

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2021
8:30 A.M., VIRTUAL MEETING

PRESENT: Tamara DePonio (8:32 a.m.), Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson

EXCUSED ABSENCE: None

ALSO PRESENT: Stacie Bytwork, Marc Miller, Kristina Bajtka

1.) **CALL TO ORDER.**

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

Chair Mosher welcomed new member, Annie Jacobson, Director of Enrollment and Student Engagement for West Shore Community College.

2.) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by Kenneth Urban to adopt the agenda as presented.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson

No: None

3.) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4.) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by James Beaudrie to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2020 regular meeting.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson

No: None

5.) **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

MOTION by James Beaudrie, second by Thad Taylor to approve the December 2020 financials.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 9 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson

No: None

Discussion included:

- Monthly disbursement report and invoices have been added to the financial reports in monthly meeting packets for transparency.

6.) **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

a. Design – Chair Mosher, Kristina Bajtko

Discussion included:

- Need for new committee chair.
- Budget needs – will be part of bigger budget discussion.
- Update to downtown refuse & recycling ordinance and fees goes into effect on February 15, 2021. City sent the letter out to businesses this week.
- City bid requests for sidewalk pavers and painting will go out shortly.
- Discussed trees and lighting within the Gateway project.

b. Business Development – Marc Miller

Discussion included:

- December meeting was cancelled.
- Solidified smaller Spark events leading up to Spark.
 - Virtual Entrepreneurial Day – March 25 (evening) and March 26, 2021 (daytime).
 - Virtual Spark-lite – September 2021, eCommerce with smaller award.
- In person Spark Event – March 2022.
- Next meeting date January 20, 2021.

c. Gateway Development Ad-Hoc – Thad Taylor

Discussion included:

- Committee (Chair Mosher and Thad Taylor) continue to meet with developers and Chamber every two weeks. Positive discussion but nothing has been cemented.
- Committee will provide more details once developer is ready for that step. Making good strides.
- Project discussions have included construction in phases or an all-at-once strategy.
- Entrance to downtown from US-31 needs to be presentable and accessible however the project proceeds.

7.) **DIRECTOR'S REPORTS** – Stacie Bytwork.

Audit completed and documents available to Board for pickup at the new offices, located at 400 River Street. RFP for Accounting Services has been drafted and will go out this

week. Will focus time on updating website and merchant list, and development of DDA budget for fiscal year 2021-2022. Marc Miller and I meet monthly with Mike Szokola from the County Planning and Zoning Department.

a. Merchant's Report – Kristina Bajtko

Merchants meetings continue every two weeks; they are interested in commercials through TV and radio marketing. Representative from 9&10 News came to a prior meeting and representative from Eagle 101.5 will be presenting at the next meeting. Jeff Mikula came and spoke at a meeting to educate the Merchants on the upcoming changes to the downtown refuse and recycling program.

b. Economic Development – Marc Miller

Gateway project continues with positive discussion. Fricano's is moving towards closing on the River Street property shortly. Ted Fricano has obtained his liquor license and first ever OPRA designation issued in the City. He will also be applying for a façade grant from the DDA and working on negotiating with the City for the purchase of land under the deck. River Water development's PUD was approved by the Planning Commission last week. Northern Hotel, 141-149 Washington Street, is on the market; lots of inquiries and showings of property. Ongoing communication with potential small business owner looking to open business in the DDA district.

8.) **OLD BUSINESS.**

a. DDA Development Plan Special Meeting Date, January 27, 2021, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

b. Downtown Dollar Survey – Kristina Bajtko

MOTION by Bruce Allen to turn Downtown Dollars program decision over to the Chamber and Downtown Merchants.

Amended *MOTION* by Bruce Allen, second by Thad Taylor to end the Downtown Dollars program.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 1.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Annie Jacobson, Karen Goodman

No: Kenneth Urban

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by Bruce Allen to support the Manistee County Cash Program in lieu of the Downtown Dollars program.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 7 to 2.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Annie Jacobson

No: Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman

Discussion included:

- Review of the ten Merchant Surveys that were returned.
- Since October 8, 2020 - \$33,000 invested in the Manistee County Cash program.
- Concern regarding appearances due to the Chamber financially benefiting from this program.
- Chamber will be completely transparent with all financial information. There are administrative cost and time spent promoting and administering program – not a money maker.
- Concerns regarding those outside organization mistakenly believing the DDA to financially support program.

9.) **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. City email addresses for Boards and Commissions – Thad Taylor

MOTION by Kenneth Urban, second by James Beaudrie to authorize payment of \$192.00 annually to pay for City email addresses for DDA members.
With Roll Call vote this motion passed 9 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson

No: None

Discussion included:

- City requiring all Board and Commission members to use City issued emails.
- Each Board and Commission is required to pay for their cost; \$192.00 per year.
- Allows City to fill Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests in an efficiently.
- Thad Taylor to check with IT if Google Drive is compatible and if it is Microsoft based or web hosted.

b. DDA Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022

Consensus: DDA Director to schedule a work session, to include 15–20-minute training on creating a budget by City Financial Director Ed Bradford, to discuss the budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year (budget is due to the City by March 17, 2021).

10. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

11. **BOARD COMMENT.**

Thad Taylor – At the January 5, 2021 Council meeting, Council approved the agreement for Downtown car charging units. Two will be located in the City lot across from the North Channel Brewery and two in the DDA lot on River Street.

Annie Jacobson – Grateful to be here. It is nice to meet everyone and I am looking forward to working together.

12. **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. virtually via ZOOM.

MOTION by Thad Taylor **to adjourn at 9:22 a.m.**

Kelly McColl
Acting Recording Secretary