

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 14, 2021
8:30 A.M., VIRTUAL MEETING**

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

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Tamara DePonio

ALSO PRESENT: Stacie Bytwork, Marc Miller, Kristina Bajtka

1.) **CALL TO ORDER.**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:30 a.m.

Roll Call.

All Members attending remotely:

Kyle Mosher – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

Thad Taylor – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

Jodi Walter – Little River Reservation, Manistee County, MI

James Beaudrie – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

Bruce Allen – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

Ken Urban – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

Karen Goodman – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

Annie Jacobson – City of Manistee, Manistee County, MI

2.) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

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

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

No: None

3.) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4./5.) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by James Beaudrie to approve the minutes from the
March 10, 2021 regular meeting.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

MOTION by James Beaudrie, second by Bruce Allen to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2021 special meeting.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

6.) **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

MOTION by Ken Urban, second by James Beaudrie to approve the March 2021 financials.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

a. *MOTION* by Thad Taylor, second by Bruce Allen to approve expenses in the amount of \$42,608.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

b. West Shore Community College Riverwalk (WSCC) Plaza/Façade Grant – both are in the approved TIF plan. It is the DDA’s intent to pay the previously agreed amount of the WSCC Riverwalk Plaza in full with bond dollars. Staff will provide WSCC with a letter of intent with this information. The façade grant cannot be paid through bond funding so is being paid over time.

7.) **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

a. Design – Ken Urban.

i. – DDA District Walk Through Recap – 2.5-hour walk-thru with Jeff Mikula, DPW Director. Discussion included:

- Landscaping
- Invasive species
- Removal of shrubs along Riverwalk for the new tour boat
- Pricing for semi-permanent crosswalk signs
- Recognizing businesses/property owners
- Upgrading the streetscape

- MDOT US31 Bridge work – impact of rerouting on downtown

Also discussed a budget amendment for the design committee as the refuse corrals were applied this year instead of last. Kristina Bajtka will discuss with Ed Bradford and bring back to Board for vote.

b. Business Development – Marc Miller.

Discussion on Spark Lite, scheduled for September. Focus will be E-Commerce for both new and existing businesses looking to diversify. Entrepreneurial Day was successful, all workshops were recorded – will continue to be a resource for future use. Will be looking into utilizing the revolving loan fund – will need to locate and identify procedures. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, 2021.

8.) **DIRECTOR’S REPORTS** – Stacie Bytwork. Thanked Staff for hard work on budget. Kristina is shifting focus to getting necessary permits in order for the downtown businesses. Staff’s next project will be the DDA website.

a. Merchant’s Report/Michigan Downtown Spring Conference – Kristina Bajtka. Merchant meeting was this week. In addition to the other businesses already utilizing the outdoor seating option, Fillmore and Goodies are interested as well. Merchants will begin meeting once a month – 2nd Thursday, following the DDA meetings. Many businesses are experiencing staffing shortages. Downtown “open” flags were discussed. Kristina found the Michigan Downtown Spring Conference very useful – especially as we explore outdoor seating options and Social Districts.

b. Economic Development – Marc Miller. Hotel Northern on Washington Street was discussed. Discussion included lots of interested buyers though no contracts, Obsolete Property designation eligibility, and marketing incentives for developers. Discussed the Princess of Ludington boat tour that has moved locations to Manistee. Updated Board on Fricano’s – demolition continues inside; anticipating submission of façade grant this week. Development continues on a questionnaire for local property owners to help identify the issues surrounding the difficulty new businesses are having with finding available storefronts to lease on or near River Street. The Lakeshore Hotel development project continues. A letter of support for the project has been signed by 21+ businesses, representing 800+ individuals, so far. It is estimated that this project would bring 65,000+ visitors to Manistee yearly, which would bring roughly \$18,000,000 to local businesses – including restaurants, retail, air travel, etc.

9.) **OLD BUSINESS.**

a. Social Districts – Kristina Bajtka. Topic of the recent Michigan Downtown Spring Conference attended by Kristina, she looked at Muskegon and Northville communities – both have established Social Districts in different ways. Muskegon’s Social District includes 12 city blocks and Northville 2.

Discussion included:

- Important to create upscale environment with marketing pieces in place – logos, banners, cups, signage, etc.
- Thad Taylor volunteered himself and Manistee City Police Chief Josh Glass for the committee – James Beaudrie, Karen Goodman, Chair Mosher, and Annie Jacobson also volunteered.
- Important to keep momentum going and be intentional knowing what is coming with the US31 Bridge closure/traffic rerouting.

10.) **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. Outdoor Dining Platforms – Kristina Bajtko.

Discussion included:

- Will need to invest in more orange barricades or a more permanent standard. Already short for the businesses interested in creating outdoor seating.
- Planters, curb, tiles.
- Funding could be included in the American Rescue Plan – project seems to fit the guidance for spending that has been given so far.
- Restaurants only or include retail businesses.
- Keep pushing forward as planning continues – timing is important!

MOTION by Ken Urban, second by Thad Taylor that the DDA is interested in deploying platforms for businesses within the DDA.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

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

No: None

b. DDA Development Plan – Bond Priorities – Board Discussion. Staff to schedule a work session to discuss.

c. Fricano’s Façade Update/Grant.

Discussion included:

- Façade grant application should be submitted this week.
- Located in Historic District but not designated as having historic significant, though planning on meeting with Mark Fedder to discuss. His desire is to be consistent with our local character.

10.) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Barry Lind, 532 Fourth Street – Great job, very impressed at all the DDA is doing. Asked about downtown décor, as banners for the spring/summer season should probably be

replaced this year. As member of the Manistee County Visitors Bureau (MCVB), very happy about the tour boat business relocating to Manistee and the MCVB will be promoting. MCVB budgets for community promotional infrastructure, as DDA does projects such as the outdoor seating or Social District keep the MCVB in mind for some funding.

11.) **BOARD COMMENT.**

James Beaudrie – Does Ted Fricano have an opening date or estimate? Marc Miller gave the conservative date of Sleighbell Weekend but nothing firm.

12.) **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.

MOTION by Thad Taylor, second by James Beaudrie **to adjourn at 9:47 a.m.**

Kelly McColl
Acting Recording Secretary