

**CITY OF LAPEER  
MINUTES OF A REGULAR  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING  
MARCH 25, 2015**

A regular meeting of the City of Lapeer Downtown Development Authority was held in the Conference Room at Lapeer City Hall, 576 Liberty Park, Lapeer, Michigan on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.

**Members Present:** Chairman Dan Gerlach, Mr. Doug Hodge, Ms. Jolane Grossbauer, Mr. John Matonich, Mr. Dan Sharkey, Mr. Ray Davis, Mr. Tom Benton, Mr. Bill Sprague and Mr. Tim Roodvoets.

**Members Absent:** Vice Chairman Tony Macksoud, Mr. Jason Rogers, Mr. Mike Robinet and Mr. Bruce Cady.

**Also Present:** Ms. Janine Saputo, Executive Director, and Ms. Linda Jackman, Planning Director.

Chairman Gerlach called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Saputo presented comments from City Manager Kerbyson for the DDA to convey a request to the DBA to allow the Historic Farmers' Market operation to use two web domain names currently being used by the DBA. Mr. Kerbyson also requested the DDA consider paying the required \$500 insurance premium incurred by the Historic Farmers' Market to operate downtown possibly by reducing the scheduled promotional service agreement April 1<sup>st</sup> quarterly payment due to the DBA.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Ms. Saputo updated the board on extremely high electric usage at the Farmers' Market pavilion during the February 10<sup>th</sup> to March 13<sup>th</sup> billing period due to an issue with the pavilion heaters being turned on and left running. Ms. Saputo reported the electrical box has been padlocked in order to avoid future issues with the heaters. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of installing a timer device on the heaters. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Hodge and supported by Ms. Grossbauer to approve the Consent Agenda for March 25, 2015 as follows:

1. Minutes of the regular meeting held February 25, 2015; and
2. Treasurer Report and Bill Listing.

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee**

There was not a report.

**Design Committee**

Ms. Saputo reported one new business plans to apply for the Sign Assistance Program.

It was the consensus of the board not to convene to a Lapeer Main Street, Inc. meeting.

**Property Maintenance/Beautification Committee**

There was not a report.

**Development Committee**

There was not a report.

**Center for the Arts Council Liaison**

Ms. Grossbauer updated the board on recent, current and upcoming exhibits, performances and activities at Gallery 194 and the Pix Theatre, attendance at recent art exhibit receptions and Pix performances and reported the council has applied to the Michigan Humanities Council to participate in the Smithsonian Hometown Heroes 2016 traveling exhibit in conjunction with the Lapeer Historical Society & Museum and the Library. Ms. Grossbauer stated special events are being planned next year to coincide with the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pix Theatre and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gallery 194 building and 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gallery 194's operations.

**DBA Liaison**

Mr. Tom Benton, DBA Treasurer, responded to the requests from City Manager Kerbyson stating the DBA's plans to operate a Farmers' Market downtown was withdrawn, that the DBA's offer to work with Denise Becker as a contract position to operate a downtown market was refused and that the DBA pays \$1,600 in insurance premiums per year to cover all of the DBA's yearly events. Mr. Benton stated the DBA acquired various website domain names for multiple years and the DBA board decided not to allow the use of the domain names due to the possibility of the DBA operating a farmers market operation at some point in the future.

Discussion was held regarding not reducing the quarterly payment to the DBA to pay an operational expense of the Historic Farmers' Market which is a private business operation.

After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Matonich and supported by Mr. Davis to request the DBA consider allowing the Historic Farmers' Market operation to utilize the DBA owned domain names with the condition that if the DBA operates a future market or if the Historic Farmers' Market discontinues operating, the domain names be transferred back to the DBA. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Benton distributed the new bi-annual edition of the DBA's Business Directory and Event Guide, stated an April 20<sup>th</sup> Meet & Greet event is scheduled and work is continuing on the Marketing Plan. Mr. Benton distributed and reviewed the anticipated revenues and expenses of the DBA's 2015-16 Budget.

Discussion was held regarding the need for DBA representatives to increase membership by approaching businesses located in the newly expanded DDA district boundary areas as well as businesses in the original district not currently members.

**Chamber of Commerce Liaison**

There was not a report.

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **Executive Director**

Ms. Saputo updated the board on the opening of new businesses Stirling Center for Excellence at 121 W. Nepessing and a barbershop at 110 W. Park, planned business closings of Pieces of LaPierre, Boomerangs and the Junk Drawer and reported announcement on the America in Bloom grant should be known soon. Ms. Saputo reviewed the Doing Business in Downtown documents available on the new City website and the DBA website which are used to assist a potential new business owner in navigating the process involved in opening a business downtown.

Discussion was held regarding comments received from new business owners on their struggle to navigate the process of opening a business downtown and the associated costs and expenses which are perceived to be high. Discussion was held regarding fees charged by the City and Building Department and the need to investigate whether or not the fees are in line with other comparable downtown's such as Owosso. Discussion was also held regarding developing a chart of current storefront vacancy rates in downtown, on M-24 and on Genesee/Imlay City Road for display and reference and the possibility of establishing a Renaissance Zone downtown.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Center for the Arts – Debt Payment**

Ms. Saputo and Ms. Jackman reviewed the request from the City Treasurer for the DDA's authorization to use the remaining Center for the Arts fund balance, the unused portion of 2014-15 budgeted CIP project funds and a portion of budgeted 2015-16 CIP project funds to pay off the Center for the Arts' remaining portion of the debt incurred from the 2008 energy efficiency upgrade project. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Matonich and supported by Mr. Benton to authorize the use of the \$3,809.36 CFA fund balance, the \$9,278.24 2014-15 balance of CIP Funded Projects unexpended funds and \$757.73 of 2015-16 CIP Funded Projects budgeted funds to pay the entire remaining Center for the Arts portion of their debt for the 2008 Energy Saving Program improvements. **MOTION CARRIED.**

### **2015-2016 DDA Operating Budget**

Chairman Gerlach committed \$250 towards downtown flowers for the 2016 & 2017 planting seasons, requested the board's input for the Executive Committee's consideration on the first draft of the 2015-16 DDA budget and stated the City Manger has requested a draft of the budget as soon as possible. Discussion was held regarding last year's receipt of \$20,000 in emergency funding from the City, the approximately \$10,000 projected increase in 2015-16 tax revenues, various expense line items for the Executive Committee to consider reducing which are not pass-through funded accounts in order to balance the budget and the need to determine the fund balance applied amount. It was the consensus of the board for the Executive Committee to meet, to determine the fund balance applied amount and present a draft budget for consideration at the next meeting.

**MDA Training Workshop**

Ms. Saputo reviewed the Michigan Downtown Association Strengthening Downtowns workshop scheduled on April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Flint Farmers' Market facility at a cost of \$75. It was moved by Mr. Hodge and supported by Ms. Grossbauer to authorize Ms. Saputo attend the MDA workshop on April 17<sup>th</sup>. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Michigan Main Street Program**

Ms. Saputo stated the Michigan Main Street Program Agreement has been approved by the City Commission and submitted and updated the board on local attendance at a recent training session in downtown Owosso.

Ms. Jackman informed the board the new art sculpture planned as part of the Court Street/Clay Street reconstruction project has been installed at the rain garden near the Court Street bridge.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, it was the consensus of the board to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 a.m.

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Mr. Mike Robinet  
Secretary