

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2021
8:30 A.M., VIRTUAL MEETING

PRESENT: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor (left at 9:57), Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Ken Urban, Karen Goodman (left at 9:01), Annie Jacobson

EXCUSED ABSENCE:

ALSO PRESENT: Stacie Bytwork, Marc Miller, Kristina Bajtka, Ron Stoneman – MAPS Superintendent

1.) **CALL TO ORDER.**

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

2.) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

MOTION by Ken Urban, second by Jodi Walter to adopt the agenda as presented.
With Roll Call vote this motion passed 9 to 0.

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

No: None

3.) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4.) **MANISTEE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRESENTATION** – Superintendent Ron Stoneman.

- Vision for students, teachers, and the future
 - MMHS (6th-12th grades) – secure entry (competed), middle school gym & locker room addition, door updates, partial roof replacement, track storage.
 - Demolition of Jefferson School and possible uses/plan for the property.
 - Kennedy School – demolition of 1927 building, secure entry, updates to meet educational standards, parking improvements, updated pick-up/drop-off areas.
 - Madison School – relocate MAPS central office, mechanical updates, roof replacement. Possibility of Transportation relocation.
- Financial impact of the project and costs.
- Importance of providing quality education and facilities.
- Comparisons to surrounding communities.
- Plan B alternatives if the millage request does not pass.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

- 5.) *MOTION* by Karen Goodman, second by James Beaudrie to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2021 regular meeting.
With Roll Call vote this motion passed 9 to 0.

Yes: Thad Taylor, James Beaudrie, Annie Jacobson, Tamara DePonio, Jodi Walter, Bruce Allen, Kyle Mosher, Karen Goodman, Ken Urban
No: None

- 6.) *MOTION* by James Beaudrie, second by Bruce Allen to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2021 special meeting.
With Roll Call vote this motion passed 9 to 0.

Yes: Ken Urban, Karen Goodman, Kyle Mosher, Bruce Allen, Jodi Walter, Tamara DePonio, Annie Jacobson, James Beaudrie, Thad Taylor
No: None

- 7.) **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

MOTION by James Beaudrie, second by Tamara DePonio to approve the February 2021 financials, including approval of invoices in the amount of \$22,500.
With Roll Call vote this motion passed 9 to 0.

Yes: Kyle Mosher, Ken Urban, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson, Tamara DePonio, Bruce Allen, Thad Taylor, James Beaudrie, Jodi Walter
No: None

- 8.) **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

a. Design – Ken Urban

Meeting held on Monday, March 8. Discussed refuse and recycling downtown, Riverwalk CIP, pavers, lighting, streetscape, façades, outdoor dining standards. Focused time was spent on the West Shore Community College (WSCC) Riverwalk Plaza. Estimate \$250,000 cost, to include ADA accessible sidewalk ramps, decking and railing, 30–40-foot diameter octagon with area for Laskey sculpture. Design Committee recommends to DDA Board moving forward on the WSCC Plaza. Survey is necessary to move forward – cost \$5,000. Fees already incurred for landscape design/architectural design - \$20,000.

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by Bruce Allen to authorize payment up to \$10,000 to WSCC to begin Riverwalk Plaza project.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 7 to 0. Annie Jacobson abstained due to conflict of interest.

Yes: James Beaudrie, Thad Taylor, Bruce Allen, Jodi Walter, Ken Urban, Kyle Mosher, Tamara DePonio,

No: None

b. Business Development – Marc Miller

March 17, 2021 is the next meeting. Committee Member Madelyn Fitzsimmons is heading up the Spark Lite event, scheduled for September 2021. Six speakers lined up for 2021 Entrepreneurial Day, March 25-26. Event is free; students and non-county residents are welcomed to attend as well. Special thank you to Tamara DePonio for lining up 4Front Credit Union as the sponsor for this event. No set plan for sponsorship for Spark Lite yet – in discussion.

Discussion included:

- Gateway to include business pop-up/incubator space. DDA should consider providing this space in the meantime.
- Hospitality training/Hospitality Day – Chamber and WSCC working on a customer service program.

9.) **DIRECTOR’S REPORTS** – Stacie Bytwork.

Budget/finances have been the focus, as DDA budget is due to the City and the new accounting firm started last week. Applied for the Consumers Energy Small Town Pitch again this year. Out of 95 applicants, Manistee was selected in the top 10 again this year. Prizes are \$25,000 for 1st Place, \$15,000 for 2nd Place, and \$10,000 for 3rd Place.

a. Merchant’s Report – Kristina Bajtka

Working with merchants to get numbers for benches and planters. Also working on street vendor and outdoor seating permits. Great discussion at the last Merchant Meeting about streetscapes. Will be attending Michigan Downtown Association Spring Workshop; includes sessions called Outside is In and Downtown’s Age-Old Question, “What to do with Vacant Buildings?”

b. Economic Development – Marc Miller

No less than 5 entrepreneurs looking for downtown space, all are having difficulty for variety of reasons. Working on finding solutions and communicating with property owners.

10.) **OLD BUSINESS.**

a. DDA Budget discussion for fiscal year 2021-2022 – Tamara DePonio, Bruce Allen, Stacie Bytwork

Discussion included:

- Kristina is meeting with accountants on Monday to make sure all figures are accurate.

- Will need to further discuss spend down of General Fund or Bonding for projects.
- Delay budget approval but result will be clean and accurate.
- WSCC Riverwalk Plaza – payment options. Bonding for this project and bundling others with it.
- Still negotiating Gateway Project but would be bonded separately.

Consensus: Staff to schedule special meeting to discuss bonding after budget finalized. Staff to schedule special meeting to approve budget.

11.) **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. DDA Secretary Appointment – Chair Mosher

Chair Mosher nominated Jodi Walter for DDA Secretary appointment; she accepted.

MOTION by James Beaudrie, second by Thad Taylor to appoint Jodi Walter as Secretary of the DDA.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

No: None

b. Social Districts – James Beaudrie and Stacie Bytwork

Discussion included:

- Social Districts allow customers to take alcoholic beverages outside of an establishment within a designated area.
- Many communities inside of Michigan and nationally have approved Social Districts. 19 counties in Michigan, some counties have multiple communities with approved Social Districts.
- Riverwalk area vs. Street side.
- Communities must meet specific criteria to establish the Social District. Ludington is one local community which has recently done this.
- Application process must be supported by City Council.

Consensus: James Beaudrie will contact communities with approved Social Districts and DDA will begin actively pursuing.

12.) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

13.) **BOARD COMMENT.**

Ken Urban – working on setting up a DDA walk through. Will let Board know when it is scheduled for those who would like to participate.

14.) **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.

MOTION by James Beaudrie, second by Ken Urban **to adjourn at 10:05 a.m.**

Kelly McColl
Acting Recording Secretary