

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2022
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B**

PRESENT: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Jodi Walter, Bruce Allen, Annie Jacobson, Kelly Greve, Deanna Marsh

ABSENT: Bill Gambill, Karen Goodman

ALSO PRESENT: Marc Miller, Councilmember Grabowski, Barry Lind – PEG, Sammie Lukaskiewicz – Manistee County Visitors Bureau, Jeff Mikula – City of Manistee

1. **CALL TO ORDER.**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:31 a.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Jodi Walter to adopt the agenda as amended.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

Adding: 9. New Business b. Façade Grants

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

MOTION by Jodi Walter, second by Deanna Marsh to approve the minutes from the July 13, 2022, Annual Meeting.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

MOTION by Bruce Allen, second by Tamara DePonio to approve the FY22 and July 2022 financials.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

a. Approval of Expenses

b. West Shore Bank Accounts – Kyle Mosher – Carmen Kott discovered fraudulent charges on the DDA account. Bank has taken care of the issue but suggested the DDA add *Positive Pay* to the account as an added layer of protection. Ed Bradford, City Financial Director,

recommended using Positive Pay as it is a standard practice with City accounts. The cost to the DDA is roughly \$60.00 per month.

MOTION by Jodi Walter, second by Annie Jacobson to approve adding Positive Pay for check clearing through West Shore Bank as recommended.

Voice vote – Motion approved.

6. **EXECUTIVE REPORTS.** – Marc Miller – will be further discussing façade grants later in the meeting but has been working with Fricano’s accountants to close out their façade grant. Fricano opened on July 20 and has been doing very well even without a liquor license. Their license application has been denied by the State and they have 20 days to appeal. The Chamber is assisting Fricano’s and Third Light Brewing in the liquor licensing process – the State is making it more difficult to be approved.

Continuing to work with owners of the Redevelopment Ready priority sites – Amor, Northern Hotel, and the Vault. Regular business retention visits continue.

Chamber is back to full staff.

7. **REPORTS FROM AD HOC COMMITTEES.**

- a. Streetscape RFQ – Marc Miller – Five applicants, three have been selected to interview. Interviews will take place in a few weeks. Recommendations from the ad-hoc committee will be brought back to the Board.
- b. District Businesses – Deanna Marsh – asked if sidewalks were in the streetscape plan (yes). Business downtown has been very good. Tuesday, August 16 is the next Merchant Meeting. Tuesday, September 20 will be the first Merchant Meeting back in person and will be held in one of the WSCC meeting rooms – hoping to see some new faces. Other entities in the downtown are welcome to join, not only merchants. Sidewalk sales happening this Friday and Saturday.
- c. Beatification – Kelly Greve
No report

8. **OLD BUSINESS.**

- a. Maintenance Agreement Status – Jeff Mikula

Discussion included:

- DDA ordered 40+ public parking signs a few years back – they were all installed in the downtown.
- Mutt Mitt station ordered to install near the Art Park.
- Planters – past and future use. Refurbishing? Will they be used in the new streetscape?
- Evergreens have been removed throughout the DDA district.

- DPW workers receive list that had been previously used by landscapers contracted with in the past by the DDA.
- Tuesdays DPW employees use blowers and pick up garbage on the Riverwalk. They need to do better pulling weeds – have been instructed to do so.
- Thursdays they blow streets and sidewalks downtown and handle any other reported issues.
- Greenbush/River Street void under sidewalk – solution has been determined will be fixing soon.
- Installed yield sign on Washington Street by the North Channel Brewery – no good spot for it in that location but where it has been placed should slow traffic at the very least.
- Board member requested yield sign be added down by Marina, Downtown Delights and Fricano’s. Jeff had ordered an extra – he will get it installed.
- Budgeted funds to replace some pavers that cannot wait and clock repairs. The clock should be repaired by the end of the month. Also budgeted \$4,500 for fountain repairs though not confident repairs will be a long-term solution.
- Discussed possibility of adding a dumpster corral at the west end of River Street.

9. **NEW BUSINESS.**

- a. New Invoices and Discussion – Request for appropriations up to \$8,000 was requested by Kelly Greve for landscaping in three locations along the Riverwalk.

Discussion included:

- Line item had \$20,000 but not sure how much is left available – Marc to check.
- City doesn’t have easement agreement with Manistee Inn and Marina and one area is outside the DDA district. Just the three-tier garden at the east end of the Riverwalk would be included.
- Using funds for landscaping on the Marina property.
- US-31 bridge work will limit access to east end of Riverwalk from the Riverwalk.

Consensus: Board asked that Kelly Greve get a revised proposal from Larsons Landscaping to include the three-tier garden and Marina area. Topic tabled until September meeting.

- b. Façade Grants –budgeted for another round of Facade Grant funding. The cost of improvements to the exterior of a building can be matched with this 50% reimbursement program anywhere in the Downtown District, including businesses that lease space. Riverwalk facade improvements are now eligible.

Discussion included:

- Changed application timing – deadline for applications is September 30, 2022.
- Grants to be approved in October and dispersed in the spring.
- Those applications that came in before the end of the fiscal year were held and contacted about the new application.
- HDC approval is no longer required before applying but is still a required step in the process.

- DDA Board asked to review new application and contact Marc with any suggestions prior to the September DDA meeting.

10. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Councilman Grabowski – thanked Marc for bringing up the need for a west end dumpster corral. Asked Jeff Mikula about the Riverwalk switchback ramp. Still is receiving feedback about DDA meetings being difficult to hear online. Expressed his disappointment with the court extension on the blighted properties on River Street.

Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Executive Director, Manistee County Visitors Bureau – Introduced herself to the Board, looking forward to working in the Manistee Community.

Barry Lind – 532 Fourth Street – reminded board that the blighted properties on River Street will still be an issue once the facades are finished as they will remain empty for many years – recommends Board investigates a vacancy ordinance. Informed Board of the weeds growing out of pavers on River Street. Advised Board that they should have similar dumpster corral conversations with the Gateway developers, or they will have the same problem that the west end of River Street is having. Social District is not being promoted enough. Banners will need to be updated and there should be an ad hoc committee to continue to promote the social district. Beautifying the Riverwalk needs a more organized

Marc Miller – thanked Councilman Grabowski for having conversations with the owner of the blighted properties on River Street.

11. **BOARD COMMENT.**

Kelly Greve – asked to have MaryJo Gordon reimbursed for her purchases for the butterfly garden – Marc to take care of immediately. Asked about the request for two Adirondack chairs for the art park.

MOTION by Kelly Greve, second by Bruce Allen to purchase two Adirondack chairs for the downtown art park in the amount of \$878.00 for both.

Voice vote – Motion approved.

12. **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

MOTION by Deanna Marsh, second by Jodi Walter **to adjourn at 10:00 a.m.**



Kelly McColl
Acting Recording Secretary