

MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 13, 2022
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B

PRESENT: Kyle Mosher, Bill Gambill, Jodi Walter, Bruce Allen, Karen Goodman, Annie Jacobson, Kelly Greve, Deanna Marsh

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Tamara DePonio

ALSO PRESENT: Kristina Bajtka, Marc Miller, Barry Lind – PEG, DPW Director Jeff Mikula, Councilmember James Grabowski

1. **CALL TO ORDER.**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:32 a.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Bill Gambill to adopt the agenda as amended.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

- Added *DPW Update* as #6.
- Amended Approval of Expenses total to \$27,522.80.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Jodi Walter to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2022, regular meeting.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Annie Jacobson to approve the March 2022 financials as amended.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

- a. Approval of Expenses – ~~\$27,173.00~~ \$27,522.80

6. **DPW Update** – DPW Director Jeff Mikula

- Maple Street Bridge update
- Crosswalk signs came in yesterday – will put out early May
- Discussed City Council budget items that impact DDA
 - Fountain
 - Clock
 - Pavers
 - Light post painting
 - Flower basket painting
- North Riverwalk – grant application was submitted at the end of March
- South Riverwalk EDA grant – will be submitted on Friday
- Seasonal workers begin in mid/late May but two will be brought on over the next couple of weeks to focus on downtown
- On track for evergreen removal
- 40-50 benches have been completely refurbished
- Discussed planter and bench placement in the downtown area – Kelly Greve will work with DPW employees to implement new layout
- Discussed upcoming Gateway demo and lane closures

7. **DIRECTOR’S REPORTS** – Kristina Bajtka.

- Outdoor seating permits were sent out to the restaurants in the DDA
- Weesies has been contracted for both spring and fall plants
- Priced out new liners for eight (8) more planters

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Kelly Greve to order eight (8) new liners for the downtown planters, totaling \$1,800.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

- Social District pavement stickers have been ordered – discussed future signage
- Received insurance renewal quotes
- Light pole banner arms have been ordered – twelve (12)
- Hops and Props agenda item is complete and will go before City Council in May
- Files have been organized

8. **GATEWAY PROJECT DISCUSSION** – Bill Gambill/Marc Miller.

Discussion included:

- Multi-phase project
- Little River Holdings is the main investor – recently brought on 6pm Hospitality as an investor
- Brownfield, City, EGLE, MEDC, City Council – all engaged in the project
- MEDC Tribal element design work – \$240,000
- All demo pre-work has been done
- Hotel brand and line has been chosen and negotiations have begun
- 1-3 weeks demo to begin

- East bound River Street to be closed from Division to US-31 while demo-ing the south side
- Traffic plans – discussed MDOT approved signage
- DDA will need to consider brownfield and TIF capture to help with additional costs
- Original plans have changed, and cost have gone up
- Phase I includes 100 room hotel; Phase II includes housing and office space
- Work on identifying Redevelopment Ready sites for future grant and partnership possibilities

9. **STREETSCAPE RFQ** – Bill Gambill.

Discussion included:

- Establishing an RFQ committee
- Includes engagement, data collection and final design
- Funding – bond or other mechanisms for funding?
- Volunteers for committee, in addition to Bill Gambill – Kyle Mosher, Bruce Allen, Karen Goodman

10. **2022/2023 BUDGET DISCUSSION** – Chair Mosher / Board.
Nothing new

11. **MANISTEE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT** – Bruce Allen.

Discussion included:

- DDA needs to put together a list of unbudgeted projects/needs - \$5,000 - \$20,000 range
- Cost estimates should be included – allow for quick response when funding opportunities come up
- Keep health & wellness grants in mind
- Manistee County contracting grant writer

12. **MICHIGAN RETAILERS ASSOCIATION / BUY NEARBY GRANT** – Deanna Marsh.

Discussion included:

- \$7,500 marketing grant – April 15 grant awards announced
- GEM – Go Explore Manistee
- Showcase the downtown
- Hidden GEMS located in downtown area – if found, is traded for a prize (restaurant gift certificate, Manistee County Cash, etc.)
- Hometown Tourist grand prize

9:46 a.m. Annie Jacobson left meeting

13. **HOPS & PROPS 2022 LIQUOR LICENSE** – Kristina.

MOTION by Bill Gambill, second by Deanna Marsh to approve the liquor license application for September 17, 2022, Hops and Props.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

14. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Councilmember Grabowski – spoke in favor of utilizing a contracted grant writer.

Barry Lind – after receiving complaints, he has added microphones for better audio for the posted recordings.

15. **BOARD COMMENT.**

Deanna Marsh – Reviewed the upcoming promotions in the downtown area. Mother’s Day basket is located at the Port City Emporium. Public can receive one ticket per day at local merchants to be added in the drawing. Similar Father’s Day promotion coming up. Check out on social media. Reviewed letter to be distributed, “Play Nice – Park Nice.” Measurable first step in communicating parking issues with downtown businesses.

Kelly Greve – asked about irrigation for garden beds and wrapping transformers along the Riverwalk. Volunteers need \$2,000 to get started on spring projects – already budgeted. Also gazebo has been ordered for the art park on River Street – can submit invoice for reimbursement.

Jodi Walter (and others) – thanked Kristina for all her hard work and wished her well as she moves on to her new position at the United Way of Northwest Michigan.

16. **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 11, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Jodi Walter **to adjourn at 10:02 a.m.**

Kelly McColl
Acting Recording Secretary