

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting of March 18, 2015
Meeting Room – 8:00 A.M.

The regular meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:08 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mary Starring, Mayor Chris Johnson, Lynda Heaton, Margene Buckhave, Greg Presley*

Absent: *Carolann Ayers, Excused, Shawn Riley, Excused, Jim Long, Excused, John Casey, Excused*

Also Present: *City Manager/Patrick Sullivan, DDA Director/Lori Ward, DDA Marketing & Communications Coordinator/Christa Williams, DDA Planning Coordinator/Kate Knight, Resident/Fred Sheill*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Consent agenda as follows:

- Minutes of DDA Meeting February 17, 2015
- PR Summary February 2015
- Financial Statement of February 2015
- Invoice Report February 2015

Motion by Johnson, seconded by Buckhave, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

AWARD OF THE EXHIBIT DESIGN CONTRACT FOR FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION

Ward presented background, analysis and staff recommendation for fabrication and installation of the exhibit design project. The DDA issued an RFP for fabrication and installation of an interpretative exhibit for the Comerica Community Connection. The Invitation to Bid was posted on MITN (Michigan Intergovernmental Trade Network), an online vendor solicitation platform and contacted area vendors directly. The Bids were opened on January 20, 2015. One response was received to the RFP from Universal Signs, Inc. of Grand Rapids. The submitted bid was \$7,265.

Because the DDA only received one response to the RFP, and because the bid was lower than the designer's estimate, DDA staff and Board member Heaton, met with representatives from Universal to discuss the project and walk through the Comerica

Community Connection to ensure that the bidder fully understood the scope of the project. During the interview, it was discovered that Universal had not included the separate installation of the lenticular panels and they agreed to contact the manufacturer and determine the cost of installing the 3 lenticular panels separately. On March 5, 2015 the DDA received a revised proposal in the amount of \$13,910 that included the 3 lenticular panels. Universal agreed to pass on to the DDA the direct cost of the 3 lenticular panels with no mark up, and to install the 3 lenticular panels for no additional charge.

DDA staff contacted the City Attorney to discuss whether the DDA could accept a revised bid from a vendor. The City Attorney assured the staff that accepting the revised bid met the conditions outlined in the RFP. In addition, the City Attorney pointed out that by passing the costs through directly to the DDA and not charging the DDA for the additional labor, the costs, if rebid would most likely increase.

DDA has contact references for Universal Sign, Inc and has received positive feedback on their signage work in other communities. In addition, Design Committee volunteer John Argenta worked with Universal on an extensive sign project in Lyon Township recently and also provided positive comments.

The DDA currently has a line item in the budget for downtown signage in the amount of \$145,000. This amount was budgeted to provide funding for both the Wayfinding and the Exhibit Design projects. DDA staff estimated the Exhibit Design project at \$35,000. The design phase of the project was awarded at \$11,500. Therefore, there are sufficient funds to finance the installation.

Motion by Heaton, seconded by Starring, to approve the DDA staff recommendation for the award of the exhibit design fabrication and installation contract to Universal Signs, Inc. of Grand Rapids, MI in the amount of \$13,910 and establish a 10% project contingency, and authorize the DDA Director to sign the contract on behalf of the DDA and the City. **Motion carried unanimously.**

AWARD OF THE WAYFINDING CONTRACT FOR FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION

Ward presented background, analysis and staff recommendation for fabrication and installation of the wayfinding project.

The DDA issued a Request for Proposals for the Fabrication and Installation of the Downtown Directional Signs (Type "B"), and Downtown Parking signage (Type "A"). Staff posted the Invitation to Bid on MITN (Michigan Intergovernmental Trade Network), an online vendor solicitation platform and contacted area vendors directly. Six proposals were received on March 3, 2015. They ranged in price from (79,945 to \$233,995. A small technical group (Jim Gallogly, Northville DPW Director, John Argenta, community volunteer with the Wayfinding project, Kate Knight, DDA Staff and Lori Ward, DDA Director) met with the three low bidders (Signs by Crannie, Sign Concepts DBA ASI Signage Innovations, and Valley City Signs) on March 6, 2015 to review the bids, discuss previous comparable projects and review the scope of the

project. Following the interviews and reference checks, the group recommends the award of wayfinding fabrication and installation contract to Signs by Crannie in the amount of \$79,945.00. In addition to the base bid, DDA staff is recommending the acceptance of two alternates: Alternate A in the amount of \$3,000 to furnish and install transparent frosted vinyl applied to the back of each of the Type "B" sign panels with a decorative panel; Alternate B in the amount of \$2,700 to fabricate and install the medallion on the each of the signs with three layers of aluminum in lieu of the Base Bid flat medallion.

The DDA continues to work with Bizzell Design to develop the family of signage for the final stages of the program, which includes regulatory signs, entranceway signage, directory signage and the larger Type "A" signs, which fall under Wayne and Oakland Counties jurisdiction.

Motion by Heaton, seconded by Starring, to approve the DDA staff recommendation for the award of the Wayfinding fabrication and installation contract to Signs by Crannie, for an amount not to exceed \$85,645 and establish a 10% project contingency, and authorize the DDA Director to sign the contract on behalf of the DDA and the City.
Motion carried unanimously.

DDA 2015-16 BUDGET

Ward presented the draft budget for fiscal year 2015-16. The DDA continues to have budget challenges in 2015-16. However, staff is hopeful that we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel. This coming fiscal year, the DDA will see a 1.9% increase in taxable value in our downtown commercial properties. Some of this increase can be attributed to several recent sales, the rest to a general increase in commercial property values. With the Sale of the Starting Gate, and the expected construction of the CornerHouse project revenue should increase again next year. The Board of Review changes impacted the taxable values which will result in a decrease of the TIF capture by approximately \$2,500 and in the 2mil levy by about \$179.

The DDA has several larger scale projects to complete and address this year, and so much of the budget discussion focused on how to prioritize these expenditures and how to fund them. The Draft 2015-16 budget shows a reliance this year on fund balance, which leaves the DDA with an average 33% fund balance.

Staff requested feedback on funding, phasing and prioritization on these items. One overall change in the DDA Budget was to eliminate the Contracted positions and instead staff the position(s) with part-time DDA staff. The main reason for this change has to do with the ability to direct staff and set consistent work schedules. DDA Director has met with labor attorney, Steve Schwartz, to discuss staffing options and is recommending this change to the DDA Board.

The three items of note that are not funded in this year's budget include:

- No funds for the Business Assistance Grant
- No funds for a Retail Market Study
- No funds of expansion of the Induction Lighting Program

Additional highlights within this year's budget:

- DDA Staff has budgeted \$4,000 to install LED holiday lighting in the 20 trees located midblock in grates in the downtown streetscape. This will address the lighting level concerns during the winter months, without requiring the removal and reinstallation of the streetlight holiday lighting.
- No additional funds have been earmarked for expansion of the Induction Lighting System initiated as part of the streetscape project completed in 2012. Approximately 56 lights remain to be converted within the DDA boundaries and an additional 20 remain to be installed in locations that are currently underserved within the district. The cost of an induction light head is approximately \$1,425 and a new complete streetlight with base is approximately \$2,925.
- Phase I of the Wayfinding Project has been completed and a portion of Phase II was approved earlier in this meeting (see Award of the Wayfinding Contract for Fabrication and Installation above). The remainder of Phase II involves the larger directional signs that will be placed on the mile roads, the regulatory signs and the three directory signs. Also in Phase II is the DDA requested quote for decorative banner poles. Two sets of decorative banner poles along Main and Center streets in the downtown would cost approximately \$16,000. Having the banner poles would eliminate the need for banner signage on the city entrance signs. The final portion of Phase II is the projecting sign on the Comerica Community Connection. Currently a temporary cloth banner is installed on the front of the building. The total estimated cost for Phase II is \$85,000. Staff has budgeted \$57,500 in fiscal year 2015-16, and \$22,000 in 2016-17. The remainder \$6,500 will carry over from the fiscal year 2014-15 surplus. The \$85,000 estimate for Phase II does not include the City's entrance signs, which were installed at five locations approximately 15 years ago and were paid for by the City's Public Improvement Fund.
- Funds (\$5,500) have been earmarked for the improvements to both the Orin and Rebecca's alleyways. These funds cover the acquisition of easements from both property owners, some sidewalk repairs, lighting or other improvements.
- The Marketing Mix Committee has recommended an inclusion of a Cycle 10 Business Assistance Grant Program. In preliminary drafts of the DDA budget, staff included a \$20,000 grant program. However, in order to fund the program, the DDA would need to dip further into the fund balance. Staff recommends not using more fund balance for this program.
- The DDA reduced the funding for outside sponsorships. The Chamber of Commerce, NCBA and Buy Michigan Now Festival all have reduced funding. This same reduction also includes the internal fund transfer to Parks and Recreation for the support of their concert programs. The DDA sponsored events all have offsetting revenue for their expenses.
- No funds have been budgeted for a Commercial/Residential Market Study for Downtown.
- Marketing contractual services has been reduced by \$5,000. This reduction impacts paid advertising and promotions.
- After review of the existing City owned parking decks, it was determined that each deck is in need of approximately \$55,000 in repairs. The DDA has phased the improvements over the next five years and will work with consultants to prioritize and phase the repairs.

- Funds (\$5,000) have been budgeted to address the sightlines issues at the entrance/exits of the Marquis Parking Lot. These funds are for landscape modifications, entry widening and striping.
- At the Chair's direction, staff has budgeted \$5,000 for a parking study to explore the feasibility of expanding the Cady Street parking deck to the East. DDA asked that the Parking Committee define the scope of the study.

Pat Sullivan voiced concern about the use of Fund Balance for budget items, specifically as it relates to the optimistic decrease in contractual budget items over the next few years. Ward agreed about the concern. Because unexpected repairs (i.e.: heat-melt system fails in Town Square, raised planter destroyed by errant vehicle, etc.) can't be predicted, contractual services can never have a specific budgeted dollar amount. Additionally, there are some existing line items which are one time installation fees (i.e. security cameras installation, electric meter installation, etc.) and will appear as a reduction in the line item for the next fiscal year. Presley asked about the impact the recently approved increase in Capture has on the budget. According to Sullivan and Mayor Johnson, between Proposal A and the Headlee Amendment, the increase in Capture will only be as high as the rate of inflation. Therefore, its benefit within the overall budget will be minimal. Staff will provide documentation at the April DDA Board meeting regarding the financial impact of Proposal A and the Headlee Amendment.

Fred Sheill requested that a line item be added to the budget for electric charging stations. Ward proposed assembling a sponsorship package to present to some of the business partners within the Northville community. The proposal would go back to the Parking Committee.

Motion by Starring, seconded by Buckhave, to present the proposed DDA budget to City Council for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Design Committee

As discussed above.

Marketing Mix Committee

None.

Parking Committee

At the December 11 Parking Committee meeting, the DDA heard a request from downtown merchants regarding several issues of common interest to merchants located at the west end of the Marquis Parking Lot. The merchants requested to sign all spaces in the portion of the lot by the Walkthrough for 3-hour parking. At the DDA's February Meeting, the Board discussed the Parking Committee's recommendation and asked that the Parking Committee meet to consider signing the area for No Parking Before 10:00 a.m. Members of the Board felt that the City had tried limiting the parking to 3 hours previously, with no success, and that it was time to consider a new option.

The Parking Committee met on March 3rd, to discuss the two alternatives: post for 3-hour parking; or post for no parking before 10:00 a.m. Numerous merchants contacted the DDA office and attended the March 3rd meeting. Many of the merchants expressed opposition to the No Parking before 10:00 a.m. signage because they have customers that utilize the parking spaces prior to 10:00 a.m. Merchants encouraged the Parking Committee to try posting the areas for 3 hour limit.

As an additional measure, the Parking Committee recommended that the fine schedule be amended to eliminate the graduated fine schedule and replace it with a flat fee of \$25 for parking violations. The first infraction will result in a warning; the second violation and any further issuances will result in a \$25 ticket. The Parking Committee unanimously votes to support both posting the area for 3 hour limit, and implementing a higher parking ticket fee structure (\$25 per parking violation).

In addition, DDA staff met with the building owner, and tenant at 134 N. Center. Several issues were discussed including persistent parking in the loading zone behind the building, problems with the use of the common dumpsters, and application for outdoor dining. During the discussion, the owner of the building requested that the DDA consider posting the loading zones with the hours of enforcement similar to other loading zones in the lot. Staff spoke to Chief Carlson about this recommendation, and the Chief requested additional information about the use of the loading zones in that area so that he could evaluate the impact. DDA staff agreed to survey the businesses in the area to collect data on the deliveries use and schedules

Motion by Buckhave, seconded by Starring, to recommend to City Council the Traffic Change Order for 3-hour limits for parking in the area behind the CCC and Bee's Knees and direct staff to collect information regarding deliveries in the areas to share with the Parking Committee and Police Chief to determine if time limits for signed loading zones would be beneficial, to change the ticket fee schedule with first infraction a warning and all subsequent violations resulting in a \$25 ticket, and to send letters to the affected businesses will be notified of the change to the Traffic Control Order. **Motion carried as follows: four approved, Johnson opposed, Riley, Long, Casey, and Ayers absent.**

Organizational Committee

Mary Starring proposed that for the April 2015 DDA Board meeting that a discussion of alternative meeting capabilities be addressed so that a quorum is met at each Board meeting. Per Ward, should there be a change in alternative meeting capabilities, the DDA By-Laws would need to be updated. A request to add to the April agenda is an update to the composition of the Board.

COMMUNICATION

Board and Staff Communications

The next DDA Board meeting is April 21, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christa Williams
Northville DDA
DDA Secretary
Marketing & Communication Coordinator