

APPROVED

BY: _____ DATE: 1/22/19

**CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2018**

This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority came to order at 7:30 a.m. with the following individuals in attendance:

DDA MEMBERS: Chairperson Anthony Moscone, Vice-Chairperson Caleb Sheng, David Gavron, Dino Grossi, Amanda Habbouche, Melanie Klebba-Cheney, John Smith, Kristin Rzeznik, Wes Umlor, and Richard Ziegler, Mayor.

ABSENT: Excused: Member Klebba-Cheney and Member Umlor

STAFF: Steve Brown, City Manager, Debra Barker, Economic & Community Development Director, Sheryl Lucas, Administrative Assistant to City Manager, Laura Cloutier, Assistant to Director of Economic and Community Development, and JoAnn Parkinson, Recording Secretary.

Determination of a Quorum:

A quorum of the Downtown Development Authority was present for this meeting.

Reading of Vision and Mission Statement:

Mission Statement: The Mission of the Wixom DDA is to coordinate the efforts of businesses and residents to promote the growth of the downtown area for the community's benefit.

Vision Statement: The Wixom Downtown Development Authority is to provide a friendly, welcoming downtown which will enhance and honor our history while promoting cultural, business and recreational opportunities that attract businesses and residents.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Vice Chairperson Sheng and second by Board Member Smith to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments:

An introduction of the people in attendance: Sheryl Lucas, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, Josh Donnelly, Detroit Branding and resident of Wixom, Mona Freiburger, is applying for the Recording Secretary position, Brandon Carnegie, future resident of downtown Wixom, Laura Cloutier, Assistant to Director of Economic and Community Development.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Board Member Habbouche and second by Board Member Grossi to approve the October 23, 2018, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

None

Old Business:

- Design Committee: Bike Update/Downtown Dazzle

Member Rzeznik provided the update. She stated that the Design Committee consists of about five to six people. Laura Cloutier and others gathered some older bikes. The committee spray painted the bikes white and placed them around the downtown, on private property, where there are outside electrical outlets. They were decorated with lights and greenery and a sign: Coming Soon Michigan Air Line Trail. All this work was done through donations. For Downtown Dazzle, if you have driven through the city recently, all the lights are going up and they will all be completed by Friday, November 30th, for the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Ms. Barker added that she has had phone calls about the bikes and she has received positive comments that people like the bikes. Also, outside outlets are a challenge with the commercial buildings. There was one extra bike and it was placed next to the front door of the City Building because there was a plug available. Member Rzeznik added that there was one more outside electrical outlet by her building.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

- Promotion Committee: Downtown Branding/Tag Line

Member Smith provided an update with a presentation. The Promotion Committee has been meeting every two weeks. By meeting every other week, they feel they can get more accomplished. The committee has been working on the tag lines for the city, some which have been shared with the DDA in the past. The presentation was put together to show their progress. The committee started with the idea that "Adventure Begins Here". It felt good because it conveys action and thought, and they wanted "Here" to be the landing point for people. But they also thought that "adventure" was kind of broad in scope and concept because there are a lot of adventures that people can do, it is not so defined. Then they came up with the concept of "Pathway to Discovery" and they wanted to tease up the ideas of the trails and all the opportunities to discover Wixom and downtown, but they thought this sounded too narrow in focus. The concept that they have settled on is "Experience Here" and they are hoping to get the DDA's vote today. This tagline is incredibly simple. It allows the DDA to replace the word

“Experience” with a lot of different ideas: “Celebrate Here”, “Invest Here”, “Eat Here”, “Work Here”, “Play Here” for all the different constituents and groups that they want to attract. It allows the DDA to use the word “Here” as a central focus. When they use a tagline such as “Celebrate Here” they want to use a lot of imagery and promotion and that is where the DDA members come in to help promote this idea. Member Smith displayed a current picture of the downtown logo. If the DDA board plans to put a new tagline and a fresh perspective in place, then they need to freshen up the logo and give more flavor to put a new perspective to the current logo. The Promotion Committee does not want to get away from the idea that they are celebrating our downtown, but they are using visualization, like the bicycle wheel to enhance our original logo. Member Smith credited Josh Donnelly for contributing to this presentation and the new logo concept. Examples were shown for the new logo being used on window decals or banners around the city. These give us an opportunity to have a clean and consistent look around the city and downtown specifically. Again, the central focus is “Here”. These are different calls to action: celebrate, dine, stay, eat, work, play, invest, live here. The committee is excited about this concept and if we do get the DDA approval then the committee will proceed to put a full campaign together working with the different business owners to really build the idea.

Member Rzeznik stated that she thinks the idea is wonderful because there are so many facets to the concept and she has always thought that there is not one thing that defines Wixom.

Co-Chairperson Sheng added that it is impossible to be precise when you are trying to be predictive. This idea allows the people working on a specific event to precisely advertise and announce the feeling of what they are trying to promote. It also takes the burden off the front end by trying to predict everything and all facets of the downtown.

City Manager Brown stated that he likes the flexibility of the concept adding that this is an excellent touch. Beginning with the word “Here” and then adding to that can accommodate a lot of different uses. He is also excited about the fact that the taglines will fit on the banners.

Member Smith added that this is a good point because simple is better and the Promotion Committee wants to use visualization and imagery to draw out the tagline and bring it to life. Chairperson Moscone added that Josh Donnelly works on the advertising for Total Sports and everything is moving towards logos, pictures, less text and more visuals. Here is the picture and the idea and if your brain cannot figure it out here are a couple of words to help you figure it out. This seems to be where advertising is going. Text and words unfortunately are less important. Member Smith explained that the Promotion Committee will continue to build and enhance the current logo as they move farther into the process of promoting Downtown Wixom.

MOTION to approve the Wixom Downtown Tagline, “Experience Here” with the intention that the word experience may be replaced with other expressions, at different times, for specific purposes. Examples of verbs to replace the word *experience* might be: live, eat, play, work, invest, dine, or celebrate. Chairperson Moscone presented the motion and second by Mayor Ziegler.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

- Wednesdays ‘n’ Wixom

Ms. Barker reminded the members that this was an idea that was brought up at the last meeting and that she wanted to present this idea to the members again. She would like to see this get “kicked off” for the beginning of the new year. Ms. Cloutier and she have done more work on this with discussions, looking at other communities, and with the Promotion Committee.

January is typically a tough time for restaurants in Michigan after the holidays. The DDA asks our businesses for donations all the time and some are not able to donate funds for this campaign. This would be a great way for the DDA to give back to the restaurants in Downtown Wixom and promote them. She proposes to have a cap of five hundred dollars for the five Wednesdays in January. The DDA would randomly choose two restaurants for each Wednesday. She believes there are eight restaurants and the DDA wants to include everyone. This would be for sit down restaurants it does not include take out. This includes Wixom Bar if they are willing to participate. The criteria would be that the money would be given to someone who orders food. Therefore, there would be caps and stipulations for all monies donated. The Promotion Committee would help promote and implement the campaign.

A short discussion followed. The DDA would not use gift cards. They would work out the details with each business owner. The winner would just be chosen by pulling a name out of a hat. Ms. Barker would then use cash or her credit card to pay for the meal. They would make sure that the server was taken care of and did not miss out on their tip. The members felt that if a patron was awarded a free meal, they would most likely pay the tip. They would take pictures and upload the pictures to the Facebook page. The whole idea is to make this a fun experience not a job.

City Manager Brown asked for a clarification of the details on how they would be “surprising” the patrons of the Wixom establishments. He also was interested in how this campaign was going to specifically help drive business in January. Ms. Barker explained that there would be several posters around the city for Wednesdays “n” Wixom with all the necessary information: five Wednesdays in January between the hours of 4-8pm. This time frame was chosen so that it would include patrons who are going out for appetizers or customers who were going out for dinner. It would also include the list of restaurants participating and it would be promoted on the City Facebook page, the City website, and could also be promoted by each individual business. Ms. Barker and her office could help those businesses with the wording for the promotion. Member Rzeznik added that the Drafting Table would be participating, and she also has “Las Casitas” on Wednesday so there is the potential for two winners at her establishment. Chairperson Moscone added that this will be a learning experience. As it catches on it will become fun with pictures on social media. If necessary, the campaign could be tweaked next summer to improve.

MOTION by Vice Chairperson Sheng to approve five hundred dollars for

Wednesdays “n” Wixom and second by Member Rzeznick.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

New Business:

- Volunteer Appreciation

Ms. Barker advised that it is important to recognize our volunteers. In the past, our volunteers have been recognized in the newspaper, on the city website, she has provided bagels or lunch, and has encouraged others to thank them. For this next year, she believes that the DDA should think about doing something more substantial and to incorporate that cost into the budget.

Member Rzeznick agreed that there should be something to show the DDA’s appreciation and to give back to our volunteers. She added that the Design Committee has met numerous times, they have been up early in the morning, going out in the cold, for instance to decorate bikes, and secure them in place. She offered that perhaps a night out with their meal being paid or a gift card could be given.

Vice Chairperson Sheng offered that when people care about something that is when they give, as an act of love. This is what service is and the return seems like it should be partly in the same language. When people give their time, usually they are not looking for a lot of bright light recognition. Yet, not everyone is the same and different measures are received differently. Therefore, perhaps there should be a blend of the recognition that is given back by the city. He also added that it is crazy how much time goes into volunteering and people are carving out a substantial amount of time to participate for the city. A dinner that would recognize all is good and when the Facebook Page is up and running there might be a designated spot that recognizes our volunteers so that they know that the city puts them forward and acknowledges their service and time. A blend is good because it is important for them to have closure where they are recognized and received, and this encourages people to continue to give again year after year.

Member Smith added that when you are a part of a celebration for your service you get to see the piece that you are in the larger picture. He would like to see, for example, the volunteers from both the Design Committee and the Promotion Committee to see and meet each other. This helps to endear them more to the downtown and that “give back feeling”.

Ms. Barker added that in the beginning of the year that the DDA can discuss volunteer appreciation again and whatever is decided upon can be added within the budget.

Mayor Ziegler announced that every year in June, the city has a B-B-Q, and they used to include high school seniors that were graduating, and this seemed to work. People get together and talk about their experiences on the different boards, and can visit together. There is usually a good turn out for this event. An event like this might be an opportunity to recognize our volunteers and

help our local businesses by catering this event. This seems more meaningful than just giving someone a gift card and then they go off by themselves. City Manager Brown added that it is better to do something together because it builds comradery and connections with people who do not usually run into each other which might spark some further connections.

Chairperson Moscone explained that with four children at home his life is all about flexibility right now. A gift card is acceptable to him or maybe a gift card given out at a summer B-B-Q, but time is a factor. Maybe ten years from now this will not be as important, but right now flexibility is important to him. Member Rzeznik agreed with this because she stated that she is busy also and many people are busy, and they have already carved out extra time to volunteer.

Vice-Chairperson Sheng advised that there must be a way to give back that still ties the public into the city. A place where people could bring their families and that shows their children the value of volunteering. He inquired if there is a place for volunteers to come and sit and be recognized at other public events. Mayor Ziegler stated that this is something that used to be done at the July 4th celebrations and there was a tent where people could congregate. Since the fireworks have been moved that has been changed to a beer tent.

Ms. Barker replied that they might be able to work out something like that. She stated that she just wanted to have this discussion and that there will be some money that is dedicated to the volunteers. The volunteer numbers are growing. The number is in the thirties. She tries to meet with everyone personally when they show an interest in participating. This is a working board and she encourages everyone to give to the areas that are important to them because she feels this is how it will succeed.

Chairperson Moscone stated that he always like to go above and beyond what others do for him therefore perhaps the DDA should think about doing all these things and there could be levels of recognition. He likes to always be on the credit side instead of the debt side when it comes to rewarding people. Maybe this would be our last Wednesdays 'n Wixom, in March. Vice Chairperson Sheng offered that then this would tee off all the spring and summer events.

Mayor Ziegler asserted the clarification that he was not suggesting that the volunteers come to the current summer celebration, but that the DDA have a special event just for them.

- Joint Meeting Schedule Proposed 2019 Dates

Chairperson Moscone informed the members that he has been to most of the business meetings and that he receives a lot of information from them being a local business owner. He encouraged as many people to attend as possible. He has noticed that more and more people are attending. As a business owner or a resident, it is important to attend.

Ms. Barker noted that the DDA must vote on the dates: Wednesday, February 20, Monday, June 17, and Monday, October 21, 2019. All at 7pm.

MOTION to approve the Joint Meeting Schedule 2019 Dates by Mayor Ziegler and second by Chairperson Moscone.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

- Scope of Powers & Duties of the DDA

Chairperson Moscone inquired as to how the members will know the Scope of Powers and Duties of the DDA. Ms. Barker replied that the information is in the member packets. The information includes new changes to the laws starting January 1, 2019. These are important because we are working on the RRC Redevelopment Readies Community Program. Part of that application process is to update our DDA plan. The Economic Development Team is receiving our DDA plan. The Economic Development Committee will look at this at their next January meeting and possibly meet with the City Planner and find out what the RRC is looking for and then tackle that.

Vice Chairperson Sheng added that this is good to remind ourselves what the scope of our responsibilities are. Everyone should take the time to read this and it should be encouraging and help us drive towards our objectives.

Ms. Barker reiterated that the Economic Development Team will look at this at the January meeting and then come back with information for the DDA board.

Member Smith asked if the DDA board should revisit the branding, tagline, mission, and vision statement and all be considered at the same time. Ms. Barker answered yes that the mission and vision statement should be evolving as the city and the downtown evolves.

Chairperson Moscone presented that perhaps they could do more than that. The DDA has an opportunity to do good for some folks. As the DDA grows, it is nice to reach out to a marketing committee to delegate responsibilities. They need to start trusting others to do some tasks. They are catching the economy at the right time. They are experiencing some growth.

Ms. Barker reminded that part of the DDA role is getting out there and talking to your neighbor and helping to explain what the DDA board can do to assist our business owners and the benefits of the downtown area. We are at infancy now, but there is unlimited potential. It does not end here, under the MainStreet program. It goes county wide and then national. There is assistance out there: finance, marketing, incentives, and the Genisys grant. Member Gavron missed an opportunity with his business sign because the Genisys grant came out afterwards, but he could have had assistance by using this grant. This is all information that our businesses need to know about. The DDA can help by supplying that information.

City Manager Brown explained that there is a listing of information in the packet, within the scope of Act 57, that the DDA can use. When the members read the information there may be something that resonates with them that the DDA might be able to do such as: the contract for

Broadband Services District to negotiate for better pricing and services. That is just one example of what may be available. After the information is read, then the members should bring their ideas to a future DDA meeting.

Ms. Barker added that the DDA has the power to buy, sell, or lease. If the economy had not tanked and the DDA had not lost some of their monies the way that they did, they could be buying some of these old buildings. They could be looking for investors to fix them up. The Economic Committee is going to be looking into the businesses that they would like to see in the downtown area and then figuring out, with the Promotion Committee, how they can attract those businesses. The DDA is somewhat prohibited now, due to cash flow, but they can still be the motivator and the inspiration. There are tools the DDA can use.

Chairperson Moscone added that he knows of a program called Healthy Livonia. It involves a free app called the "Cared App" which a person can have on their phone. It tracks your steps and when you reach 10,000 steps daily then you get a coin worth five dollars or you receive a gift card to Starbucks, or Amazon or whatever it may be. It is all sponsored through the Chamber of Commerce of Livonia and St. Mary's Hospital. This is just one idea. He suggested that the DDA members try to think outside the box and see what they can come up with. The more ideas they have the better chance that they may stick.

Ms. Cloutier gave an update on the app from Distrix which had been discussed at an earlier meeting. She stated that the app is launched and can download onto your phone. She is still learning how to use it, but she has put the upcoming DDA events on the app: The Downtown Dazzle, The Block Party, and Derby Day. The DDA will have to recruit the downtown businesses to sign up and pay the ten dollars a month. It is a work in progress. Each business that signs up has the right to control their own content and the DDA has the rights to control their content. The city could decide to add walking tours, such as a "Sip and Stroll" where you pair up a historical site to other businesses and have a recognizable voice for the tour. When the business signs up they get a beacon at their door and anyone who has that app on their phone will have access to the content from each business such as daily specials or promotions that are going on at that time. The app is free to the city.

Information:

- **Business Forum Events**

- December 11: Wilson Marine, 48500 W. 12 Mile Road
- January 8: Center for the Performing Arts, 28243 Beck Road
- February 12: American Interiors, 29550 Hudson Drive, Novi, MI 48377

- **Downtown News/Events**

- Downtown Dazzle: November 30, 2018 to January 5, 2019

- Tree Lighting Festival: November 30, 2018
- “Nutcracker” Performance – December 8, 2018 - Walled Lake Western High School

Ms. Barker informed the board that American Interiors is a former Wixom company, who built a building outside of Wixom borders. The company asked if they could continue to be a part of the forum and Ms. Barker said absolutely. American Interiors does a lot of work with Wixom companies.

Public Comments:

Ms. Barker added that since the agenda went out more information has come in. There may be a potential partnership with the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. Some of their committee members have historical relatives who are significant to the Hopkins Barn. When they heard about a possible farm project, they said they were interested in being a 501C3 partner and would help manage the funds since the DDA has not taken the steps necessary yet to become an official 501C3 entity in order to be able to accept grant money. The Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society would like to know what the Hopkins Barn may be used for and Ms. Barker had a discussion with them about bringing a Farmer’s Market back. This is a strong potential and they have many contacts for grants and activities. Ms. Barker stated that she will probably bring them in to a future DDA meeting for a discussion. For a nominal fee, they may be a potential partner with the DDA for the Hopkins Barn project.

Ms. Barker explained that a couple members had contacted her because they had been reading about the Community Development Block Grant funds that the city of Wixom has. She believes that the City Manager’s Office is spearheading a walking path around City Hall property for the remaining CDBG funds. She did talk to City Manager Brown about the funds being used to restore the ramp (to the farm property), because the ramp is the first item to be repaired for the project, but it seems that the city will be using the remaining CDBG funds for the walking path. Her office will seek other means for the ramp to be repaired, as this is an ADA compliance in order to use the property.

Ms. Barker declared that the budgets are going to be due sooner. City Manager Brown confirmed that the plan is to move the dates up a little bit. The Economic Vitality Committee will be taking up this discussion and having conversations with the City Council to lengthen our payback time one or two years to allow the DDA to have more money. The potential for a DDA Director is important. She stated that this is not her expertise, but a DDA Executive Director is needed to take this board to the next level.

The next topic are the banners. There may be the possibility to get some banners up for the next Derby Day or something else that the DDA would like to highlight. The Promotion Committee will discuss that. This is all based on the budget discussion because the DDA would have to pay for the banners. Perhaps there could be some business sponsorships, but then they would have to take into consideration what will be displayed on the banners such as the names of the businesses

because they will want some recognition. City Manager Brown added that the members should start to think about their thoughts on what they would like to see for a DDA Executive Director.

The last item is the 2019 Visitors Guide for Wixom which was all done with no expense to the DDA. Ms. Barker's office was approached by the company that designs the chamber booklet-Harbor House Publishing. For the first year, they decided on a thousand copies and three boxes will be dropped off at the hotels and they will be placed in the hotel rooms so that people will be encouraged to come into the downtown. Some of the booklets will also be going out to new residents. Member Smith added that he liked the idea and he wondered if the Promotion Committee could have some input on this in the future. Ms. Barker added that this is an annual printing and the Promotion Committee could be involved in the future.

Executive Director's Comments:

None

Board Members' Comments:

Vice Chairperson Sheng stated that he just wanted to thank all the members for all the time they give to the City of Wixom. They should know how much they are appreciated.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Mayor Ziegler to adjourn the meeting. Member Habbouche second the motion. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:37am.

JoAnn Parkinson
Recording Secretary