

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

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Ray Bell
Brian Chapman
Craig Cooper
Tom Fornicola
Jessica Johnston
Allison Youngs

Absent: Ray Bauer, Debbie Jones, and Tara Kelgar

1. CALL TO ORDER.

2. ROLL CALL. Attendance was taken as noted.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

- June 15, 2022, regular DDA Board meeting minutes

Moved by Brian Chapman, supported by Ray Bell to approve the June 15, 2022, regular DDA Board meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Moved by Brian Chapman, supported by Ray Bell, to approve the July 13, 2022, Main Street/Downtown Development Authority Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

5. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

There were no conflicts of interest declared at this time.

Before Committee Reports Allison asked the two new DDA Board members, Jessica Johnston, and Ray Bell, to introduce themselves.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

A. Economic Vitality Committee Report (Craig).

Craig reported that the Economic Vitality Committee has not been meeting regularly.

B. Promotions / Organization Committee Report.

- Need new Chair.

C. Design Committee Report (Debbie).

Debbie was absent from this meeting.

7. EVENTS.

A. Concert Series.

Allison reported that Music in the Park is going well. More volunteers are needed on Wednesday, July 27th at the performance of the Petoskey Steel Band; approximately 2,000 people attend this event every year. Tom Fornicola indicated that he will help Allison on that evening.

B. Sidewalk Sales.

A group of downtown business owners are planning Sidewalk Sales; flyers will be going out soon.

C. 4th of July Parade.

D. Engineers Day.

8. WORK ITEMS.

A. Bylaws.

Craig indicated that he is working on a rough draft of the Bylaws, the DDA's Mission Statement and the new DDA member packet.

B. Rules of Procedure.

C. New Member Board Packet (Craig and Tom).

D. Events Policy.

E. Vibrancy Grant (Engineering).

The vibrancy grant is moving forward; the City Engineering Department is working with MDOT on this.

F. Pulse Survey (Craig).

Craig reported that he has drafted a generic pulse survey that includes twenty-five questions regarding parking, frequency of visits downtown, what type of new businesses downtown, what brings you downtown, what purchases you make online that you would purchase downtown if available, where do you live, etc. Craig will be sending out the final pulse survey to the DDA Board in the next week or so, for their distribution of the survey as well.

9. BUSINESS ITEMS.

A. Voting of Officers.

1) Chair

Moved by Tom Fornicola, supported by Ray Bell, to appoint Allison Youngs as Chair of the DDA Board.

2) Vice Chair

Moved by Brian Chapman, supported by Tom Fornicola, to appoint Craig Cooper as Vice Chair of the DDA Board.

3) Treasurer

After discussion, it was decided that a Treasurer is not needed on the DDA Board.

4) Secretary

Moved by Tom Fornicola, supported by Ray Bell, to appoint Jessica Johnston as Secretary of the DDA Board.

B. DDA Director Recruitment.

1) Director's Salary

The DDA Director posted position is in the pay range of \$48,000-\$55,000. The DDA Board will negotiate the salary when a new DDA Director candidate passes a background check and references are contacted.

The interview(s) will be scheduled in the next week or so.

2) Contractual Director

Brian indicated that Justin Knepper submitted a contract for him to work part-time for the DDA. The contract needs to be rewritten; Brian will revise the contract and forward it to the DDA Board for their review, and then send it on to Justin.

C. MEDC Community Storytelling Program.

The MEDC is launching a Community Storytelling PILOT Program, available to communities based on their certified status Redevelopment Ready Communities and/or Select or Master level status in Michigan Main Street. The PILOT Program will provide direct marketing and promotion technical assistance with goals of increasing local tourism-focused collaboration and growing local awareness and utilization of the Pure Michigan platform. The application for this PILOT Program is due on Friday next week.

Moved by Jessica Johnston, supported by Tony Fornicola, to move forward with the application process for the MEDC Community Storytelling PILOT Program. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Mural Grant Funding.

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. At the April 2022 DDA Board meeting then DDA Director Cutler indicated that after the murals were completed, \$7,000 was left over and for several years had not been used or re-designated. At the April 2022 DDA Board meeting a motion was passed to use the \$7,000 to support the Community Housing Network's renovations project of 300 Court Street and provide funding in the amount of \$7,000 for the mural project associated with 300 Court Street.

At the May DDA Board meeting it became aware that there was only \$5,000 left in the 2016 mural program budget. The current sign grant project, with a budget of \$14,000, so far has six applicants, to be reviewed as the next agenda item. If the six sign grants are awarded there is still a \$3,900 balance in the sign grant budget.

Moved by Craig Cooper, supported by Tom Fornicola, to approve the use of \$2,000 in sign grant funds, to cover the \$7,000 for the mural project associated with 300 Court Street. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Sign Grants.

- 1) CHN – The Annex, 300 Court Street
- 2) National Office Products – 322 Court St./405 Ashmun St.
- 3) Gym 906 – 327 Ashmun St.
- 4) Mole Hole – 201 Osborn Blvd.
- 5) 135 Ashmun St. – Cleary Rentals
- 6) 722 Ashmun St. – Cleary Rentals

After discussion regarding the requested renderings of the new signs, definition of signs and businesses, the representative for Cleary Rentals told the DDA Board that she would like to withdraw her application for 722 Ashmun Street.

Moved by Ray Bell, supported by Tom Fornicola, to approve all the sign grant applications. There were two nays; motion passed with four yeas.

The representative for Cleary Rentals reiterated to the DDA Board her withdrawal of the sign application for 722 Ashmun Street.

F. Goal Session Update.

The updated goal session will be brought to the DDA Board for adoption at the August 10, 2022, DDA Board meeting.

G. DDA Board Member Applications. (Cathy Howell Resignation).

DDA Board appointments are made by the Mayor; the DDA Board's recommendation can go on the July 18th City Commission meeting agenda if the Board agrees.

Moved by Tom Fornicola, supported by Ray Bell, to recommend Sue Anne Wilkes to serve on the DDA Board for a balance of a term to expire on April 1, 2024. There were two nays; motion passed with four yeas.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Sue Anne Wilkes representing Cleary Rentals requested that her comments (verbatim) be included in July 13, 2022, DDA Board minutes.

“Over the past weekend, using the guise of community concern, a malicious anonymous voice spread false and distorted information in an obvious attempt to attack and demean our family publicly. I won't address any such comments, but like to share with this board the progress we have made in the past few years on our properties and improving the downtown.”

Ms. Wilks provided the DDA Board with photos of Cleary Rentals' buildings showing the renovations being made on their downtown buildings. She also gave a brief overview of the improvements done to the buildings. A power point presentation was given to City staff following the meeting and it was requested that it be attached to these minutes.

12. BOARD COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

13. ADJOURNMENT.

Moved by Craig Cooper, supported by Ray Bell, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:35 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

ALLISON YOUNGS, DDA Chair

sg