

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting of November, 21 2017
Meeting Room A

The regular meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:02 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Ken Roth, Chairman Shawn Riley, Carolann Ayers, Natalie Kneifel, Robert Miller, Mary Starring, Aaron Cozart, Margene Buckhave*

Absent: *Jim Long, Greg Presley, John Casey*

Also Present: *Patrick Sullivan/City Manager, Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Amelia Ritter/DDA Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Marilyn Price/City Council Member, Sandi Wiktorowski/Finance Director (for audit presentation), Doug Bohrer/Plante & Moran (for audit presentation)*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Ward welcomed audience member, Marilyn Price, and announced she would be joining the Executive Committee. She also introduced new DDA staff member, Amelia Ritter, the DDA's new Marketing and Communications Coordinator.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

- a. October 2017 Financial Statement
- b. October 2017 Invoice Report
- c. October 17, 2017 Meeting Minutes
- d. DDA Annual Report

Ayers asked to add an agenda item to discuss the Cady Street parking deck stairs.

Motion by Roth seconded by Buckhave to approve the Consent Agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

DDA AUDIT PRESENTATION

Ward introduced Doug Bohrer, partner with Plante Moran to discuss the DDA's audit. Bohrer indicated that he had met previously to walk through a draft of the audit with Ward.

The unmodified, or clean, opinion was the first item discussed and it means that the books and records were found to be clean and this is a positive thing for the DDA.

For 2017, the DDA's largest source of revenue was captured property taxes. These funds come from the City, as well as from Wayne County and Schoolcraft Community College, the metro parks and others. Going forward, the District Library capture may be at risk. It is something for the DDA Board to keep in mind during future budgeting.

Revenue for 2017 was up from the previous two years but not by a substantial amount. The expenditures for Design and Marketing Committees were down as well, as a result of the purchase of wayfinding materials in 2016. The DDA's advertising costs were down from 2016. \$5,000 was added to our fund balance which is considerably better than in previous years.

In consideration of the DDA's original budget, final budget, and actual expenses the DDA is very close to the original budgeted figures. The largest budget issue was the Design Committee being over budget, this was due to the timing of the Wayfinding project being completed. Overall the DDA is close to the original estimate and doing a good job or amending the budget when necessary.

Bohrer explained that the DDA's money is pooled with the City of Northville but separately tracked. A lot of the DDA's funds are invested in short-term growth and liquid investments so there is a better return. Lastly, Bohrer went over the debt repayment amounts from year to year and the stated that the DDA is still on track with the yearly amount paid.

Roth asked about what percentage of savings the DDA would need to have to issue a refinance. Bohrer said it depends on interest rates, principles, and loans. Bohrer recommended that the DDA contact their bond counsel to figure out the best way to go about this. Financial forecasting is recommended for future projects for ideas about tax capture and revenue. It may offer more long-term options. Items that may be a part of the financial forecast are multi-year budgeting, the library millage, and parking decks.

Motion by Roth seconded by Starring to approve the DDA Audit. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATES

a. *Design Committee –*

Miller talked about improving secondary streetscape design standards, specifically around Cady Street. They are looking to adopt new standards. There also plans to look at some bigger ticket projects, such as a connection with Ford Field.

Ward brought up the Allstate Grant that had been previously awarded with help from Casey. In addition, Riley introduced a place-making grant from the Greater Metropolitan Association of Realtors for a mural on the side of Lucy and the Wolf. The building owner needs to be contacted and details need to be hatched out as far as grant acceptance requirements, if a plaque (mural sponsorship) is necessary, and how soon the mural can be completed.

b. *Marketing Mix Committee* –

Riley asked if there was a possibility for a new event to ride the success of Skeletons Are Alive! Sponsorship would be an option for local businesses for another music event or something similar.

Starring recapped the kick-off of Storyville and explained the event to the board.

Ward gave an idea for another installation event that Mike McDonald of Begonia Brothers is prototyping right now that involves ice blocks dressed up and doing various activities around town. This could be a possible new event for winter in 2018.

c. *Parking Committee* –

The parts are in from Tesla for the Electric Charging Stations and the DDA is waiting for installation information from the electrician, as well as information on how to get the stations listed on driving apps.

Ayers brought up the bids for repairing the lighting in Town Square. Ward mentioned that the City has a contract with an electrical firm already and we do not know whether or not the DDA is required to utilize this firm. Ward has sent out a proposal to a couple of other electrical firms in case the DDA is allowed to use another company.

d. *Organizational Committee* –

The Cady Street parking garage stairs are in bad shape. There is a sign warning people to be careful because of the poor condition of the stairs. Action needs to be taken to fix these stairs. There are about 15 total steps that need to be repaired in both towers. Miller argued that it makes the most sense, if possibly financially, to repair or replace all of the steps so they wear the same as times goes on. The budget needs to be referred to in that case to see if money is allotted for repair or for replacement. It is also a decision of whether or not we want to pay the \$3,000 for the repairs, or the full \$17,000 for the full replacement. Miller also suggested that we ask for another estimate, as the one we have is from March 2016. He also recommended checking to see if there is a warranty on the materials that would repair/replace the steps. It may also be worth checking if there is a new material that can be used that will last longer- perhaps the same material that the steps outside of the parking deck are made out of. Lastly, it is recommended that there be an inspection of the entire deck because it is an older structure and hasn't had a full report in the last few years. This would be another expense, though there is money left in the budget for the 2017 fiscal year, and would take a couple of months, so action needs to be taken as soon as possible. In the meantime, Ayers suggested one set of stairs get closed, but both towers have the similar damage so it may be a detriment to the one that is kept open to get twice the use. However, when repairs do get made, one set will be kept open at a time. Sullivan suggested that this may qualify as an emergency repair, but believes we should still get quotes.

Ayers also asked to address DPW charging the DDA for jobs such as snow removal and street sweeping. We pay them \$80,000 a year in two payments. Board members are wondering if it might be too much, as this is a separate line item from banner installation, lights, etc. When the new director is hired, a decision will have to be made on whether or not they can be paid per service or if we should hire a private contractor for these parking projects.

e. *Economic Development Committee* –

Ayers noted that it was nice to see so many different backgrounds represented at this committee's meeting. Their goal is to get people to come here, stay here, and invest in the community. They mentioned a business assistance team in their meeting and will continue to revisit this idea for the small businesses in town. They met for about two hours and had a lot to cover.

The next item of action will be a joint department meeting and the agenda will be put together in the next couple of weeks in a department head meeting.

Sullivan updated the DDA Board on plan approval and zoning changes made in the City Council meeting the previous night. They passed amendments to the Planned Development Ordinance, which streamlines communication for final site plan approval. They also proposed to change the Master Plan and possibly end the prohibition of first floor residential uses. This could help the Cady Street Project, a four-story mixed-use development with condominiums, get approved. If first floor residence becomes approved, the next step is to amend the overlay ordinance. Once there is a PUD, you can use the site for any or all of the permitted uses. There are many obstacles to redeveloping this site, including environmental cleanup.

Discussion continued with talk of developers wanting large and new spaces for commercial use in Northville, where there may not be space yet. There is also an issue with the historic district and some buildings needing to be updated or possibly demolished. Miller suggested offering a compromise in which a historical building could be torn down and salvaged to be rebuilt in another spot. This would have to be discussed with the Historic District Commission. Buildings and lots that are available but not necessarily desirable were discussed, for example the area next to the car wash behind Cady Street. This area was brought up because the apartments next to it have been remodeled and it might start to become more of a desirable area to live just outside of the downtown boundary.

FUTURE MEETINGS/ IMPORTANT DATES

Future Meetings / Important Dates

- a. Santa in Town Square – Through December 23, 2017
- b. First Friday Experience – December 1,
- c. 2017 Marketing Mix Committee Meeting – December 7, 2017
- d. Tinsels and Treasures Holiday Market – December 8-10, 2017
- e. Executive Committee Meeting – December 13, 2017
- f. Economic Development Committee Meeting – December 18, 2017
- g. DDA Board of Directors Meeting – December 19, 2017

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Economic Development Committee meetings will be the third Monday of the month (the day before the DDA Board meets) at 8:00 am in Meeting Room A.

The next DDA Board meeting is December 19, 2017

Meeting adjourned at 9:29 am

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "a. Ritter".

Amelia Ritter, Marketing and Communications Coordinator
Northville DDA