

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Special Meeting of the DDA Board
March 16, 2021
Zoom Meeting

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

ROLL CALL

Present: *Mayor Brian Turnbull (Emmet County, MI), DJ Boyd, Margene Buckhave, John Casey, Jim Long, Greg Presley (Lee County, FL), Mary Starring, Aaron Cozart, Shawn Riley*

Absent: *Carolann Ayers, Ryan McKindles,*

Also Present: *Patrick Sullivan/City Manager, Lori Ward/DDA Executive Director, Jeri Johnson/DDA Marketing & Communications Director, Marilyn Price/City Council, Dave Gutman/Resident, Barbara Morowski-Brown/City Council, Anna Mary Lee Vollick/Resident, Petar Elieff, Sarah Prescott/School Board, Susan Haifleigh/Resident*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Long questioned the Carlisle Wortman electronic meetings expense of \$639.98. Long asked if that expense was just for the DDA meetings and Ward said yes. Ward will provide the detailed bill from Carlisle Wortman to the DDA Board.

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

LANDSCAPE CONTRACT BID RESULTS

Ward stated that the DDA has been working with the same landscape contractor for the past 8 years, Commercial Grounds Services. In February, the DDA was notified that they would not be asking to extend the contract with the DDA. They will be installing the spring plantings in early April and the new contractor will take over beginning in May with the summer plantings. DDA staff released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Landscaping Services in late February 2021. DDA staff posted the RFQ on MITN (Michigan Intergovernmental Trade Network), an online vendor solicitation platform and contacted area vendors directly. The RFQ contained a list of more than two dozen common plants, shrubs, and trees as well as labor and design services. The response date was March 12, 2021. Ward also reached out to several local landscapers requesting bids. Two proposals were received: Begonia Brothers and Landscape

Design and Associates. A selection of a single preferred vendor, based on personnel, qualifications, similar work, and unit prices will be awarded for the year. Ward said Landscape Design's prices were double the bid from Begonia Brothers. Ward called all of Begonia Brother's references and had their contract reviewed by the City attorney.

Begonia Brother's has successfully completed DDA planting and maintenance projects for the Northville DDA for over ten years, including various services such as hardscape repair, holiday décor, hedging trimming, Christmas light replacement. The DDA has had a long-term partnership with Begonia Brothers with our Skeletons are Alive project that has grown from a dozen skeletons the first year to over 120 today. In addition, Begonia Brothers has experience working with municipalities, malls, and Home Owners Associations throughout Michigan.

Ward said the unit costs increased this year by an average of \$2/plant. The cost of the plants includes labor, which is where most of the cost increase comes from. Also, there are additional large planters at the barricaded entrances that have been added to the contract. Staff knew going into the solicitation for qualifications that the pricing would increase and has budgeted an additional \$4,000 this year.

The DDA staff recommends that the Northville DDA approve the attached contract with Begonia Brothers of Northville to provide professional landscape services as needed, based on the unit prices provided in the RFQ submission and forward the contract to City Council for review and consideration.

Boyd questioned what percent increase was the \$4000 additional landscaping expense to the DDA budget. Ward said the budget increase is around 15%.

Motion by Long, seconded by Turnbull to approve the Begonia Brother's contract to provide landscape services for the DDA. **Motion carries unanimously.**

DDA 2021-22 BUDGET

Boyd said the attached proposed budget is the final draft and he would be happy to answer any questions. Ward said it is nice to see the tax increment number increasing this year by \$35,000 from new construction. Presley asked how much the new building on Cady street contributed to the increase. Ward said quite a bit of the increase was from the new construction and the DDA will see even more next year when the project is fully completed. Ward said for every million dollars of taxable value the DDA receives \$27,000. Boyd would like to start a discussion with the Board about what to do with the increases from tax increments. Boyd said there are several options on how to spend the additional funds. Ward said the new budget takes into account all the additional costs for maintaining the street closures and still allows for \$37,000 to be transferred to the fund balance. Riley questioned whether we should reinstate the façade grant program. Long and Casey think the additional funds should be kept in the fund balance in case of emergency. Johnson questioned whether the tabled physical improvement projects from this past year could be funded with the extra tax revenue. Presley said up in the Petoskey area a lot of the building owners are looking for help with the maintenance of their historic buildings. Presley agrees with putting the façade grant program on hold for

a few years to build up funds by keeping the increase in the fund balance. Boyd said the facade grants have a direct impact on the downtown which is the DDA mission but also agrees with the need to build up the fund balance before taking on a project of that scale.

Motion by Long, seconded by Casey to approve the 2021-22 Budget with the additional \$37,000 tax increment dollars remaining in the fund balance. **Motion carries unanimously.**

COMMITTEE INFORMATION AND UPDATES

a. *Design Committee:*
None

b. *Marketing Committee:*
Riley said the Art House is moving forward with their Arts & Acts event scheduled June 18, 19 & 20. The event will take place on Cady Street and in the parking lot behind Board Office and next to the library. Riley said “Married by the Mayor” will take place again June 11th & 12th at Mill Race Village. Boyd wondered if there was a discussion about alcohol being permitted in the parking lot behind the Board Office. Arts & Acts did not request alcohol so there was no discussion. Ward mentioned that Mary Kay Gallagher reached out to see if the Senior Prom could be held on Thursday May 27th in the downtown. The DDA will be working with the HS to make this happen.

c. *Parking Committee:*
Presley questioned whether Poole’s new roof top dining would require more parking. Sullivan said currently the City Ordinance does not require more parking credits for outdoor dining. Ward mentioned that 160 Main may also look at roof top dining.

d. *Organizational Committee:*
None

e. *Economic Development Committee:*
None

f. *Sustainability Committee:*
Gutman said the City of Northville has been recognized by the Department of Natural Resources as a “Official Tree City”. Sullivan said City Council approved a tree planting contract to plant 100 trees in the City.

BOARD AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Ward said McKindles accepted the DDA Board position of Treasurer.

The next DDA Board meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2021.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 am

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