

APPROVED
BY: _____ DATE: 5/28/19

**CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2019**

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

DDA MEMBERS: Vice-Chairperson Caleb Sheng, Melanie Klebba-Cheney, Kristin Rzeznik, John Smith, Wes Umlor, and Richard Ziegler, Mayor

ABSENT: Excused: Members Chairperson Anthony Moscone, David Gavron, Dino Grossi, Amanda Habbouche and Debra Barker, Director of Economic & Community Development

STAFF: Steve Brown, City Manager, Sheryl Lucas, Administrative Assistant to City Manager, Laura Cloutier, Assistant to Director of Economic and Community Development, Marilyn Stamper, Finance Director and Mona Freiburger, Recording Secretary

Determination of Quorum:

Vice-Chairperson Sheng called the meeting to order and did roll call.

Reading of Mission and Vision 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 opportunity that attract businesses and residents.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Board Member Klebba-Cheney and second by Rzeznik to approve the Meeting Agenda.

Public Comments

Ms. Cloutier introduced Vanessa Willett, a long time resident; she also put in her application to join the DDA Board. Ms. Willett worked on the Main Street Video, she has a lot to offer and is excited to be at this meeting.

Board Member Smith indicated the biggest point was negative comments versus inappropriate comments. Inappropriate comments would be blocked, filters would be used to reduce the language. Negative comments would be addressed to show we care about them, to give them a voice and provide new opportunities.

Board Member Smith stated that at the next DDA meeting, the committee would have some branding concepts to share with the team, then they would be able to launch a campaign wide initiative for the Downtown including signage and different types of channels that were identified, as well.

- 2019-2020 Budget: Update DDA Director Position

Vice Chairperson Sheng indicated there was a budget work session held on April 22, 2019 which was interesting. There was an update regarding the DDA director position.

City Manager Brown thanked Vice Chairperson Sheng and Board Member Rzeznik for attending the budget work session to articulate the reasons to hire a DDA director. There was no push back on the establishment of the position. There were some terms regarding the structure, and the coordination with the city. The next steps are to finalize the job description. City Manager Brown indicated he would set up a meeting to talk about the job description. There was some discussion at the budget work session meeting on whether the director position would be a city employee position as opposed to a contract position, which is the intent from the relationship standpoint. There was some discussion on hours. There are a few things to get finalized before doing the solicitation to get someone hired. Approvals, theoretically, would take place at the May 28th meeting and then be implemented on July 1st.

Board Member Smith indicated Main Street Oakland may have some leads for candidates. City Manager Brown stated he talked to Oakland County Economic Development for feedback from the community.

Vice Chairperson Sheng stated the session was very helpful and it was incredible to see the director position become a reality in just over a month. This is a transformational step for the DDA. He gave credit to the volunteers, City Manager Brown and Mayor Ziegler for making this happen within five weeks.

- Main Street Awards: Update "Spirit of Main Street" Video

Ms. Cloutier stated the video had been submitted to Oakland County Main Street. There is no online voting. The Awards Ceremony will be held on May 9, 2019 at the Flagstar Strand Theatre in Pontiac.

New Business:

- 2019 Derby Day: Update by Kristin Rzeznik

Board Member Rzeznik indicated Derby Day would be held within two weeks. There is good traction with people signing up. Facebook pushes on the Drafting Table Facebook page have been tremendous. Fox 2 News went to one of the farms for Camp Casey for an interview. The interview will be aired on Thursday, Friday and Saturday before Derby Day.

Board Member Klebba-Cheney, the recipient talked about how important it was for her to have this opportunity for the services that Camp Casey offers. It was interesting and heartwarming to hear her talk about the Camp Casey. Derek Kevra from Fox 2 News is a Wixom resident will be MCing the event.

Board Member Rzeznik stated the 10K race would start at 9 a.m., the 5K starts at 9:10. There is also a one mile run, the Tot Trot.

Board Member Klebba-Cheney indicated the camp would be bringing a different therapy horse. The kids will be able to feed the horse and do a craft to stamp your hands on the horse. The horses are very mellow and allow the kids to come up and touch them. There will be a lot of cool activities for the non-runners. Ms. Cloutier stated Derby Day wristbands are being sold from Drafting Table. Wristbands for participation would be sold to the public. The wristbands are \$5, with \$3 going to Camp Casey; \$2 will come back to the DDA.

Mr. Bill Adams will be returning to take photos, as well. Ms. Rzeznik asked for volunteers to help around the course. Board Member Smith indicated he may be available on Saturday morning on a segway to help with traffic. Ms. Cloutier indicated they were meeting with DPW, police and fire to go over the plans. She also stated the race company is all set. There would be a coffee truck. Ms. Cloutier presented the three year series medal for the DDA members to view. Vice Chairman Sheng thanked everyone for their work

- Get Fit Here: Partnership with Ascension Health

Ms. Cloutier indicated Ascension Health, one of the main sponsors for Derby Day, approached them to say they would sponsor with the caveat to create a healthy living program for the Downtown as a whole. There has been a very good response. Two Saturdays a month from June to the block party, fitness studios in Wixom will be holding three fitness sessions at Sibley Park. Ascension Health will participate and have a health fair with mobile screening units. Kelly's Dance Craze will be teaching Hawaiian and Tahitian dances for fitness.

Information:

- **Business Forum Events**

-May 14: Oakland Schools Technical Campus, 2000 Beck Rd., Wixom 48393

-June 11: Wixom Public Library, 49015 Pontiac Trail, Wixom 48393

- **Downtown News/Events**

-May 9: The Main Event - "Main Street Radio Hour" Awards 6:00 p.m., 12 Saginaw Street, Pontiac, MI

-October 5: Drafting Table - Oktoberfest Party

Public Comments:

Board Member Smith had an update from the last session regarding the farm house and barn. There was some discussion within the Promotion Committee with ideas, and perhaps a business plan. While he was in Rochester, he saw some people working on a barn as part of a campus. Board Member Smith spoke to the people, they are willing to look and give us a bid on whether or not to move forward on the project. This could give us some feedback on whether to move forward on this project. The company's mission is to preserve and restore barns and farmhouses.

City Manager Brown asked Board Member Smith to give him an email with the names and numbers to call to talk about this. City Manager Brown indicated there is a funding opportunity but a decision would have to be made quickly about a business plan. Board Member Smith stated the group is part of a Michigan Barn Historic Commission.

Mayor Ziegler indicated he did not believe there is a big interest by City Council in developing the barn and house the way that the presentation was made here. He did not think the Council saw it as a workable option as a rental place and have a market and shop front. In general terms, the Council probably values the barn more than the house. He didn't think anybody thought the house as a cute farm house that you envision. Mayor Ziegler did not think there was an interest in preserving the barn; the interest would lean toward refurbishing it but moving it to the Gibson property. There was a council member on the planning commission, at that time, when the barn was discussed. It was in a better shape then than now. It was suggested using it for fire training to have a real life experience. There are not a lot of people that value that piece of property on the council. If there was a proposal that made sense, it might help to bring forward and have ideas. There had been talk about the barn and weddings; the idea would cost a lot more as far as personnel to take care of it, and monitor it during events. There is not a lot of interest for development in that way. Mayor Ziegler indicated the discussion was several years ago. His recollection was there was not a lot of interest. He did not view that building as a money maker. It would be a challenge to come up with a proposal for it to be acceptable to several people. You have to be practical and realistic. The Historical Society was housed there and they were working on it for a lot of years and then finally they moved to the Gibson House. They are doing a nice job of taking care of the Gibson House now.

City Manager Brown asked about the alternatives and possibilities; funding source is modest, nothing directional or life changing. City Manager Brown stated it is an eye sore, and would require a substantial investment.

Board Member Smith stated we could elaborate on discussion, explore different ideas to help support the project. Brides and families pay a premium to get married at barns, it could be a great attraction, a destination, and part of historical walk as well. Board Member Smith indicated if we had support from the board, he would be willing to help. It is the city's property but act as caretakers and/or property management, potentially, having tenants to be an event company or planner of some sort that could pay rent to utilize the property and be an attractive resource for weddings or other venues. There is so much more such as farmers' markets, Christmas tree stand, family picnics, senior pictures, etc. It could become a destination especially with the Michigan Air Line Trail, it is a good spot to stop and rest. It could be part of the historical walk as well.

It might be helpful to have another discussion on it to see where the current Council stands. It could be a community center for senior programs, and could be rented out; if nobody in the community is using it, rent out and help offset some of the costs. It would be a challenge to come up with a proposal and be acceptable to the Council. Mayor Ziegler stated he did not want to be discouraging but to be practical and realistic.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Mayor Ziegler, second by Board Member Klebba-Cheney to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary