

CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/CHARLEVOIX MAIN STREET BOARD MINUTES
Monday, March 28, 2016 at 5:30 p. m.

210 State Street, City Hall, Second Floor Council Chambers, Charlevoix, Michigan

A. Call to Order/Invocation or Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call of Members Present

Chair: Dan Barron

Members Present: Gabe Campbell, Fred DiMartino, Kirby Dipert, Dianne DuPont, John Kurtz, Rick Wertz, John Yaroch

Members Absent: Tamie Gillespie

City Staff: Annie Doyle, DDA/Main Street Director; Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

C. Inquiry into Potential Conflicts of Interest

None.

D. Consent Agenda

1. Main Street/DDA Board Meeting Minutes – February 22, 2016

Chair Barron stated that there was a technical issue with the recording of the minutes. Motion by Mayor Campbell, second by Member Yaroch to approve the minutes of February 22, 2016 as presented. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Main Street Committee Meeting Minutes

Chair Barron stated that the Committee meeting minutes were provided to the Board for their information. There were no questions or comments from the Board.

3. Revenues and Expenditures Report

Director Doyle explained a slight adjustment on the revenue side to the first two line items, "Current Property Tax Levy and Current Property Tax Levy TIF". There was a ~~misappropriation-miscalculation~~ of funds regarding these accounts and in addition, the County had an administrative error. Therefore, the variance amounts of \$14,349.66 and \$93,024.52 were corrected and "in the red as of today". Member Kurtz projected that the DDA Fund would end the year with a positive fund balance of approximately \$16,000.

E. Director's Report

Director Annie Doyle reviewed the Executive Director's Report and responded to questions.

1. Presentation of Groundhog Shadow Fest Donation to Charlevoix Main Street

Tim Fore and Maureen Owens of the Groundhog Shadow Fest Organization presented Charlevoix Main Street with a \$2,000 donation as part of the revenue generated from the Groundhog Shadow Fest. Chair Barron stated that on behalf of the entire DDA Board he wanted to extend their gratitude to the Promotions Committee and the leaders of the Shadow Fest initiative.

2. Request for Work Plan Approval on the Following Projects:

a. Customer Service Training

Director Doyle stated that this program was unique in that it was not Committee based, but more of a work plan. Tentative dates for the training were June 8th and June 20th.

Motion by Member Wertz, second by Member Kurtz to approve the Work Plan for the Customer Service Training. Director Doyle responded to questions about the program. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

b. Craft Beer Festival

Director Doyle reported that the Round Lake Group requested the DDA continue to handle the liquor license application, liquor one day bond application and liability insurance for this event. The estimated cost is \$950. Last year the Round Lake Group donated approximately \$2,600 from the event to the Charlevoix Main Street Program. The Promotions Committee recommended approval of this project.

Motion by Member Yaroch, second by Member Kurtz to approve the Work Plan for the Craft Beer Festival. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

c. Restaurant Week

Director Doyle stated that Restaurant Week was scheduled for April 17 – 23 and staff recommended supporting this retail event as it directly impacts sales in our downtown restaurants. Director Doyle described details of how the project will work.

Motion by Member Dipert, second by Member Dupont to approve the Work Plan for Restaurant Week. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

F. Old Business

None.

G. New Business

1. Design Committee Discussion: Project Next Steps

Bob Jess, Project Chair, stated that he would like to continue working as a volunteer on the ice rink project and he has heard good things from community members about the project. He was surprised to hear that work was stopped on the project.

John Campbell felt the DDA needed to clarify what they meant by having a survey done and having some input from the community. Chair Barron stated that if they were going to move forward with the project he wanted to be sure they were proposing a project that had a good prospect for success in terms of usage. He felt there was strong sentiment in the community for the project but, he was concerned that the viability of the project may depend on this being an amenity that is supported not just by Charlevoix but by people from the entire region. Discussion followed regarding using a professional to analyze the feasibility of the project and the anticipated usage.

Mr. Jess suggested a separate committee outside the Design Committee that could work with the DDA. Chair Barron stated that it may be appropriate to designate an Ice Rink Committee as a special Ad-Hoc Committee to the Main Street Board. He felt that they needed a professional study to ascertain regional usage. Mr. Campbell stated that the rink had to be different than what other communities have and having a facility with a chiller system would allow more usage.

City Manager Heydlauff stated that the Parks & Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) is being updated. He explained that the PRMP allows the City to plan effectively for current and future recreation assets and the ice rink was a logical project to include. Once the project is included in the PRMP and prioritized, the City can apply for grant funding. City Manager Heydlauff stated that there was an ideal symbiotic relationship between the PRMP and this project. Director Doyle stated that dovetailing the project with the PRMP would be fulfilling the community input step and brainstorming process.

Discussion followed regarding the PRMP, proposed usage study, and how to determine the interest/support of the business owners for this project. Jeff Porter stated that he was a member of the Design Committee and he felt that an economic impact survey should be conducted, but he was not sure how relevant such a study would be. He stated that the ice rink was #8 on the list conducted as part of the Cool Cities study several years ago, and #3 on the list was lighting the trees downtown. He also suggested that the Committee look at different systems including an artificial ice surface. He felt that the project needed further study.

Jodi Bingham felt that this project was totally out of what Main Street handles. She sees a partnership with Main Street, the City, and the Conventions & Visitors Bureau and felt this was a long-term project. She preferred that the Board move forward with signage for businesses off the main street, more lights in the trees, and the trees getting trimmed.

Member Yaroch advocated for a separate Ice Rink Research Committee.

Director Doyle challenged the Board to continue to “think big”, but in terms of this particular project she did not feel that this was the best use of Main Street’s resources. She recommended that the DDA obtain a Feasibility Impact Study.

Mickey Barnhart stated that the Board was talking about a small 30’ x 80’ ice rink which would accommodate 25 people. She advised the Board to take a deep breath as this project may not bring more shoppers to the stores. She felt that the ice rink was for local families to enjoy in the winter.

Bob Jess stated that they looked at the third option. The reason they moved against it was because: 1) if it freezes it cracks, 2) the rink would have to be covered every night, and 3) it cost \$65,000. He favored the man-made system for three years at a cost of \$50,000, or \$25,000 with a matching grant. During the three years, the Committee could study the economic impact of the ice rink, and determine if it was worth going with the chiller system.

The item was closed to the public.

Member Wertz favored option #1 or #4. Mayor Campbell noted that they needed to decide how they wanted to use the rink – in January or also in November and December. Member Dipert preferred option #2 with the hope that the new “Ice Rink Research Committee” decides on #1 to hire a neutral third-party professional. Member DiMartino was in favor of option #1. Chair Barron referenced the study which indicated that one of the things they need to look at is becoming a regional attraction to draw people to Charlevoix during the shoulder seasons. Member DiMartino questioned whether there was another way other than an ice rink. Director Doyle stated that the Chesapeake Study contained a lot of the information that they needed and it would be formally presented in May.

Director Doyle stated that there were two areas of focus: 1) identifying if the ice rink is what the Board wants to support and if it is the highest and best use of Main Street resources; and 2) if yes, then assessing the ice rink in and of itself. Chair Barron felt that the Board could not make an educated decision without an outside study. Member Yaroch suggested that the Ice Rink Research Committee could research what other communities have done with regards to a study.

Member Dupont stated she was having a hard time seeing how this project could economically benefit downtown retail. She indicated that she is the only store open daily in her block during the winter, and she would not be open extended hours during the week and on Sundays for an ice rink without additional open storefronts.

City Manager Heydlauff felt the question for the Board was “What can we do to make Charlevoix even better and what can we do to strengthen our Main Street?” He stated that any action will come back to the Board for a vote. He indicated that City staff can develop the specifications to solicit bids for a consulting firm if desired. He stated that the City and the Board needs to do what is best for Charlevoix.

Motion by Member Wertz, second by Member Dipert to direct staff to hire a neutral third-party professional to assess project feasibility in terms of potential usage and economic impact to the downtown area; findings would be reported during a regularly scheduled Board meeting (option #1).

City Manager Heydlauff estimated professional costs of \$10,000. Director Doyle questioned whether there was an opportunity to save costs by utilizing the firm that is working on the PRMP. City Manager Heydlauff stated that development of the 5-year PRMP which includes a large survey component, cost \$11,000 – bids ranged from \$8,000 to \$35,000.

Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Chair Barron expressed his appreciation to Mr. Jess and the Design Committee for their work. He felt the ice rink project should be put on hold until the study is complete and then sent to the Design Committee for their review and recommendations. Director Doyle stated that the consulting firm’s information gathering would include taking input from the Design Committee and others involved in this project.

2. Proposed Executive Committee By-Laws

Director Doyle stated that this policy document was recommended by City Manager Heydlauff to clarify the Executive Committee's powers and responsibilities. Chair Barron suggested that the last bullet point under Powers & Responsibilities be changed to read: "Representing the Board and Authority before or with other governing boards and all Committees of the Authority." He also suggested a change to the membership in that it provided that the Mayor was a member or the Mayor may appoint someone to represent him. It should indicate that the other individual is required to be a Board member. City Manager Heydlauff explained that the DDA Act stipulates that the Mayor or his/her designee shall be a member of the Board. The language would be clarified to reflect that the membership included the Mayor or his designee to the Board.

Discussion followed regarding the first bullet point under the Powers & Responsibilities section and whether or not a dollar amount for purchases should be included in the By-Laws.

Motion by Member Yaroch, second by Member Dupont to approve the proposed draft entitled *Charlevoix Downtown Development Authority/Main Street Executive Committee Policy* as amended. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

H. Public Comment

Jodi Bingham stated that the downtown tree lights failed to be removed last spring and they wanted this work done in April. She stated that the cost estimate was \$26,000 and she preferred that money go toward lights rather than a feasibility study. She stressed the importance of the lights in the trees in the winter and summer. Ms. Bingham stated that the businesses pay for the lights and felt that it was time for the City and DDA to recognize the importance of the lighting by making this a budgeted item. Director Doyle suggested that they ask John Campbell to make a presentation to the Board at the next meeting including a proposal and cost estimate. Ms. Bingham stated that the timing was crucial to do the trimming in April before the major growing season. Member Dipert explained that there needs to be \$25,000 - \$30,000 spent right now to take the old lights down, marginally trim the trees, and install the new lights. In addition, they would need to budget \$10,000 - \$12,000 a year thereafter to maintain, replace or hold in reserve for the following year when new lights would have to be purchased. Director Doyle stated that there was about \$3,800 in the budget for removing the lights and no funds for installing new lights.

Discussion followed regarding the history of how the lights were funded, fundraising ideas, timing for removal of the lights, expansion of the lighting area, the need to have the lights year-round, securing sustainable funding for this project, and alternatives for lighting downtown.

Chair Barron stated that a report on the status of the re-negotiation of the bonds and the reserve fund needed to be on the next agenda.

Discussion followed regarding the need to have a special meeting to address the issue prior to the next meeting due to the timing to have the lights removed from the trees before the start of the growing season.

I. Miscellaneous Business of the Board

None.

J. Future Agenda Items

1. Bridge Park Building: Recommendations from Facilities Committee on Needed Repairs and Development of Maintenance Plan

Chair Barron said they would schedule a special meeting at the Bridge Park building to review the facility and then reconvene the meeting at City Hall to look at the maintenance plan and baseline maintenance standards. Discussion followed regarding the usage of the building and associated maintenance needs. The Board concurred to schedule a Facilities Committee meeting on April 15th at 8:30 a.m. at the Bridge Park building.

The Board agreed to schedule a special meeting on the lighting issue, the status of the DDA fund balance, and how much to keep on a reserve basis. City Manager Heydlauff stated that the fund balance was approximately \$725,000.

Motion by Mayor Campbell, second by Member DiMartino to spend up to \$30,000 for replacement of the tree lights downtown. Member Dupont stated that the issue still needed to go to the Design Committee to explore expanded plans for next year. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

The special meeting previously discussed was no longer needed.

2. Executive Director's Performance Evaluation.

Chair Barron directed members to complete the evaluation form and forward it to his office prior to April 14th. Results will be tabulated, and they will hold a closed session meeting with Director Doyle on April 25th to review her job performance evaluation.

Member Yaroch asked to add a future agenda item for a recommendation from the Organization Committee to expand their database for fundraising efforts. Member Dupont questioned what the Economic Restructuring Team was doing to fill storefronts. Director Doyle stated that item could be included as part of an overall discussion on goals and the status of the reserve funds.

K. Adjournment

Motion by Member Wertz, second by Mayor Campbell to adjourn. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Joyce Golding/fgm

City Clerk

Dan Barron

Chair