

MAIN STREET/DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2023 – 8:30 A.M.
MEETING HELD AT CITY HALL – CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Ray Bauer – City Commission Liaison
Ray Bell
Craig Cooper
Jessica Johnston
Debbie Jones
Sue Anne Wilks
Mark Savoie
Amy Goetz

Absent: Brian Chapman
Allison Youngs

I. Routine Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:30 am.

2. Roll Call

Attendance was taken as noted.

3. Approval of Minutes

December 14, 2022, Regular DDA Board Meeting Minutes – Corrected

Discussion was held on the December 14, 2022, regular DDA Board meeting Minutes. Sprecker noted that City Commission Liaison Bauer was listed as a voting member during a roll call vote. As Bauer is not a voting member of the Board, he should not be listed as such. Wilks added that she would like to see the meeting minutes out within an eight-day time period. Due to the timeliness of the minutes being sent out as well as errors within them, she would like to see an accountable secretary taking minutes.

Moved by Ray Bell, supported by Debbie Jones, to approve the December 14, 2022, regular DDA Board meeting Minutes with the suggested change. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

March 8, 2023, Regular DDA Board Meeting Minutes

Discussion was held on the March 8, 2023, regular DDA Board meeting minutes. Wilks expressed her belief that her comments, as detailed in the minutes, were misrepresented. Going forward, Wilks will be personally recording the meetings. Sprecker added that

information pertaining to the organization and operation of the Board is to be included in the minutes. Wilks stated that the Board currently lacks basic structure and that the minutes should be distributed within eight days.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Ray Bell, to table the approval of the March 8, 2023, regular DDA Board meeting Minutes until the next meeting for all Board members to review the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Agenda

Discussion was held on April 12, 2023, DDA Board meeting agenda. Sprecker noted that a sixth item will be added to the Routine Agenda Items to discuss a Board resignation. Wilks stated that she would also like an item added to the Routine Agenda Items to discuss the Secretary position.

Moved by Mark Savoie, supported by Jessica Johnston, to approve the April 12, 2023, DDA Board meeting agenda with the additional items. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest.

There were no conflicts of interest.

6. DDA Board Member Resignation

Discussion was held on the resignation of a DDA Board Member. Sprecker informed the Board that Allison Youngs, DDA Board Chairperson, has formally resigned. Youngs provided her formal letter of resignation to DDA Director Sprecker and thanked the Board. During the April Board meeting, Cooper will act as Chairperson. During the May Board meeting, a vote will be conducted to elect a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

7. Secretary Position Discussion

Discussion was held on the Secretary position. Wilks stated that there is not currently a secretary that is accountable for the accuracy and submission of meeting minutes. She suggests the Board have an accountable Secretary to take the minutes and distribute them in a timely manner. Cooper added that Johnston is the Board's Secretary. Johnston indicated that she would be willing to review the minutes moving forward. Bryn will continue to take the minutes and then send them onto Johnston and Sprecker for final review. Johnston will review and send a draft version onto the Board.

II. Director's Report & Updates – Stephanie Sprecker

Discussion was held on the Director's Report & Updates. Sprecker informed the Board that the Match on Main Street Grant has been awarded to Bird's Eye Outfitters. Bird's Eye intends to use the funds to extend their outdoor space, year-round.

1. Annual Main Street Conference

Discussion was held on the Annual Main Street Conference. Sprecker attended the Annual Main Street Conference, which took place March 27 through March 29 in Boston, MA. Sprecker explained that she obtained valuable information by attending the conference and attended presentations on downtown finance, transformation strategies, developing a master plan, and more. Additionally, the conference was a great networking opportunity. Sprecker will share the information she obtained with the Board.

2. Grow with Google

Discussion was held on the “Grow with Google” training. Jones, Johnston, Bell, and Goetz attended the “Grow with Google” training. The training opportunity was led by one of ten Google Coaches in the nation who trains businesses on how to become more visible online. Sprecker noted that there are many Main Street resources such as this training that she would like to share with businesses.

3. Blight Elimination Grant Award

Discussion was held on the Blight Elimination Grant Award. Sprecker informed the Board that the Blight Elimination Grant Award has been awarded for the blighted building at 538 Ashmun Street. The building will be revitalized and renovated for mixed-use for business and mid to high-class rentals. Sprecker added that she is working with the owner of Zim’s Bar as well as MEDC contacts for future sale and redevelopment.

4. Vibrancy Grant

Discussion was held on the Vibrancy Grant. Sprecker informed the Board that she would like to have a solid plan for the use of funds before applying for this grant. Further, she does not feel it would be responsible to take on an additional Vibrancy Grant at this time as she is continuing to work on existing grants, such as the Match on Main grants for Co-Ed Flowers, Prim Aesthetics, and Bird’s Eye. It was noted that the signs for the last Vibrancy Grant were recently delivered and are in the process of being placed.

5. Sponsorship Package

Discussion was held on the Sponsorship Package. Sprecker explained that a sponsorship package for fundraising has been placed in early draft form and will be completed and distributed at the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1, 2023. Sprecker will present the package to the Board at the May Board meeting for input. It will be presented in June for approval.

6. Storytelling Service

Discussion was held on the upcoming Storytelling Service. Sprecker started by informing the Board that a date has not yet been selected for this service. Phil Eich will travel to Sault Ste. Marie to create the story of our downtown. The Storytelling Service is a half-day session, which includes podcasts and interviews with downtown stakeholders. The service is a great promotional opportunity for our downtown.

7. Farmer’s Market Canopy

Discussion was held on the Farmer's Market Canopy. Sprecker explained that the DDA Board will not need to locate funds to purchase a new Farmer's Market Canopy at this time. She discovered that although an insurance claim was not filed in 2022 when an accident occurred, an insurance claim was filed in 2020. Sprecker worked with DPW to locate available funds for the canopy.

III. Transformation Strategy Plan

1. Organizations Committee – Sue Anne Wilks

Wilks stated that she created a draft for the overall sponsorship package and the Music in the Park sponsorship package. A draft Board Member Packet has also been created for new board members. Wilks next discussed Act 57 compliance. Wilks informed board by preparing information meeting template and collecting 2020-2022 TIF reports. Wilks indicated that the board now has all information it needs to become compliant if they publish and hold meetings.

a. Volunteer Spring Social Gathering

Discussion was held on our Main Street's Volunteer Spring Social Gathering. Sprecker explained that May would be a better month for the Volunteer Spring Social Gathering. Wilks indicated that she would review a list of volunteer job descriptions sent to her by Sprecker. Wilks will inform all Board members of the date and location that the gathering will take place. Sprecker clarified that the Spring Social Gathering is for volunteers and a work plan is not required as no expenses will be incurred.

Discussion was held on possible dates and locations for the Volunteer Spring Social Gathering. Goetz suggested having the event at The Lockview. Johnston suggested one representative from each committee attend the gathering. An educational meeting will be scheduled in the future for DDA technical details and information regarding Main Street, TIF, and PSD.

2. Design Committee – Stephanie Sprecker

Discussion was held on Design Committee progress. Cooper indicated that he is willing to be the Design Committee chairperson until a designated chairperson has been selected. The Flower Project, Sign Grants, Mural Grants, and Cross Walk Paintings are currently the main focus of this committee. Goetz said that she would like to work on the Flower Project as well. Sprecker explained that after the snow melts, planning for the Cross Walk Paintings will take place in conjunction with LSSU and possibly Sault High.

3. Economic Vitality Committee – Craig Cooper

a. Ready 2 Recruit Primer Service

Discussion was held on the Economic Vitality Committee's Ready 2 Recruit Primer Service. Two webinars will take place, which will provide resources on downtown development and market profile analysis sheets. Cooper intends to use the Downtown Business Owners Facebook page to post applicable information.

b. Real Estate Training Series

Discussion was held on the Economic Vitality Committee's Real Estate Training Series. During this discussion, Wilks indicated that she would like to see the scoring rubric for the Match on Main Street Grant selection. Sprecker clarified that there are currently a few of these rubrics for the Match on Main Street Grant selection. Additionally, Sprecker presents the option to the Board each round for them to add local criteria to the selection process. This occurred in the last round, with no additional selection criteria chosen.

4. Promotions Committee – Jessica Johnston

Discussion was held on the Promotions Committee. Ladies Night Out will take place on Friday, May 19 from 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Sprecker will work with the Engineering Department to ensure that the construction on Ashmun Street will not hinder the event. Sprecker has solidified transportation for the event. Johnston informed the Board that Ladies Night Out is construction themed, with the slogan "Dig It." Hosting the pre-party event costs \$300, while hosting the after-party event costs \$500. Additionally, Johnston mentioned the possibility of having one uptown business sponsor this event in the future. Monocle Jewelers has donated \$1,500 to sponsor this year's Ladies Night Out event. If Monocle Jewelers donation is the largest, they will be the naming sponsor for the event.

Jones informed the Board that the 100 Women with Hearts event will take place on May 4. Jones suggested looking into combining a DDA event with this event next year.

Sprecker informed the Board that the DDA website will be running within the next few days. Once it is functioning, Sprecker will begin to revamp the website.

IV. Public Comment and Announcements

Wilks asked Finance Director Kristin Collins about a payment made to the Ogni Group. Collins explained that the payment to the Ogni Group was charged to the Parking Garage Capital Maintenance Fund for lighting upgrades. Discussion was held on the Match on Main Street Grant funds as well.

Collins provided a brief review of the 2023-2024 proposed draft budget. She noted that the ending fund balance has a significant amount of \$31,700. Collins suggested that over the next year, the Board consider its priorities. Additionally, she suggested scaling back expenditures to reduce the budget or seek additional funding sources.

V. Board Comments and Announcements

Savoie asked how many Board members are required to sit on the DDA Board per the Bylaws. Cooper explained that the Bylaws allow for a minimum of nine and maximum of twelve Board members.

VI. Adjournment

Moved by Ray Bell, supported by Amy Goetz, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:10 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Cooper, DDA Vice-Chair

blm