

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 14, 2020
8:00 A.M., MANISTEE CITY HALL**

PRESENT: Tamara DePonio, Barry Lind, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Karen Goodman, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Jodi Walter

ALSO PRESENT: Stacie Bytwork, Marc Miller, Mayor Pro-Tem James Grabowski, Erin Glynn – News Advocate

CALL TO ORDER.

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by Kenneth Urban to adopt the agenda with amendments. Add under Old Business: DDA/West Shore Community College Lease Agreement Update and Vehicle Charging Stations.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

MOTION by Kenneth Urban second by James Beaudrie to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2020 regular meeting.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Barry Lind to approve the September and October 2020 Financial Reports.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

Discussion included:

- Streamlining payments.
- Processes for Board approval of checks and expenditures.
- Boards fiduciary responsibility to review financials regularly.
- Tamara DePonio and Stacie Bytwork verbally reviewed three checks that have been recently or will be today deposited.

Consensus: Include checks and expeditors in agenda packet for monthly Board approval. Have accountant prepare checks in advance and once approval comes through send out.

COMMITTEE REPORTS.

- Merchant Meetings – Kenneth Urban
Attended one meeting so far. Question he received from merchants was about the Downtown dumpster corrals and how these will be billed. Also, merchants feel there is a communication void on this subject with the City.
Thad Taylor addressed this: City staff is working on payment mechanisms and how to equitably charge merchants. He asked Stacie Bytwork to have Jeff Mikula attend a Merchant Meeting or provide a written update for the merchants, to address the communication void.

- Design Committee – Barry Lind
Current Projects:
 - Parking lot signage.
 - Tracking and updating progress on refuse corrals.
 - Gateway Project
 - TIF and planned projects/timeframes.
 - Riverwalk plan.
 - Next section of pavers on River Street to be put out for bid.
 - Bike racks.
 - Signage with new City branding.
 - Art Park.
 - Seasonal/holiday decorations and banners.

Discussion included:

Riverwalk improvements and maintenance, blight, developments.

- Business Development – Tamara DePonio
October 20 is the next meeting; will we lead by Marc Miller. Spark will be the focus.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT.

Stacie Bytwork –

- Streamlining financials.
- Team Approach – Kristina Bajtka, Marketing downtown/Merchants; Marc Miller, Economic development of downtown.
- Preparing to move office in December to West Shore Community College building.
- Meet weekly as a team to communicate DDA business.

Kristina Bajtka –

- Meeting with Merchants every two weeks. Merchants lead the meetings and keep them informal; 15-20 usually attend.
- Restaurant looking for somewhere to dispose of grease.
- Working on a countywide Christmas Campaign; running weekend after Thanksgiving until January 1, 2021.
- Current Downtown Facebook page campaign – Fall in Love with Downtown.

- Replacing Downtown Dollars with online based countywide cash program.

Marc Miller –

- High level business contacts – 141 countywide/77 Downtown Manistee.
- Gateway Project
- Fricano’s Project.
- Downtown Reinvigoration Plan is coming to a close this week. Barricades will be picked up; barricades were donated by a local business with zero cost to the DDA. Would like to begin to plan for next summer over the winter months.

Discussion included:

- Downtown Dollars program – needs to come before the Board next month before a decision is made to do away with the program.
- Utilizing the Riverwalk for business opportunities – eateries, store fronts, and community gathering spaces facing the water.

OLD BUSINESS.

- a.) **DDA/West Shore Community College Lease Agreement** – Thad Taylor.

Final draft of the lease agreement has been completed.

Lease includes:

- One office space – 200 sq. ft.
- 21 dedicated parking spaces available 24/7.
- 18 additional parking spaces available after normal business hours.

NEW BUSINESS.

- a.) **Ground Level and Lower Level Dwelling Standards, C-3 District.**

Rob Carson, County Planner provided the new zoning amendments and language for Ground/Street Level & Lower Level Dwelling Standards in anticipation for beginning the process of scheduling a Public Hearing. Board asked Staff to highlight the changes from the previous draft presented and email it to them.

- b.) **Discussion of Implementation of Development Plan** – Thad Taylor.

Suggested the Board schedule a special brainstorming meeting, including Ed Bradford, City of Manistee Chief Financial Officer, to develop an implementation strategy for the current Development Plan. Board asked Staff to set up and provide copies of the Development Plan.

- c.) **Donation of Leslie Laskey Sculpture for the Riverwalk** – Thad Taylor.

Artwork donated for Riverwalk; DDA doesn’t have a Riverwalk plan yet.

Discussion included:

- Sculpture trail.
- West Shore Community College to place it.

Consensus: Board instructed Staff to speaking with WSCC contacts to discuss placement options.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

None

BOARD COMMENT.

Chair Mosher – Acknowledged challenge for City to equitably bill and the negative thoughts and feelings about downtown refuse corrals but feels it is a net positive to have trash off River Street. Encouraged Board to be positive about this with business owners.

CLOSED SESSION.

The Board will vote to enter Closed Session to discuss permissible business under the Open Meetings Act 15.268 Section 8(d), which states that a body may enter closed session, “[t]o consider the purchase or lease of real property up to the time an option to purchase or lease that real property is obtained.”

MOTION by Barry Lind, second by Thad Taylor to proceed to Closed Session to discuss permissible business under the Open Meetings Act 15.268 Section 8(d).
Voice vote—Motion approved.

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Thad Taylor to proceed to enter Regular Session.
Time: 9:19 a.m.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by James Beaudrie to authorize Chair Mosher to sign the Letter of Intent to the Gateway developers, to facilitate discussion on community-oriented partnership opportunities.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Thad Taylor to create a subcommittee comprised of Chair Mosher, Barry Lind, and Thad Taylor to meet with the Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce and the developers of the Gateway project to further facilitate a community-oriented partnership.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

ADJOURN.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 8 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 70 Maple Street, Manistee, Michigan.

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by Barry Lind **to adjourn at 9:22 a.m.**

Kelly McColl
Acting Recording Secretary