

MAIN STREET/DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023 – 8:30 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
Jessica Johnston
Debbie Jones
Sue Anne Wilks
Mark Savoie

Absent: Amy Goetz
Ray Bauer – City Commission Liaison

I. Routine Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:30 am.

2. Roll Call

Recommended action: Motion to excuse Amy Goetz from meeting.

Attendance was taken as noted.

Moved by Ray Bell, supported by Jessica Johnston, to excuse Amy Goetz from the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes

March 8, 2023, Regular DDA Board Meeting Minutes

Recommended action (option 1): Motion to approve regular DDA Board meeting minutes as is from March 8, 2023, Board meeting.

Recommended action (option 2): Motion to approve regular DDA Board meeting minutes with changes as proposed by S. Wilks from March 8, 2023, Board meeting.

Discussion was held on the process and expectations of Board meeting minutes.

Moved by Sue Anne Wilks, supported by Ray Bell, to approve the March 8, 2023, regular DDA Board meeting minutes, with changes as proposed by S. Wilks. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes
April 12, 2023, Regular DDA Board Meeting Minutes

Recommended action: Motion to approve regular DDA Board meeting minutes from April 12, 2023, Board meeting.

Moved by Ray Bell, supported by Sue Anne Wilks, to approve the April 12, 2023, regular DDA Board meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Agenda

Recommended action: Motion to approve agenda for today's meeting.

Moved by Brian Chapman, supported by Ray Bell, to approve the May 10, 2023, DDA Board meeting agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest.

There were no conflicts of interest.

**II. Economic Development Strategic Plan – Downtown Sault Ste. Marie Draft Presentation
Stephanie Sprecker, DDA Director, Jeff Holt, EDC Executive Director**

Jeff Holt, EDC Executive Director, began the Economic Development Strategic Plan – Downtown Sault Ste. Marie draft presentation by explaining that Explorer Solutions has been selected to consult on the Strategic Plan. Surveys were sent to community members and organizations within the community and 500 responses were received. Holt noted that this is a great opportunity to receive input from the public. He provided the Board with a review of the priorities, objectives, and strategies of the Strategic Plan. Once the plan has been finalized, funding will be secured.

III. Action & Consensus Items

1. Election of Officers

a. DDA Board Chairperson Appointment

Recommended action: Motion to appoint _____ as Chairperson of the DDA Board, with term to expire on 4/1/2025.

Discussion was held on the appointment of the DDA Board Chairperson.

Moved by Sue Anne Wilks, supported by Mark Savoie, to appoint Ray Bell as Chairperson of the DDA Board, with a term to expire on 4/1/2025. There were three yeas, Wilks, Savoie, and Bell, and four nays, Chapman, Cooper, Johnston, and Jones – motion failed.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Jessica Johnston, to appoint Craig Cooper as Chairperson of the DDA Board, with a term to expire on 4/1/2025. The motion passed unanimously.

b. If Necessary DDA Board Vice-Chairperson Appointment

Recommended action: Motion to appoint _____ as Vice-Chairperson of the DDA Board, with term to expire on 4/1/2025.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Jessica Johnston, to appoint Ray Bell as Vice-Chairperson of the DDA Board, with a term to expire on 4/1/2025. The motion passed unanimously.

c. DDA Board Vacancy Appointment

Recommended action: Motion to appoint _____ as a member of the DDA Board.

Discussion was held on the DDA Board vacancy appointment. Prior to the Board meeting, Sprecker sent Board members three applications from potential DDA Board members. The Board reviewed the applications for Tammy Rutledge, Jordan Chisholm, and Misti Collia.

Moved by Debbie Jones, supported by Jessica Johnston, to appoint Jordan Chisholm as a member of the DDA Board. The motion passed unanimously.

d. DDA Board Position/Recommendation on Form Based Code to City Commission

Tentative Discussion Led by Kelly Freeman, Director of Community Development.

Recommended action (option 1): Motion to support Form Based Code and direct Stephanie Sprecker, DDA Director, to draft a letter of support to present City Commission

Recommended action (option 2): Motion to not support Form Based Code and take no action to City Commission

Kelly Freeman, Director of Community Development, began by providing an overview of the Form Based Code, which focuses on the historic features and character of downtown buildings. Based on community feedback, the code was created with two tracks, one for new buildings and the other for existing buildings. Freeman added that buildings are distinguished as contributing or noncontributing. A noncontributing building can become a contributing building through an amendment process. Freeman noted that the Form Based Code does not force changes on property owners, prevent routine maintenance, implement an HOA, or restrict what occupies a building. Additionally, existing buildings would be grandfathered in when the code is adopted, with exceptions for changes made after the code is adopted. Matt Wilks shared his concerns and stated that he created a petition opposing the Form Based Code.

Moved by Sue Anne Wilks, supported by Ray Bell, to table discussion on the Form Based Code. There were four yeas, Wilks, Bell, Savoie, and Johnston, and two nays Cooper, Jones; Chapman abstained – motion passed.

IV. Director's Report & Updates – Stephanie Sprecker

1. Match on Main Street Grants

Discussion was held on the Match on Main Street Grants. A six-month extension has been submitted for Co-Ed Flowers. Prim Aesthetics Match on Main Street Grant funds should be received shortly. Additionally, Bird's Eye has six months to complete the work for the grant.

2. Optimize Main Street Grants

Discussion was held on the Optimize Main Street Grants. Sprecker began by explaining that Soo Locks Candy Shop and Gym 906 were selected for the most recent round of the Optimize Main Street Grant for \$2,500, to be used for technology. Soo Locks Candy Shop will utilize the funds to expand to online sales, which will allow for year-round revenue. Gym 906 will also create an online presence to expand revenue.

3. Sponsorship Package

Discussion was held on the sponsorship package. The Board came to the consensus that the sponsorship package can be distributed without Board approval. Sprecker will work with Wilks to distribute the sponsorship package on July 1, 2023.

4. Storytelling Service

Discussion was held on the Storytelling Service taking place on Friday, May 12, 2023. Phil Eich will attend the service and create the story of our downtown, which will be distributed to the Board and shared by the MEDC and Main Street.

5. Non-DDA Events/Activities

a. Farmer's Market – Beginning 5/24

The Farmer's Market will begin on May 24, 2023.

i. Canopy Update

Discussion was held on the Farmer's Market canopy update. The Department of Public Works has ordered the canopy, which is expected to be installed within the month.

b. Engineers Day 6/30

Discussion was held on Engineers Day, which will take place on June 30, 2023.

c. Downtown Cleanup Day (SCCU) – 6/19

Discussion was held on the Downtown Cleanup Day taking place on June 19, 2023. Soo Co-op Credit Union employees will take part in cleaning parks and general downtown cleanup.

6. MDA Summer Conference – 6/2 (Virtual)

Discussion was held on the MDA Summer Conference, which will take place on June 2, 2023. Sprecker will be attending the conference virtually. All Board members are welcome to attend.

V. Board Comments and Announcements

1. DDA Classification – Nonprofit/Tax-Exempt Government – Sue Anne Wilks

Discussion was held on the DDA Classification – Nonprofit/Tax-Exempt Government. Wilks reviewed the requirements for 501(c)(3) classification. Chapman noted that our DDA is also Main Street, which is a not-for-profit entity, and that donations can be written off. Wilks suggested looking into the designation to decide if the classification would be beneficial.

VI. Transformation Strategy Plan

Committee Updates

General Update – Stephanie Sprecker

Sprecker thanked the Board for their active involvement in the Committees.

1. Promotions Committee – Stephanie Sprecker/Jessica Johnston

Upcoming Events:

a. Ladies Night Out – May 19th

Discussion was held on Ladies Night Out, which will take place on May 19, 2023. Johnston is working on creating fliers that will include specials from participating retailers. Deep Roots Salon will host the pre-party and Austin's Cigar Lounge will host the after-party. Sprecker has coordinated transportation for the event.

b. Music in the Park – Beginning 6/21

Discussion was held on Music in the Park, beginning on June 21, 2023. Sprecker has distributed the preliminary schedule to the Board. Work will begin on creating a flyer, which will include sponsors. Sprecker added that in addition to fan favorites, there will be several new performers this year.

Other:

c. Website (downtownsault.org)

Discussion was held on the website. Sprecker explained that the website developer will have the website running very soon, just in time for summer.

2. Organizations Committee – Sue Anne Wilks

a. Volunteer Spring Social Gathering Date 6/5/2023

Discussion was held on the Volunteer Spring Social Gathering, which will take place on June 5, 2023, at The Lockview. Wilks has created an agenda, with input from Cooper and Johnston. Job descriptions will not be included. Shannon Dorrity and Misti Colliia have indicated that they will help with the social gathering.

b. Other

Discussion was held on other matters regarding the Organizations Committee.

3. Design Committee – Stephanie Sprecker/Craig Cooper

a. Flower Project – Planting date 5/27

Discussion was held on the Flower Project. Planting of the perennials will take place on May 27, 2023. Sprecker, Jones, and Goetz have discussed placement of the planters. Due to construction, planters will not be placed on Ashmun Street. Jen Reattoir has shown interest in joining the Design Committee.

b. Crosswalk Murals

Discussion was held on the Crosswalk Murals. Cooper will go to Sherman Williams to price out paint, which will determine how many crosswalk murals will be completed. Sprecker added that there is an opportunity to expand on the crosswalk murals through a grant. Wilda Hopper has offered to help with the grant and the crosswalk murals.

4. Economic Vitality Committee – Craig Cooper

a. Active Work:

i. Ready 2 Recruit Primer Service – Developing toolbox

Discussion was held on the Ready 2 Recruit Primer Service. The service will help create a toolbox that will assist in promoting real estate and downtown development. Sprecker suggested changing the name of the retailers' meeting to the business owners' meeting, to include other businesses.

ii. Real Estate Training Series

Discussion was held on the Real Estate Training Series. The training series will provide insight on how to utilize the toolbox created at the Ready 2 Recruit Primer Service.

iii. Other

Discussion was held on other matters regarding the Economic Vitality Committee.

VII. Public Comment and Announcements

There were no public comments or announcements.

VIII. Board Comments and Announcements

There were no Board comments or announcements.

IX. Adjournment

Moved by Mark Savoie, supported by Sue Anne Wilks, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:35 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Cooper, DDA Interim -Chair

blm