

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9TH, 2024
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B

PRESENT: Bruce Allen, Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Karen Goodman, Ben Crowley, Bill Gambill, Lindsey Swidorski, Deanna Marsh

ABSENT: Kyle Mosher, Tyler Leppanen

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by the Vice-Chair at 8:31 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Andrew Stafford recommends an amendment to the agenda correcting the Special Meeting Date from December 8th to December 11th.

MOTION by Bill Gambill, second by Ben Crowley to approve the amended agenda.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

a. None

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to approve the minutes from the September 11th, 2024, Regular Meeting.

5. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS

a. Carmen Kott sent out the updated invoice list, which now includes a photography invoice for the Fall Festival.

MOTION by Karen Goodman second by Lindsey Swidorski to approve the September 2024 financials.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

6. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

- a. Andrew Stafford provided an executive report update to the board, highlights include:
- i. **Downtown Business:** Annie's Florals, has relocated to downtown.
 - ii. **Building Price:** The price of 348 River Street has dropped highlighting the seller's urgency to offload the property.
 - iii. **Northern Hotel RFP:** A request for proposal (RFP) is in progress for the Northern Hotel. The RFP will be presented at the next county land bank meeting.

7. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

a. Facade Grant

i. Applications close on October 15th, with three submissions in and three more expected. The ad hoc committee will review and score them, with funding decisions expected in November.

b. Streetscape

i. Rightside Design has made progress with initial renderings, which were reviewed by the ad hoc committee. Discussions with Spicer Group followed to evaluate feasibility on River Street. The Spicer Group provided a proposal to assist further. At this critical stage, engineering firms are needed to assess costs and feasibility for the project's next steps. Bill Gambill emphasized the need for accurate cost estimates to determine financial feasibility.

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz, second by Ben Crowley to accept the proposal from Spicer for the streetscape proposal.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

c. Events

i. Event Trailer Fund Allocation

(i.) The insurance for the event trailer is finalized, and necessary items have been purchased. Andrew Stafford requested an additional \$5,000 for the trailer and decals. The trailer needs branding before public use, and DPW may be the only department authorized to move it. Deanna Marsh recommended setting aside \$6,000 to cover all costs, while Ben Crowley recommended that the trailer's ramp doors have assisted mechanisms due to their weight.

MOTION by Deanna Marsh, second by Karen Goodman to move forward with the \$6,000 allocation for the purchase of the event trailer and the decals.

ii. New Procedure for Street Closure

(i.) The board discussed setting objective criteria for street closure requests, with the current rule requiring 60 days' notice. Bill Gambill emphasized a uniform event management approach, while Ben Crowley suggested removing the time frame. Lindsey Swidorski supported eliminating the time constraint if other criteria, like family-friendliness, notice for neighbors and adequate marketing time, are met.

(ii.) Discussion on the position of an events coordinator took place and has been tabled to the next meeting.

iii. Jones Street Closure Application - November 2nd

(i) Ben recommends allowing this application to bypass the DDA and go directly to the council, as it is not within the 60-day requirement the DDA Board is trying to implement and the event is outside of the DDA District.

(ii) Sammie Lukaskiewicz expressed her desire for the area to be seen as a place that encourages events. She believes the DDA should set a positive tone for the area and create an environment where people feel encouraged to host events.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Ben Crowley to bypass a recommendation to Council due to the event being outside of the DDA District.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

iv. Fall Festival Reimbursement

(i) The fall festival organizer is seeking reimbursement for expenses incurred. The DDA is currently the fiduciary for funds raised for the event.

MOTION by Ben Crowley, second by Deanna Marsh to reimburse Port City Emporium (Pat and Anita Shaffer) for expenses incurred for the Fall Festival.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

v. Holiday Decor Quote

(i) The DDA board approved the holiday decor quote from Lutz Farms. Ben Crowley suggested exploring other vendors and questioned what's included in the decor budget. Deanna Marsh supported Lutz Farms, praising their quality.

MOTION by Bill Gambill, second by Deanna Marsh to approve the quote for holiday decor from Lutz Farms.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

d. Gap Financing

i. Proposed TIF Plan Addition

(i) Tabled discussion until the next meeting. Andrew Stafford will continue to connect with the board members.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Revolving Loan Fund

i. We are waiting on the Venture North board resolution for the transfer of funds.

b. Shine

i. No significant updates. Three trees appear in poor condition due to broken cords and need to be evaluated.

c. Riverwalk

- i. An arborist will evaluate the North Riverwalk. An MDNR grant is expected in the next couple of weeks. Packages for the South Riverwalk have been sent out to ensure the project moves forward.

d. Social District

i. Stickers Updates

1. There was a discussion about the process of buying stickers. Due to purchasing constraints faced by the DDA director, we are unable to stockpile stickers. Further discussion will take place on allowing businesses access to the social district sticker logo.

ii. Participating Businesses Packet

1. Contains the legislation and information regarding the social district to be distributed to participating businesses.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Special Meeting December 11th, 2024

- i. The special meeting will be held to review selected documents. As a board we are required to have two special meetings a year.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None

11. BOARD COMMENTS

Bill Gambill: Brad Olsen expressed interest in a housing facilities incentive district, which may come before the board soon. The City obtained an emergency permit to remove the net shed but not to reinstate it.

Deanna Marsh: Inquired about the news of Stacie Bytwork's departure.

Bruce Allen: The Riverwalk was lost over the summer, but Bill Gambill successfully restored it within the same season, noting his appreciation to Bill Gambill's efforts.

Karen: Reiterated her nostalgic feelings for the net shed and expressed her appreciation for it.

12. ADJOURN

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13th, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Bill Gmabill supported by Deanna Marsh **to adjourn at 9:40 a.m.**

Nicole Kaminski
Acting Recording Secretary

