

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 14, 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

ABSENT: Tamara DePonio

ALSO PRESENT: Marc Miller, Katie Mehl – City Zoning Administrator, Jeff Mikula – DPW Director, Councilman Grabowski

1. **CALL TO ORDER.**

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

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

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

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

*MOTION* by Jodi Walter, second by Annie Jacobson to approve the minutes from the August 10, 2022, annual meeting.  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

*MOTION* by Karen Goodman, second by Bruce Allen to approve the August 2022 financials.  
Voice vote—Motion approved.

a. Approval of Expenses

6. **EXECUTIVE REPORT** – Marc Miller. Façade grant application period is open and there has been interest. Decision will be made in October; staff will offer recommendations once applications are reviewed. Some applicants are having trouble getting the required number of quotes due to lack of response from contractors, they will need to be more lenient when reviewing applications in this area.

Assisted business owner in finding a location in downtown district. *Up North Collectors Sports Cards and More* will be moving to 339 River Street once the Democratic Party moves out.

Continue to work with the Hotel Northern and owners of 348 River Street. Designer of Hotel Northern is finding construction cost to be very high. The cost of bringing back a historic building is expensive and difficult – DDA maybe asked to help in the future.

7. **REPORTS FROM AD HOC COMMITTEES**

- a. Streetscape RFQ – Bill Gambill

- i. Committee Recommendations – interview three qualified firms: Spicer, Fleis & Vandenbrink, and Viridis. The Committee recommends Fleis & Vandenbrink.

**Discussion included:**

- Reasons behind the decision. Fleis & Vandenbrink’s design has each intersection as a place making area, branding incorporation, Emphasis on traffic and parking studies, flexible and willing to listen to DDA and community, holistic look at downtown and forward-thinking approach.
- Use of lidar data.

- ii. Board Support and Motions

*MOTION* by Karen Goodman, second by Kelly Greve to approve the Streetscape RFQ Committee’s recommendation, Fleis & Vandenbrink, extending an invitation to engage with the firm on the Streetscape project.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

- b. District Business – Deanna Marsh. First in-person merchant meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 20 at 8:30 a.m. at the WSCC Education Center, Meeting Room B. Walked the downtown and invited new merchants. Gathered email addresses to add to list. Misuse of downtown parking continues to come up – will mention at the merchant meeting. Summer business has been great. Asked about providing coffee and bagels at the meeting - \$100; okayed, needs to contact Carmen Kott for payment.

Bill Gambill advised that any downtown business would need to get Manager/Council approval before putting scaffolding up on the sidewalks downtown. Marc Miller will discuss at the merchant meeting.

- c. Beautification – Kelly Greve. Over the last few weeks the Harbor Commission, Parks Commission, and Manistee Proud have been working on the Marina. Scope of work has included cleaning, painting, vegetation removal, sidewalk edging, etc. Met with Larsons Landscaping for quote on updating the landscaping, they have not sent quote yet. Have made a significant impact but still more to accomplish. Marina has a significant impact on downtown merchant.

Jeff Mikula – asked for a contact person to address:

- When to remove hanging baskets?
- What is planned fall planters?
- Banners?
- Sleighbell décor – DDA will continue to decorate the downtown for the winter season – confirmed.

Marc Miller will be the contact person.

Bill Gambill – will be meeting with Manistee Proud in December to discuss project(s) for the upcoming year. Will discuss time, budget, and scope of project(s). Can include DDA in these discussions.

8. **OLD BUSINESS.**

9. **NEW BUSINESS.**

- a. **EDA Riverwalk Improvement Grant** – Bill Gambill. Appreciative of the DDA contribution of the \$240,000 match for the \$850,000 grant from the EDA, which will result in \$1.09 million overall project. Upgrades include composite decking, lighting, ADA access improvements, stormwater improvements, art park, cultural enhancements, etc.

**Discussion included:**

- Formation of an RFP Committee.
- Competitive federal requirements.
- Riverwalk easements.

- b. **Planning Commission – New Use in Ordinance for Event Center** – Katie Mehl, City Zoning Administrator. Planning Commission (PC) held a public hearing on September 1 to consider zoning amendment request – Places of Public Assembly Large. This would modify the special land use requirement for Places of Public Assembly Large within the C-3 District. The PC tabled the item to seek insight from the DDA.

**Discussion included:**

- Current requirements include key street frontage – change would eliminate this.
- Change would be for entire C-3 District, not just the applicant’s property.
- Master plan supports change.

- Currently does not require parking.
- Can change be requested by owner or tenant? Either, at this point.
- Specified use for “Event Center” – parking, safety issues...

**Consensus:** DDA supports zoning amendment request with additional stipulations for parking.

*MOTION* by Deanna Marsh, second by Karen Goodman to support the use of Event Center in C-3 District with parking required.

9:30 a.m., Karen Goodman and Annie Jacobson left the meeting.

Discussion on tax exempt property.

Amended Motion:

*MOTION* by Deanna Marsh, second by Jodi Walter to support the use of Event Center in C-3 District with parking require. and a more specified definition of public assembly excluding tax exempt use.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

- c. Other – Hops & Props** – No one from the committee has contacted the DPW or Police Department about event. City would like to make sure all set up and needs are met. Staff will reach out to committee chair.

10. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Councilman Grabowski – Spoke about the importance of getting boater input on downtown district. Thanked Bill for the time and effort put in applying for the EDA grant.

Jeff Mikula – Harbor Commission is working on ways to inform boaters of community amenities and entertainment. Spoke to the strengths of the new marina manager and gave update on the marina marketing campaign – looking for financial partners. Pedestrian signs were very successful this year, though the one on Washington Street didn’t survive Labor Day – waiting to replace until next year. Memorial Drive should be paved by the end of the week, once the two layers of asphalt and striping is complete the road will open – expected very soon.

11. **BOARD COMMENT.**

Jodi Walter – Round about by the casino should be finished by Monday.

Deanna Marsh – Suggested getting Marina information out to publications.

12. **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street.

**MOTION** by Bill Gambill **to adjourn at 9:47 a.m.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. B. McColl", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Kelly McColl  
Acting Recording Secretary