

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2024
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B

PRESENT: Kyle Mosher, Bruce Allen, Tyler Leppanen, Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Karen Goodman, Deanna Marsh, Lindsey Swidorski

ABSENT: Ben Crowley, Bill Gambill

ALSO PRESENT: Sara Herberger, Kyle Kotecki, Gordie Heinold, Brandon Jensen, Krista McDougall

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Deanna Marsh to accept and amend the agenda to include discussion on event street closures as suggested by Tyler Leppanen and to adopt the agenda as presented.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Gordie Heinold: raised concerns about the tree lighting, echoing Jane Seviert's worries about the impact on tree health and Matt LaMore's opinion that the lights are excessively wound. He also highlighted the unsightly electrical boxes behind Anne's bookstore, noting that two belong to Consumers Energy and the others might be owned by a private business or cable company. While he sees more work needed on the Riverwalk, he doesn't feel equipped to lead or make decisions on behalf of the public.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JULY 10TH, 2024 REGULAR MEETING**

MOTION by Tyler Leppanen, second by Bruce Allen to approve the minutes from the July 10th, 2024, Regular Meeting.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 7TH, 2024 SPECIAL MEETING**

MOTION by Tyler Leppanen, second by Lindsey Swidorski to approve the minutes from the August 7th, 2024, Special Meeting.

6. **ANNUAL COMPILED FINANCIAL REPORT - RICHARDS & MCDUGALL**

Krista McDougall from Richards & McDougall presented an overview of the financials from the 2023/2024 fiscal year:

Highlights from the presentation:

- i. Checking accounts are up compared to last year.
- ii. Total equity has increased from the prior year.
- iii. Overall income is down compared to last year. This is due to the variation in programs compared to the previous year.
- iv. Despite the income fluctuation, all projects are proceeding well, with no financial concerns identified in the statements.

7. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Tyler Leppanen to approve the July 2024 financials.

Voice vote—Motion approved

8. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

- i. Andrew Stafford provided an economic development update regarding the DDA District.
- ii. 348 River Street has seen three interested buyers in the last month but no offers have come forward.
- iii. The Brownfield plan that was approved at the DDA Special Meeting was approved by City Council. Movement on the project is expected next spring.
- iv. A business relocation to the downtown area is expected to take place in November, further details are still confidential.
- v. Andrew Stafford reiterated that he is the point of contact for the DDA and that anything DDA related should be directed to him or the DDA director email.

9. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

a. Facade Grant

- i. The proposed guidelines and application for this year's grant cycle are complete and awaiting board approval to be released to the public. Minimal changes to the guidelines were made.

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to approve the Facade Grant Application with suggested changes.

Voice vote—Motion approved

b. Streetscape

i. Presentation by RightSide Design

- Brandon Jenson presented a proposal to consult RightSide Design in organizing the work done by Flicks and Vanderburg and Spicer Group.
- Concerns were raised by Sammie Lukaskiewicz about whether the proposed streetscape scope and funding are realistic for Manistee. Karen Goodman questioned what the results were of the survey sent to board members about priority items. Bruce Allen emphasized the importance of documenting top priorities and achieving consensus.
- RightSide Design will lead the creation of a communication toolkit, partnering with the DDA to gather and package items from the F&B study, tailored to the needs of the DDA and Streetscape Subcommittee, to guide the next steps in the streetscape project.
- The Streetscape Committee recommends supporting RightSide Design as the facilitator to create a clear, sustainable, and realistic plan for the streetscape that will endure beyond current board members.

MOTION by Karen Goodman second by Bruce Allen to accept the contract for phase one of Rightside Design Group's quoted proposal.

Voice vote—Motion approved

c. Events

- i. Items have been purchased and delivered for the event trailer. Items currently purchased are picnic tables, speaker and sound system, signs, and a heater. Plans for acquiring high top tables and cornhole boards were discussed, with a budget layout indicating just under \$2,000 left of the allocated funds for additional items and potential trailer purchases. The Decision has been established that the trailer is only to be used for the DDA District.
- ii. Comments by board members that the trailer needs to be wrapped immediately upon purchase with the DDA logo. Committee approval is needed for purchasing the last of the proposed items, high top tables and corn hole boards.

d. Street Closures

- i. Updates were provided on street closure applications, emphasizing the need for clear criteria and communication to minimize negative impacts on businesses.
- ii. Discussion took place on the system of approval and recommendation of approval. City Council is asking for the DDA Board to provide recommendations

on if street closures should be approved or not. Discussion took place on what the order of approval should be, more discussion to come at future meetings.

iii. General consensus is that the approval for a street closure should be justified, organized and that not all events should result in the closure of a street because of the resulting impacts of the closure.

iv. Recommendation by the board to add City Council and DDA meeting schedule to the event brochure to assist with application deadlines by applicants

e. Gap Financing

i. Sub-committee met and had discussion of tangible examples of implementing this into our community. By using example properties and how this tool would be utilized.

ii. Sub-committee will recommend amendments to the current language of the program. Proposed verbiage and example projects will be presented at the next meeting.

iii. A more in depth discussion and presentation on Gap Financing will take place in future meetings.

10. OLD BUSINESS

a. Downtown Window Appearance

i. Letters regarding downtown window appearance were sent out to business owners via the quarterly newsletter and conversations with specific business owners regarding their space have taken place.

b. Revolving Loan Fund

i. After review of the program the DDA board has two options for future use of the funds: continue the program as is or give back the money to the USDA.

ii. Andrew Stafford made the recommendation to transfer the program to Venture North with the requirement that it is used for businesses within the DDA District. More work will need to be done to transfer the funds and board approval is needed to transfer the funds to Venture North.

iii. To current understanding based on past conversations with Venture North there would be no fee to the DDA, the DDA would continue to promote the program but it would essentially become a Venture North program. USDA is very comfortable in this solution for the DDA to transfer the

funds to Venture North because of a pre-existing and established relationship.

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to transfer the revolving loans funds balance to Venture North to run the program on behalf of the Downtown Development Authority,

Voice vote—Motion approved

c. DDA Bylaw Changes

- i. Andrew Stafford gave an update on the on-going struggles to get in contact with the City Attorney regarding the by-laws changes. Continued work with Bill Gambill to figure out how to get these changes before the City Council will take place.

d. Riverwalk

- i. Bids for the Riverwalk project regarding the EDA Grant came in higher than expected, the City will have to itemize priorities and re-evaluate the scope.

e. Social District

- i. Further communication to participating businesses will take place regarding the Social District legislation.
- ii. Kyle Mosher recommends a creation of one or two page compliance sheets for participants, describing what's needed by business owners to be in compliance with the legislation.

f. Shine Update and Options

- i. Andrew Stafford constructed a budget for the cost to maintain the program. He stated that annual maintenance will be necessary. There is a \$40,000 line in the budget for downtown decorations, which is currently covering the cost of this program.

- ii. Solutions will need to be discussed regarding the health of the trees and continuing the program in a way that's not damaging to the trees.

- iii. The Board unanimously agreed to continue the program.

11. NEW BUSINESS

1. Food Truck Rules and Regulations

- a. Andrew Stafford presented a packet regarding Food Truck Rules and Regulations as it relates to the DDA District because of increased interest

from food truck vendors. The packet does not need board approval

2. Board On-Boarding Packet

- a. Andrew Stafford presented a Board on-boarding packet for new and existing board members.
- b. The packet provides an overview of the role of a board member, explaining the duties and responsibilities. The purpose is to educate new board members in an easier way.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

13. BOARD COMMENTS

Deanna Marsh: Questioned that since there is a \$40,000 line in the budget for downtown decorations, if some of these funds can be used to enhance decorations for the Fall Festival. She will gather and present quotes from Weesies and one other place at the next meeting.

Bruce Allen: Expressed his appreciation for the conduit that existed in the past that worked to get projects done downtown. Stressed that the board doesn't currently have a conduit presenting projects they'd like to get funded to be done for the improvement of downtown Manistee.

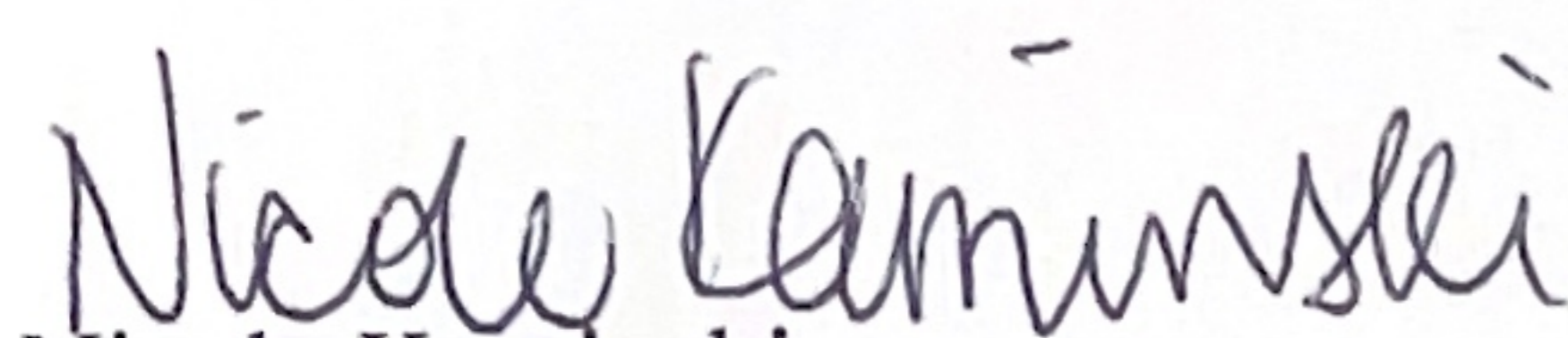
Sammie Lukaskiewicz: Shared that the 9 & 10 News weather camera is up and running. with a special thanks to the Vogue Theatre for allowing insulation to be on their build. Manistee is getting wonderful coverage online and on TV.

Karen Goodman: Suggests that the Board reach out to DPW, Consumer Energy, or the Cable Company about the electrical boxes on the Riverwalk. Requesting that solutions be presented to hide them. She also commented on the removal of the trees by Dicks Barber Shop, requesting that alternate greenery be planted.

14. ADJOURN

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Sammie Lukaskiewicz supported by Lindsey Swidorski to **adjourn at 10:02 a.m.**


Nicole Kaminski
Acting Recording Secretary