2015 Construction.** Discuss status of streetscape project. The start of construction on South Ashmun Street has been moved back to begin the week of July 13th. Director Knepper has been working diligently with business owners (approximately 20 on S. Ashmun) to provide alternate customer parking areas during this time. The manager of the CC Hall has indicated that the public can use their parking lot, unless there is a reception taking place at the Hall. Supervalu will be passing out flyers, Hungry Howie's is putting parking maps on their pizza boxes, Wicked Sister will be passing out maps, and *The Evening News* will be putting updates in the paper.

With construction taking place on Dawson, Spruce and Maple Streets at the same time as South Ashmun Street, Director Knepper has been under pressure trying to appease all the businesses. He asked the DDA Board for help and if the opportunity arises, take some time and touch base with business owners who are affected by all the construction.

At this point, the DDA has not received a construction schedule for South Ashmun Street. There have been concerns regarding night work, detour route, and whether the street will be completely closed at any given time. Director Knepper is working on specific directional signs for the Soo Locks / Tourist District, and rear entrance signs for businesses.

E. **Downtown Business Survey.** Review SurveyMonkey Results. Thirty-five downtown business owners participated in the Downtown Business Survey. Approximately 100 downtown businesses were asked to complete the survey. Director Knepper highlighted certain responses:

- 1) 53.33% own their property; 46.67% lease their property.
- 2) Gross sales volume. 19.23% less than \$50,000; 19.23% between \$50,000-\$100,000; 7.69% between \$100,000-\$250,000; 23.08% between \$250,000-\$500,000; 7.69% between \$500,000-\$1,000,000; 23.08% over \$1,000,000
- 3) Estimated number of weekly customers. 35.71% 1-50; 14.29% 50-100; 7.14% 100-150; 3.57% 150-200; 39.39% 200+.
- 4) From where do you draw customers. 57.14% Downtown neighborhoods; 75.00% City of Sault Ste. Marie; 85.71% Greater Sault Ste. Marie; 75.00% Tri-county area; 32.14% Lower Michigan; 42.86% Canada; 10.71% Other international.
- 5) If hired any new employees during the past year, what positions did they fill. Top four hired were: 42.86% Sales; 28.57% Skilled Worker; 21.43% Manager; 21.43% Laborer (unskilled).
- 6) Plan to add any new positions in the coming year. 7.14% Yes; 57.14% No; 35.71% Maybe.

- 7) In the next year, do you plan to: 57.14% Expand your business; 0.00% Move your business; 14.29% Cut back your business; 33.33% Other.
- 8) Would you like development assistance with: 9.09% Record keeping; 9.09% Database management; 36.36% Website; 45.45% Social media; 36.36% Other.
- 9) Improvements that would make downtown Sault Ste. Marie more inviting for shopping, walkability and entertainment. 39.13% Buried utility wires; 69.57% More flowers; 52.17% Public art; 56.52% Bicycle racks, parking and other bike friendly amenities; 65.22% Free Wi-Fi; 34.78% Other.

Two original goals of the Downtown Business Survey was to find out if downtown business were going to expand and perhaps relocate out of the downtown area, and see what assistance, if any, businesses were looking for. Director Knepper indicated that if the DDA Board would like to see individual comments, etc. they can stop by the DDA office for complete survey results.

F. **Events Planner Job Position.** Approximately 20 applications were received for the Events Planner job position. The events planner Committee, Director Knepper, Michelle LaJoie, and Human Resource Generalist Alicia Karr, went through the applications together. In going over the applications it was apparent that none of the applicants had the experience or expertise to be an Events Planner. After discussion, the events planner committee decided that the DDA should focus on an assistant position to help with Director Knepper's day-to-day work, as well as focusing on downtown events. Erica Smith, who is currently the DDA Intern, was one of the applicants. Erica has been doing a great job in the DDA office and Director Knepper is recommending that Erica be hired as his assistant. Erica has indicated that she would be willing to take on the part-time assistant position.

G. **Wayfinding Signage. Finalize plan for wayfinding signs; discuss addition of directories on each sign.** At the June DDA Board meeting, the Board reviewed photos of wayfinding signs in the DDA District and discussed changes to each sign. The DDA Board decided to form a downtown signage committee and invite various representatives from throughout downtown to review each sign and make changes, as necessary. On June 24th at 3:00 p.m. Director Knepper, Linda Hoath, Lisa Waskin, Ray Bell and Mary June participated in a downtown signage work session at City Hall. It was decided that each sign be repainted with the original colors, maroon and blue, and new lettering be applied to each. It was the general consensus that the verbiage be updated once a year. The DDA received a quote from Tim Korcal of \$350 for each of nine signs. Work will begin in a month or so.

6. NEW BUSINESS.

A. **Discussion Regarding Sidewalk Sales.** Sidewalk Sales will take place on August 7th and 8th. North Ashmun Street will be closed from the Ashmun Street Bridge to Portage Avenue for this event. And although South Ashmun Street construction is slated to begin on July 13th, there will be two lanes open at all times for traffic to run

through during Sidewalk Sales. Some of the events scheduled are: Martial Arts presentation, dance shows, vendor tents, 'Slashin' Ash" car show on August 8th, and 2015 BASS Nation State Championship weigh-in will take place on Portage Avenue (Templeton Lot) on August 7th and 8th at 3:00 p.m. Approximately 50 teams/boats have registered for this event.

7. DOWNTOWN MANAGER'S REPORT.

A. **State Façade Grant Program.** Work has commenced at the Chippewa County Historical Society. Cross-K Construction won the bid for **A Cut Above the Rest; bids are being finalized for the final three buildings.** Director Knepper is the grant administrator for the State Façade Program and is working to get grants underway. Island Books and Crafts, Paul Brewster's Building, and U.P. Architects and Engineers are waiting to confirm their contractors. The current State Façade Grant Program is open until August 2016.

B. **National Register Historic District Update.** Surveys are being distributed to building owners along Ashmun Street. The work on this is almost complete.

9. **MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE BOARD.** There were no matters presented by the Board.

10. **MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC.** There were no matters presented by the public.

11. ADJOURN.

In that there were no other issues the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m. upon motion of Greg Collins and support of Oliver Turner. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

William Karr, Co-Chair
Downtown Development Association Board

sg