

MAIN STREET/DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, April 13, 2022 – 8:00 A.M.
MEETING HELD AT CITY HALL – CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Ray Bauer
Brian Chapman
Craig Cooper
Cathy Howell
Debbie Jones
Tara Kelgar
Allison Youngs

Absent: Tom Fornicola and Samantha Hale.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

2. ROLL CALL. Attendance was taken as noted.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

- March Minutes – Board Training.

Moved by Cathy Howell, supported by Debbie Jones, to approve the March 9, 2022, DDA Board meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Director Cutler indicated an addition to the April 13, 2022, agenda; add discussion regarding the DDA Spring Fling Open House Event to agenda item no. 6, Committee Reports, B. Promotions / Organization Committee Report.

Moved by Tara Kelgar, supported by Debbie Jones, to approve the April 13, 2022, Main Street/Downtown Development Authority Agenda with addition added to agenda item no. 6, Committee Reports, B. Promotions / Organizational Committee Report. The motion passed unanimously.

5. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this time.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

A. Economic Vitality Committee Report.

- Assign Committee Members / Chair.

After discussion, it was determined that Craig Cooper serve as interim Chair on the Economic Vitality Committee until the July 2022 DDA Board meeting when annually in July all DDA Main Street committees appoint committee chairs and committee members.

B. Promotions / Organization Committee Report.

- Event Guidelines Presentation.

Cathy Howell, Promotions Committee Chair, presented an outline of the new DDA event guidelines, which included:

Main Street events are typically viewed through several lenses and measures of success, including, but not limited to community engagement, downtown awareness, and increasing revenue in downtown businesses.

Cathy also gave an overview of the event planning timeline with four steps, 1) Contact the DDA Director or Promotions Committee Chair, 2) Submit Your Work Plan – Ideally 6-12 months prior to the event, 3) Following DDA Approval, several steps taken prior to the event, and 4) Following Up with Your Event.

- Addition to the Agenda: Downtown Sault Ste. Marie Spring Social on Wednesday, May 4th at 5:00-8:00 pm at 313 Ashmun Street.

Join downtown Sault Ste. Marie DDA Board for a fun, casual get-together. Meet new DDA Director Tony Cutler, mingle with downtown business owners and the community and learn about changes within the DDA. Cash bar and light refreshments with a brief presentation from Tony.

C. Design Committee Report.

- Assign Committee Members / Chair.

Debbie Jones reported that the Design Committee will be reaching out to Sault Tribe Probation Officer, Nick DePlonty, who has indicated that he would be willing to provide clients to do community service for the DDA and the Chippewa County Community Foundation. The community services group will work on cleaning up downtown, weed the Business Spur planters, etc. and will be an on-going process during the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

Debbie also indicated that Master Gardener Kim Kimber, will again be working with the Design Committee to maintain the downtown flowerpots and gardens areas.

7. FINANCIALS.

A. January and February Financials.

Finance Director Kristin Collins went over the revenue and expenditure report for the period ending January 31, 2022.

TIFA 1 Fund 245. Year-to-date revenues are \$57,116.34 which is 28.59% of budget used for fiscal year 2021-2022; total budget in the amount of \$199,800. Year-to-date expenditures are \$116,659.50 which is 58.39% of budget used for fiscal year 2021-2022; total budget in the amount of \$199,800.

TIFA 2 Fund 245. Year-to-date revenues are \$108,536.49 which is 87.74% of budget used for fiscal year 2021-2022; total budget in the amount of \$123,700. Year-to-date expenditures are \$74,156.07 which is 58.39% of budget used for fiscal year 2021-2022; total budget in the amount of \$127,000.

DDA Operating Fund 248. Year-to-date revenues are \$62,238.11 which is 31.04% of budget used for fiscal year 2021-2022; total budget in the amount of \$200,5000. Year-to-date expenditures are \$77,081.69 which is 37.88% of budget used for fiscal year 2021-2022; total budget in the amount of \$203,500.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

A. Downtown Check.

- Central Savings Bank Agreement – Attached.
- Checkout Downtown Program.

At the January 2022 DDA Board meeting Director Cutler recommended going forward with the Downtown Check program to pilot the program and get it going.

Director Cutler indicated that he met with a Central Savings Bank representative, and it was agreed that CSB will make an initial donation of \$4,000 as the sponsor for this program, and a \$1,000 donation the following fiscal year provided the DDA Board does not cancel the program. CSB and the DDA will renegotiate after the second year of the program's operation to consider continued sponsorship and support.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Tara Kelgar, to move forward with the "Checkout Downtown" Campaign, and approve the Agreement between Central Savings Bank and the Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Development Authority (DDA). DDA Board vote took place with one nay; five ayes, motion passed.

B. Vibrancy Grant Award.

- \$20,000 Award.

Director Cutler announced that downtown Sault Ste. Marie is one of eight communities to receive the MEDC Vibrancy Grant Award for \$20,000. The project will allow the DDA to replace the broken old sign on the Ashmun Street Bridge which is the gateway to downtown, and new signs will be positioned at various exits from I-75, and along the Business Spur to guide people to historic Main Street, downtown Sault Ste. Marie. This grant will cover up to 85% of the cost up to \$20,000, therefore the cost of this project is \$23,361.70, with the DDA contributing \$3,361.70.

C. Sign Grant Creation.

- Proposed Application Attached.

At the February 9, 2022, DDA Board meeting the DDA Board approved a budget amendment utilizing monies from two inactive DDA accounts, along with \$981.40 from the promotions budget to create \$14,000 in funds for the purpose of replacing or creating new signage for businesses in the Principal Shopping District. The DDA will choose seven businesses for a \$2,000 matching grant.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Craig Cooper, to approve the Sign Grant Application Form. The motion passed unanimously.

9. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Goal Session – Tuesday, April 26th.

The DDA Goalsetting session will take place on Tuesday, April 26th from 5:00-8:00 pm at the Soo Locks Children’s Museum on Portage Avenue.

B. Two New Board Member Appointees.

- City Commission vote to accept resignation of Larry Jacques and recognized Les Townsend’s term ending and early withdraw.
- Public Posting Seeking Applicants.

C. Downtown Mural Applications.

- Sanderson Land Management – Danna Sanderson.
- Community Housing Network – Allan Martin.

Seventy downtown business owners located in the DDA / Principal Shopping District were notified of the Downtown Sault Mural Project Reimbursement Grant. Two businesses applied, Sanderson Land Management, 111 Ashmun Street, and Community Housing Network, (old Courthouse Annex building) 300 Court Street.

The Sanderson Land Management building is located at 111 Ashmun Street. They are interested in creating a mural on a retaining wall not attached to the building.

Community Housing Network, (old Courthouse Annex building) 300 Court Street. Allan Martin, representing the Community Housing Network, was in attendance and explained that with the help of the MEDC, the Community Housing Network will be renovating the historic building into eleven market-rate apartments, and they would like to create a mural on the south side of the building facing the parking lot.

In 2016, the City of Sault Ste. Marie partnered with several local artists and downtown businesses to create a series of mural paintings across the City. The murals were originally created with funds raised locally and from the MEDC and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. After the murals were completed, \$7,000 was left over and for several years had not been used or re-designated.

Director Cutler is recommending that the old mural funds in the amount of \$7,000 be used to add another mural to the downtown area. The \$7,000 in funding for the mural would qualify as the City's financial involvement to secure the rest of the funding for the renovation project. With a total of \$3.1 million in funding for the apartment renovation, the Housing Network can officially begin planning the project.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Craig Cooper, to support the Community Housing Network's renovation project of 300 Court Street, and provide funding in the amount of \$7,000 for the mural project associated with 300 Court Street. The motion passed unanimously.

D. City Administrator.

- Public Hearing Parking.
- Public Hearing PSD.

Public Hearing Parking. City Staff is recommending moving towards a parking app to facilitate meter parking as well as consolidating the permit structure down to two permits: a standard parking permit and a 24-hour tenant parking permit.

The standard parking permit will be used for parking within all city-owned parking lots. The intent is that every city-owned parking lot will be open to parking via either the parking lot permit or metered parking. Parking spaces within the lots will not be designated for permit or metered parking only; all spaces are open for either Metered parking within the lots will be purchased via the city's mobile parking App vendor, where physical meters are absent. Physical meters within the lots will be phased out. The only exception to this is the parking lot on S. Court Street which is primarily used by staff members in the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians office. This parking lot will be permit only between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm. After 5 pm the parking lot will be open to the public for metered or permit parking.

While staff is providing a recommendation to the Commission at this time, staff is aware of the impact parking changes can have on the downtown. A public hearing has been approved to be facilitated during this item on the agenda at the April 18, 2022, City Commission meeting.

Public Hearing PSD. The Principal Shopping District was established on a five-year renewal cycle and was last renewed by the City Commission in 2017. Therefore, the PSD needs to be renewed and will be presented at a public hearing at the April 18, 2022, City Commission meeting and Commission action will take place after the second public hearing is completed on May 2, 2022.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

A. Music in the Park Lineup.

- Advertising Strategy.
- Prime Sponsor Suggestion.

Director Cutler indicated that he has booked all acts for this season's Music in the Park lineup, and that he is working on a sponsorship.

B. Downtown Shuttle Service Proposal.

Director Cutler is looking into the DDA purchase of two eight-seater golf carts to run a downtown business shuttle loop for shoppers, diners, etc. The DDA could perhaps partner with the Cruise Ships to provide transportation for the ship's patrons.

C. Snow Removal Contract.

- Planning Meeting with Contractor.
- Options with Business Owners.
- City Staff DPW Input.

Director Cutler is meeting with City staff today to discuss the snow removal contract for the 2022-2023 season.

D. Freighter Race Fundraiser.

- Custom Freighters.
- Structure.
- Fundraising Focus.

Director Cutler is looking into a three-day freighter race fundraiser festival event, with participants purchasing custom-made miniature freighters to race in the Power Canal for prizes. This festival could potentially be a money-maker for the DDA.

E. Spring Open House.

F. Ladies Night Out Planning.

Ladies Night Out is on Friday, May 20th from 4:00-8:00 pm.

G. Engineers Day Planning.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

A. Citizens' discussions with the DDA Board:

- The two downtown mural applications; Sanderson Land Management and Community Housing Network.
- Downtown Dollars vs Checkout Downtown Program, and cash back to customers.
- City Trolley was sold, due to the cost of major repairs needed.
- The City once supported a Parking Commission, made up of local stakeholders, that worked to improve the downtown parking experience. It was suggested that the DDA work with downtown merchants to re-address parking issues and get their take on downtown parking. Also suggested was for the City to not jump too quickly with major changes in parking.

- City and County employees have specific places to park around City Hall and the Chippewa County Courthouse.

B. Tony Haller, Executive Director of the Sault Chamber of Commerce, commented that with the Chamber Bucks program it is mandatory to give customers their exact change back; he would encourage the DDA to do the same with the new Checkout Downtown Program.

Chamber of Commerce up-coming events:

- Business After Five on Thursday, April 21st at 5:00-7:00 at The Little Gift Shop.
- Spring Economic Luncheon on Tuesday, May 17th at 11:30 am – 1:30 pm at LSSU Superior Room. Guest speaker: Neel Kashkari, President, and CEO Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

12. BOARD COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

There were no DDA Board comments and announcements.

13. ADJOURN.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Allison Youngs, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:55 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

ALLISON YOUNGS, DDA Chair

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