

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting of the DDA Board
October 20, 2020
Zoom Meeting

The regular meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

Turnbull reminded the participants that the DDA Board meeting is now under the Open Meetings Act. Sullivan said that any voting members attending outside of Northville need to state the City, County and State from which they are Zooming. Presley said he is Zooming from Petoskey MI in Emmet County. Casey said he is in Collier County, Naples, FL. Turnbull said the Open Meeting Act is in effect until December 31, 2020. Sullivan said beginning January 1, 2021 you can participate via Zoom only if you are an active service member, feeling ill, or if your County or State's Health Department has declared an emergency.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Brian Turnbull, DJ Boyd, Margene Buckhave, John Casey, Aaron Cozart, Jim Long, Ryan McKindles, Greg Presley, Shawn Riley, Mary Starring*

Absent: *Carolann Ayers*

Also Present: *Patrick Sullivan/City Manager, Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Jeri Johnson/Marketing & Communications Director, Marilyn Price/City Council, Dave Gutman/Resident, Barbara Morowski-Brown/City Council*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda:

- a. September 2020 Financial Statement
- b. September 2020 Invoice Report
- c. July 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- d. August 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- e. September 15, 2020 Informational Meeting Minutes
- f. September 15, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion by McKindles, seconded by Starring to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda. **Motion carries unanimously.**

SOCIAL DISTRICT UPDATE

- a. **Status:** Ward referenced the downtown MLCC permits table she created with all the restaurants and the various licenses they have applied for through the State. Soon the restaurants will be applying to convert their temporary outdoor license, 204a, to a permanent 204. It can be canceled if Northville decides to reopen the streets. The temporary 204a is good through November 30th. There are now 8 restaurants participating in the Social District with the addition of Los Tres Amigos. 160 Main, Browndog Creamery and Center Street Grill have secured a second bar permit.
- b. **Winter Plans:** Ward did a survey of the restaurants to inquire about their outdoor plans for the winter. Most of the restaurants are planning to do some type of outdoor structure for dining. Pooles and 160 Main are doing enclosed structures around their existing outdoor dining which will not be in the streets. The restaurants along Main Street are hoping to work together with a unified approach to winter dining in the street. Ward said the DDA plans to take the revised event application for winter plans to City Council on Monday November 2nd for approval. Boyd wondered where the restaurants could store their tents when not in use. Ward said currently the DDA has nowhere to store things but will possibly look into purchasing a large pod to be located at the DPW yard. Johnson commented that the Chamber rented a couple storage units from local storage companies and the downtown businesses might want to consider renting a unit together.

Presley asked if the winter street closures would continue in future years. Ward said there will need to be a discussion with all the stake holders in the near future to determine next steps. Turnbull feels that the DDA should organize the conversation with the restaurants and retailers and then present it to the Council.

Riley commented that these winter structures will be expensive and the restaurants are looking to the DDA for support. Casey agreed that some of the restaurants are looking for financial help, Pooles and 160 Main are paying for their own structures. The DDA would need to decide if they want to put aside a pool of money that could be distributed to restaurants to offset their costs. McKindles said maybe the DDA could establish a grant program tied to helping the restaurants offset winter structure costs. Ward said if the DDA were to do a grant program it would need to have defined criteria set by the Board. Boyd said he doubts the DDA budget has the funding for a grant program given all the other current budget priorities. Starring asked if there are any State grants available for COVID-19 related expenses. Ward said an Oakland County grant just reimbursed the DDA and City for several COVID expenses to date. Sullivan said there may be more money to come.

- c. **Winter Outdoor Area:** Ward said that she and Riley met with Manfred Schon, a Northville resident, about building a German like winter market in the downtown. Riley said in Germany they put up portable food stands and dining pods during the winter months serving hot drinks and seasonal themed food. Upon further

discussion with the downtown restaurants they wanted to make sure the food stands would be available for use only by downtown restaurants. Riley said these structures are portable and will be used at other events, an investment for the future. Ward said there are two different structures, a vending kiosk and stand up dining pods made from wood and metal. Ward said there will be propane heat and lighting in the ceiling of the structures. Turnbull asked what each structure would cost. Riley said they are still working the price structure but each structure will cost about \$10,000 – \$13,000. Ward said this would be a unique concept that would be different than what other communities are doing. The restaurant owners liked the German Market concept but also wanted to do their own outdoor dining in front of their restaurant. Ward said Schon has agreed to use his own money to do the architectural drawings if the DDA decides to move forward with this program. Other business owners are also interested in sponsoring this new winter concept. Sullivan expressed concern if the structures were fully constructed, they would need to have a crane drive on the pavers in Town Square. Ward said the DDA would put plywood down to protect the heat melt system. Johnson suggested that programming in the streets would be an important addition in making German Market concept successful. Johnson suggested that possibly other organizations that have had to cancel their fundraising events might be interested in helping with creative programming in the downtown to make up for some of the event money they lost.

Boyd expressed concern about the quick turnaround time and the DDA having to manage this project. The funding is also a concern and how does this impact the DDA budget. Boyd suggested forming a small subcommittee group to discuss the logistics and funding. Ward suggested forming an ad hoc group from both the Design and Marketing Committees with input from Schon to look into the German Market.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATE

a. Design Committee:

Boyd said the Buzz branding project is complete and the graphics for the different City logos has been finalized. Boyd said all other projects have been put on hold until the COVID restrictions have been lifted. Ward said the Sustainability Committee has been discussing the retrofit induction lighting in downtown. The Energy Coalition Group (ERC) made a presentation to the group about the cost savings they could provide the City. They are willing to make a presentation to the DDA Board. Boyd suggested that this discussion could fall under the Organizational Committee.

b. Marketing Committee:

Riley said the committee met and many of the non-profits have had to cancel their events. Riley said the Mill Race weddings were a huge success.

c. *Parking Committee:*

Casey said the 2nd parking meeting took place. The last parking study was done in 2007. Casey said the committee was discussing whether a second one needs to be done. The concerns are given COVID restrictions and the winter months coming the DDA might not get accurate results.

d. *Organizational Committee:*

i. 1st Quarter Budget Amendments: Boyd said the committee met and discussed the impact that COVID has had on the DDA budget. COVID has impacted both the revenue and spending side of the budget. Boyd referred to attachment 4.h.

ii. Budget Amendment Explanations: The biggest decrease in planned earnings came from the property tax millage reduction of \$30,817. The increase in planned earnings comes mostly from the Oakland County Cares Act reimbursement program, \$18,866. The net impact on our budget is negative \$26,361 in planned earnings. The reduction and increase in planned spending also have a cumulative negative impact of \$25,380. The decrease in planned earnings and increase in planned spending combined impact the DDA budget negative \$51,741. Boyd said we have a fund balance to offset this negative balance. Ward said there are lots of requests outstanding so the DDA needs to be careful in prioritizing projects. Sullivan shared the good news that the reported millage reduction of \$31,000 will only be \$5,000 so the DDA can put \$26,000 back into their budget.

e. *Economic Development Committee:* Cozart said the committee did not meet.

FUTURE MEETINGS/ IMPORTANT DATES

- a. Economic Development Committee- TBD
- b. Marketing Committee Meeting – November 5, 2020
- c. Design Committee Meeting – TBD
- d. Executive Committee Meeting – November 11, 2020
- e. DDA Board Meeting – November 17, 2020
- f. Parking Committee Meeting - TBD

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATION

Ward suggested that the DDA host a townhall discussion about future years in the downtown. The DDA has been getting lots of feedback and questions whether the downtown streets will remain closed. Ward suggested getting the invested parties together in one forum for a conversation so the City and DDA can come up with a future plan that continues the energy that we have seen this summer and fall. Buckhave suggested a Zoom call so everyone would be able to participate. Sullivan suggested separating the summer and winter dialogs because we have not yet experienced winter street closures.

The next DDA Board meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2020.

Motion by Turnbull, seconded by Starring to adjourn the DDA Board meeting.
Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 am

Respectfully submitted,
Jeri Johnson, Marketing and Communications Director
Northville DDA