

**MAIN STREET/DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 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  
Brian Chapman  
Craig Cooper  
Jessica Johnston  
Debbie Jones  
Sue Anne Wilkes  
Allison Youngs  
Mark Savoie

**Absent:** Amy Goetz  
Ray Bell

**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 December 14, 2022, regular DDA Board meeting minutes. Wilkes noted that the minutes did not include the roll call vote for *Section III* Budget Items, #3, Revenue Discussion Request. Request for edits discussed and will be brought for approval at the next meeting.

***Moved by Brian Chapman, supported by Craig Cooper, to approve the December 14, 2022, regular DDA Board meeting Minutes with the suggested change. There were seven yeas, Bauer, Chapman, Cooper, Johnston, Jones, Youngs, and Savoie, and one nay, Wilkes –motion passed.***

**Approval of Minutes**

**February 8, 2023, Regular DDA Board Meeting Minutes**

***Moved by Craig Cooper, supported by Brian Chapman, to approve the February 8, 2023, regular DDA Board meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### 4. Approval of Agenda

Discussion was held on the March 8, 2023, DDA Board meeting agenda. Sprecker noted that a seventh item will be added to the Director's Report & Updates to discuss a new Vibrancy Grant opportunity.

***Moved by Craig Cooper, supported by Brian Chapman, to approve the March 8, 2023, DDA Board meeting agenda. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### 5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest.

There were no conflicts of interest.

## II. Budget Items

### 1. Review/Discussion – Fund 248 – 2023-2024 Proposed Draft Budget Stephanie Sprecker, DDA Director

Discussion was held on Fund 248 – 2023-2024 proposed draft budget. Finance Director Kristin Collins started by explaining the budget process to the Board. Department requests are the first level in the process, followed by the City Manager's recommendation, and lastly City Commission approval.

Sprecker noted that the MEDC Match on Main Grant funds have not yet been distributed. Sprecker provided a breakdown for the non-event fundraising, which includes \$1,500 for flowers, \$500 for crosswalk murals, \$3,000 for overall downtown beautification, and \$5,000 for Mixed-Use Match. Cooper asked what the deadline is to submit capital project requests for the new fiscal year. Collins and Sprecker stated that this deadline is usually in December. The Board may apply for capital projects throughout the year, if necessary.

Discussion then moved to the DDA operating expenditures. The request for part-time seasonal wages of \$18,200 is reflected in the proposed draft budget. Bauer explained that the DDA has had part-time seasonal workers in the past and it has been added and removed from the budget before. He believes that the part-time seasonal wages line item should not be removed from the budget in the future. Collins added that the DDA previously had a part-time position for downtown maintenance, which is now handled by the Department of Public Works and paid for by the City. Collins explained that fringe benefits are calculated based on personnel requests.

Sprecker noted that the budget for supplies increased because the DDA office needs office supplies and storage. Wilkes asked about promotions expenditures. Wilkes stated that for promotions expenditures, one of the big incentives in the past for those who donated \$5,000 was to be named in the advertisement in the SCVB visitor's guide. Wilkes proposed adding \$1,700 to the directories/brochures line item and deducting \$500 from the dues/subscriptions line item. Sprecker noted that \$400 must be added to repair & replacement to account for the special assessment on a parcel owned by the DDA. This is a total of \$1,600 in City appropriations. With the suggested changes, the bottom line for is still net zero.

Wilkes asked about the transfers out shown in the budget. She believes that all transfers out, even those that result in a net change of zero, should be brought to the Board for approval. Wilkes requested more information regarding the Capital Projects, Fund 402, transfer out for building improvements. Collins reminded the Board that during the February meeting, the Board requested that the financials show only DDA funds. Youngs noted that building improvements for the parking garage is not a DDA fund, which is why it was transferred out as requested. Collins added that transfers between capital projects require Commission action.

Wilkes next asked about chain-of-command and why Collins does not report financial information directly to the DDA Board as the Board does not have a treasurer. Collins explained that requests are to be directed to DDA Director Sprecker, who then passes the requested information along to the Board members. Bauer added that this is normal practice and if it was not handled through Stephanie, it would also be counterproductive and extremely time consuming for City department heads.

### III. Action Items

#### 1. ACTION NEEDED – Fund 248 – 2023-2024 Proposed Draft Budget

**Option 1: Recommended Action:** Motion to accept the proposed 2023-2024 DDA Operating Budget Fund 248 as presented today for moving forward in the City budget process.

**Option 2: Recommended Action:** Motion to accept the 2023-2024 Operating Budget Fund 248 with modifications discussed today for moving forward in the City budget process.

***Moved by Craig Cooper, supported by Debbie Jones, to accept the 2023-2024 Operating Budget Fund 248 with modifications discussed today for moving forward in the City budget process. There were seven yeas, Cooper, Jones, Bauer, Johnston, Youngs, Savoie, and Wilkes; Chapman abstained – the motion passed.***

#### 2. ACTION NEEDED – Reappointment – Amy Goetz Term to expire 4/1/23

**Recommended Action:** Motion to re-appoint Amy Goetz to the DDA Board with a term to expire on April 1, 2027.

***Moved by Brian Chapman, supported by Craig Cooper, to reappoint Amy Goetz to the DDA Board with a term to expire on April 1, 2027. The motion passed unanimously.***

#### 3. CONSENSUS – Quarterly Budget Reviews

Discussion was held on the quarterly budget reviews. Sprecker proposed the Board review budgets on a quarterly basis, as opposed to a monthly basis. Sprecker believes this will be more beneficial and will reduce the duration of the monthly DDA Board meetings. DDA

Board members will still receive reports monthly but will review the budgets quarterly. All Board members were in favor of this change.

#### **4. CONSENSUS – Board Meeting Packets**

Discussion was held on the Board meeting packets. Sprecker explained that gathering materials for the Board meetings and creating Board meeting packets is a very time-consuming process. Sprecker expressed that she would like to present the materials on the TV monitor during the meeting and email the packet prior to the meeting. The Board came to the consensus that this is reasonable, and the change will be taken into effect immediately.

### **IV. Director's Report & Updates – Stephanie Sprecker**

#### **1. Out of Office – Annual Main Street Conference**

Discussion was held on the Annual Main Street Conference. The Annual Main Street Conference will take place March 27 through March 29. Sprecker will attend the conference and will also be taking a vacation. Sprecker will leave town on March 23 and return on March 31.

#### **2. Sign/Mural Capital Project Budget Amendment Update**

Discussion was held on the Sign/Mural Capital Project budget amendment update. During the January DDA Board meeting, the Board voted to transfer \$692 from the Sign Capital Project fund to the Mural Capital Project fund for the CHN Mural. The transfer was brought to the City Commission at their meeting held on March 6. The transfer was approved by the Commission.

#### **3. Soo Theatre Sign Restoration Donation Update**

Update was given on the Soo Theatre Sign Restoration donation. In January, the DDA Board approved the donation of \$2,000 to the Soo Theatre Sign Restoration. The check was processed, and Justin Knepper expressed his gratitude to the Board for the donation. Sprecker will be setting up a photo opportunity.

#### **4. Ready to Recruit Primer Cohort**

Discussion was held on the Ready to Recruit Primer Cohort. Sprecker explained that the Ready to Recruit Primer Cohort is an economic vitality opportunity that she signed the DDA up for months prior. The Cohort is just beginning and will wrap up in September.

#### **5. Main 5 Communication Plan Reminder**

Discussion was held on the Main 5 Communication Plan reminder. Sprecker distributed information to all Board members regarding the Main 5 Communication Plan. The event will take place virtually on April 10, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

#### **6. Board Requests**

Discussion was held on board requests. Sprecker expressed that she is happy to assist all Board members, but some requests are much more time consuming than others. As DDA Director, Sprecker must ensure that her time is efficiently utilized. Sprecker indicated that she intends to prioritize requests based on urgency. Wilks stated that she has made requests as the Organizations Committee Chair to meet with Stephanie two weeks prior to this board meeting to discuss progress. Wilks provided the published goals for her committee to the board that she is using to direct her efforts to fulfill Strategic goals of the DDA. Wilks presented Sault Ste. Marie DDA org chart provided to her by Sprecker to discuss. During the normal course of meetings, Wilks will present her committee chair report even if time in Sprecker's schedule did not allow her to meet. Sprecker clarified that although committee chairs report to the Board, they must report to the DDA Director. It is crucial that the DDA Director is informed and that there is effective communication. Sprecker added that getting back on track with Main Street is a top priority. Wilks referred to the DDA published tasks as her priority and understood they would not be Sprecker's priority. She added that is precisely why Mainstreet organizes how it does in the organization chart so that menial tasks like word processing can be handled in committee. Wilkes explained that the Spring Social event she is organizing is approaching. Cooper noted that events must be brought before both the DDA Director and the Board for approval. Wilks noted that compliance was one of her main priorities and that when the information was gathered, she would let the board know so they could choose to take action if they wanted to be in compliance. Jones reiterated that currently the highest priority is to get into compliance with Main Street and that requests must be planned and prioritized accordingly. Wilks stated that if that is true the presentation to hold an info meeting for Act 57 compliance was completed with very small exceptions.

## **7. Vibrancy Grant**

Discussion was held on the Vibrancy Grant. Sprecker informed the Board that the Vibrancy Grant, which offers eight \$25,000 grants, opens in April. Cooper noted that this grant requires a match of funds. Jones added that, depending on the project, the Downtown Garden Program and the Chippewa County Community Foundation may have unrestricted funds to donate for the match.

## **V. Transformation Strategy Plan**

### **1. Promotions Committee – Jessica Johnston**

#### **i. Music in the Park**

Discussion was held on Music in the Park. Wilkes requested to be informed on when planning meetings will take place.

#### **ii. Ladies Night Out**

Discussion was held on Ladies Night Out. The event currently has two champions – Laurie Jarvie and Jennifer Reattoir

### **2. Organizations Committee – Sue Anne Wilkes**

Discussion was held on the Organizations Committee. Wilks stated It had been a long and tiring meeting already and that she will send this month's progress report to the Board.

Cooper noted that Wilkes must discuss progress with Sprecker, so she is aware of progress made and can add applicable items to the agenda. Wilkes restated that she will send this month's progress report to the Board. Emailed update attached for the record.

### **3. Design Committee – Stephanie Sprecker**

Discussion was held on the Design Committee. The Design Committee is still in need of a chair. Sprecker stated that the Board will need to review and ensure that all Board members have joined a committee and that each committee has a chair.

### **4. Economic Vitality Committee – Craig Cooper**

Discussion was held on the Economic Vitality Committee. Cooper informed the Board that he has successfully recruited three members for the Economic Vitality Committee. One of the members that Cooper is looking to recruit is former DDA Director, Justin Knepper. Cooper is continuing to work on the list of existing downtown buildings that have vacant second floor space.

## **VI. Public Comment and Announcements**

There were no public comments or announcements.

## **VII. Board Comments and Announcements**

There were no Board comments or announcements.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

ALLISON YOUNGS, DDA Chair

blm