CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, August 27, 2024

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 Carissa Osburn, Vice Chairperson; Board Members: Mark Garmo; Kaitie Guzowski; Russ Meredith; Leslie Payment; Vanessa Willett

ABSENT: Excused: Jessica Buck; Patrick Beagle, Mayor; Darby Hoppenstadt;

STAFF: DDA Staff: Laura Cloutier, DDA Executive Director
City Staff: Steve Brown, City Manager
City Staff: Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager & Director of Economic Development
Mona Freiburger, Recording Secretary

Determination of Quorum:

Quorum was met.

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 opportunity that attract businesses and residents.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Board Member Willett to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

Approved 10/22/2024

Public Comments:

No public comments.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Willett to approve the June 25, 2024, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

1. Resignation notice from DDA Board Member Steven Hartman
2. MSOC SEO Workshop

Executive Director's Report: July/August 2024

Executive Director Cloutier's Monthly Report for July and August 2024, is included in the packet.

Executive Director Cloutier gave an overview of her July and August, 2024 reports. She indicated Shop OC Main Street has kicked off. Currently, there are only two downtown businesses included. She has been talking with the comic bookstore, who she feels would benefit being on Shop OC Main Street site.

Executive Director Cloutier and Assistant City Manager Benson met with DTE to discuss burying the power lines at the West End Commons. DTE will be doing work on the conduit there, so they will be trying to line up how that will work. DTE is doing their own conduit project, entirely separate to burying power lines; however, it does open up the opportunity to, potentially, bury the lines either at the same time or at least having them install a conduit large enough to bury them at some point at a reduced cost to us. The preliminary cost to bury everything was approximately $8 millon, specifically, around the Old Wixom Road area. The cost could be closer to $2 million because of the work that they are already doing. The work will be taking place between 2024 and 2030. The work could be set up to not affect the West End development. DTE's intent is to run a conduit on the west side of Old Wixom Road.

Volunteer Local has kicked off. All of the Board Members and Community Members should have received an email from Board Member Hoppenstadt to sign up for the Block Party.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated she is working with Ashgrove Marketing for brand apparel to have in time to sell at Block Party.

Approved 10/22/2024

South by Southwest managers which include Highland, Lyon Township, South Lyon and Executive Director Cloutier have been meeting regularly to talk about how they can collaborate. They are looking at having a burger battle between the communities for the month of February. More information to follow.

Vendors for the Block Party are being secured. Record numbers right now for vendors. Executive Director Cloutier is working with DPW on the layout for the food trucks to make sure there is room for all of the vendors.

Old Business:

1. Interlocal Agreement with Oakland County/West End Commons Update

In August, 2024, The Wixom DDA and City Council authorized design engineering services for the West End Commons Project, in anticipation of various grant funding opportunities that were on the horizon. In early 2024, we were notified that the City was awarded $738,400 from the federal government via a Community Project Funding (CPF) grant, which was secured by Hayley Steven's office. The grant requires a 20% match.

In addition to this, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners has also awarded an additional $206,868 of their American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the City as a subgrant for the West End Commons area. This brings the total funding for the project:

Wixom DDA TIF Capture	$283,078 - 23%
Community Project Funding (CPF)	$738,400 – 60%
Oakland County ARPA Grant	$206,868 – 17%
Total:	$1,228,345 – 100%

(Full Memorandum to Wixom Downtown Development Authority from Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager & Director of Economic Development; and Laura Cloutier, Executive Director, DDA to Wixom Downtown Development Authority dated August 27, 2024 enclosed in the packet).

It is recommended that the DDA Board approve a motion to authorize an Interlocal Agreement with Oakland County for the Allocation of ARPA funds as a Grant for the West End Commons project and recommend approval to the Wixom City Council.
(Placemaking and Public Spaces Program Agreement for Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Distribution Between Oakland County and City of Wixom enclosed in the packet)

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated there are two renderings in the packet. The purpose of the agenda item is to give an overview of how the project is moving forward over the next couple of months. We have received an Interlocal Agreement from Oakland County for their portion of the project. The total amount of money available is summarized, $1.23 million dollars.

Approved 10/2/2024

The DDA will not, technically, be a party to the Interlocal Agreement, however, it is asked for the DDA to make a recommendation about the project, as a whole, to City Council. The DDA will be taking the Interlocal Agreement to City Council tonight. The DDA is not voting, nor is City Council voting, on the final layout of the plan. There are two plans in the agenda packet. These plans are very early. The intent, in terms of next steps, assuming City Council approves the initial step of entering into the Interlocal Agreement with the County, will be for us to take these plans and, essentially, take them through community engagement. The DDA will be involved in the ultimate design at the end, but then it goes to City Council, the same type of process. The intent is to show that could be shaped differently; it could look different. On the far east side, south of the dumpster closure, is where either, potentially, a throne, more temporary bathroom situation or, potentially, a permanent bathroom situation (which needs to be worked out in the engagement piece), but, theoretically, we have the money to be able to do it, if we make sure the infrastructure is there. HRC will be preparing the RFP with the specifics.

City Manager Benson noted it is the intention for a significant gateway signage installation on the corners, on the backside of the seating area. The project budget reflects that, as well.

Board Member Guzowski indicated she loved the restroom facility idea, which is very important. She stated the Design Committee had the idea of extending this scope of work to include a brick façade on the planter boxes which are gray concrete down Pontiac Trail. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated it probably wouldn't be an eligible cost for either of the grant funds that are secured but he thought it could be incorporated into the project since they would be mobilized; it would decrease the cost.

Board Member Meredith stated of the two plans, he really liked the one with the bocce ball court best. He asked if two more checkerboard tables could be placed near the walkway that comes from the existing parking lot, close to the pathway, for a total of four.

Board Member Guzowski indicated she went to the Farmer's Market in Farmington. Their Farmer's Market had a nice set up with hanging lights, a lot of corn hole boards, and a lot of little fire pits. The lights were hung from some poles and lights attached to the buildings.

City Manager Brown asked the Design Committee to think about the band area where the concerts are held, to incorporate the design of the brick work with columns which ties to the way the brick is on the electric sign on the City Hall side. People talk about how it looks disjointed and separate. Also, the band area, if we could make that as visually punchy as possible, a high-quality design.

Board Member Meredith stated he visited a pocket park in Port Huron, which had a large stage area; they had put lights in the ground that change colors when you walked around. It could be an interesting feature to put along the concrete of the walkway.

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MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Guzowski to recommend approval to authorize an Interlocal Agreement with Oakland County for the Allocation of ARPA funds as a Grant for the West End Commons project and recommend approval to the Wixom City Council.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

New Business:

1. Strategic Planning Proposal from POW Strategies to conduct Strategic Planning Session with the Wixom DDA.

Memorandum to Wixom Downtown Development Authority from Laura Cloutier, Executive Director dated August 27, 2024, subject: Recommendation to approval proposal from POW! Strategies for Strategic Planning Services for $4,000.00 from Professional Development/Conferences account is enclosed in packet.

Director Cloutier has been working with Main Street Oakland County (MSOC) on the criteria for becoming a Select Community for the past few years, as they feel the Wixom DDA is on the cusp of this level promotion. Becoming a Select Community within the Main Street program would allow us to become accredited with MSOC and National Main Street for using best practices taken away from a strategic planning session. Also, this would provide the Wixom DDA more opportunities to grant funding, business support, trainings, and other tools to help us continue to success while exhibiting best practice. MSOC has suggested that the Wixom DDA take advantage of the Strategic Planning Services through POW! Strategies as part of the process to becoming a Select Community.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated this is a very good opportunity for the DDA to go through this process. It is a commitment of time. All Board Members and committee members are expected to attend. Executive Director Cloutier would like to invite City Council, if they would like to participate. This will position the DDA better going into negotiations to renew the DDA and TIFF plan because we will have those goals. It is also one-stepping stone into becoming a Select program with Main Street Oakland County, as well.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated the POW Strategies would create a survey which would be sent out to all stakeholders, i.e., Board members, committee members, City Council, City staff, and herself. This will be a very safe place to insert your opinions, thoughts, ideas and then based on that, the strategic planning meeting will be developed to set those goals. In October, we can look at those project lists to see priorities based on the goals that came up with the strategic planning meeting. Assistant City Manager Benson stated this session is a little bit more formal than the strategic planning or strategic budgeting that is held in October. When it gets to the

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budget session, the DDA will already have a good handle on priorities for the next three to five years.

Executive Director Cloutier stated this session is not a requirement of Main Street Oakland County, but it is highly suggested that we go through this process. Many other communities such as South Lyon and Oxford went through this process, and they are already a Select community. It is for the DDA to get all on the same page with an outside source versus Main Street coming in and telling us how we should set our goals.

MOTION by Board Member Guzowski and second by Board Member Payment to recommend approving the proposal from POW! Strategies for Strategic Planning Service for the cost of $4,000.00 from the Professional Development/Conferences account.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

2. Main Event Awards for Main Street Leader and Entrepreneurship & Innovation Monetary Awards for Director Cloutier and Drafting Table Brewing Company

The Main Event was held on June 6, 2024 in Downtown Rochester. This annual event hosted by Main Street Oakland County (MSOC) celebrates the achieves of all the downtown organizations that participate in the Main Street program. This event resulted in the Wixom DDA being honored with two awards, Main Steet Leader for our Director Laura Cloutier and Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship for Drafting Table Brewing Company. Each award came with a $600.00 check as an extra bonus.

At the June DDA Monthly Board Meeting, Director Cloutier asked that Board members think about what to do with those funds and give suggestions to her as MSOC does not have any stipulations on how the funds should be used and leaves it up to the discretion of the DDA board. At this time, there have been no suggestions made to her.

It is the recommendation from Chairperson Buck to award those funds to the Director Cloutier and Drafting Table Brewing Company since they worked hard to earn these awards.

Vice Chair Osburn read a letter into the record from Chairperson Buck. Chairperson Buck suggested that the checks to be received by the Drafting Table and to Executive Director Cloutier.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated Oakland County grants the awards; they write the checks to the community and then leave it up to the City's discretion of where it goes from there. To be clear, the funds are not DDA Tiff capture; and they are not, specifically, subject to the restrictions.

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Board Member Guzowski suggested that there be some type of promotion for the check delivery to Drafting Table to share with the community.

Board Member Willett suggested that the funds for Executive Director Cloutier be spent for some type of professional development such as another conference. She stated the funds would be a good way to reinvest in the business.

Vice Chair Osburn inquired if this motion should be tabled to have more time to consider the options or if the Board was ready to vote.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated he did not know enough about the awards from Main Street Oakland County but in this particular case, these are awards granted to a specific individual besides volunteer of the year.

Board Member Payment indicated as much as she agrees with Board Member Willett, perhaps this award of bonus could be reinvested for education to make Executive Director Cloutier an even better director, but she also believes that it is a gift. It is an award that was well deserved, Executive Director Cloutier has made herself available to this community. Board Member Payment stated her personal feeling is that we all work hard, and Executive Director Cloutier did it selflessly, so for Executive Director Cloutier to take the $600 and spend it on herself.

It was agreeable to the Board Members to have the motions, individually.

MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Board Member Guzowski to approve the monetary awards from the Main Event Awards for Main Street Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship to Drafting Table Brewing Company for $600.00 from Main Street Contributions account.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Motion passes.
All in favor.

MOTION by Board Member Payment and second by Board Member Meredith to approve the monetary awards from the Main Event Awards for Main Street Leader to Director Cloutier for $600.00 from Main Street Contributions account.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Motion passes: 5 to 1

Information:

Approved 10/2/2024

1) Committee Reports

Memorandum from: Kaitie Guzowski, Design Committee Chair; Vanessa Willett, Economic Vitality Committee Chair Members; Jess Buck, Promotions Committee Chair; and Carissa Osburn, Organization Committee Chair dated August 27, 2024; subject Committee Reports is enclosed in the packet.

A. Design Committee

Board Member Guzowski stated the Committee is meeting next week on Tuesday. She asked the Committee to have ideas on what they want to see around the Loop pathway. The meeting will be held on Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. at the Drafting Table.

Board Member Guzowski also indicated the Committee has been discussing the West End Commons; everybody is really interested. Hanging flower baskets is on the agenda to bring to the group, as well. The Committee was tasked by City Council to the DDA to find alternatives.

The Bike painting project and installation of the wood pieces of art were completed. Board Member Guzowski gave a shout out to the Eagle Scout for all of his work; and also, Tim Simka and Russ Pearson from DPW who installed the bikes around the downtown area.

B. Economic Vitality Committee

Board Member Willett indicated the Committee did not meet last night. A planning session for the coming year was to be discussed along with some opportunities to work with the other Committees. She stated more folks are needed on the Committee, who have a business background and understands economics and how things work.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the Design Committee would be doing a lot of the design work related to West End Commons. He stated it would be a good idea to take that to Economic Vitality to get their perspective, as well.

C. Promotions Committee

Executive Director Cloutier stated the Committee is working on the Block Party. The entertainment is booked, food trucks are good, although the lobster truck did cancel last week, but she got a BBQ truck to replace them. Mega 80's is all set. There is a record number of artisans, vendors and businesses. She stated for the Board Members to sign up to help and volunteer.

Dough, across the street, is interested in doing a spotlight video. It may be a few months down the line.

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Ashgrove is working on downtown swag.

The Spooktacular Treat Hunt is being planned. Spooktacular event has been very well received. There are other activities planned at Sibley Park to keep it fresh. The pumpkin patch is planning to be expanded. Different and more candy is expected this year. Executive Director Cloutier has a meeting with John Hensler, Trail Manager, Michigan Air Line Trail, who would like to do something along the trail or the loop around Renton, possibly, a haunted walk. There was a discussion with Director Magee from Parks and Recreation regarding equipment to project sound for Spooktacular.

The next meeting will be in two weeks, right before Block Party.

D. Organization Committee

Vice Chair Osburn indicated they met on Tuesday. The main topic was the Volunteer Local app, and the new implementation. The Volunteer Local app was rolled out to the Board and committee members.

There was a discussion regarding a volunteer appreciation event in October. Last year, the volunteer appreciation event was held in the summer and the turnout was okay. Drafting Table sent out available dates in October to hold the event this year.

The next meeting for the Committee is Tuesday, September 17th.

2) Downtown Business News/Events

2024: September 21st – Block Party, 3:00 to 8:00 pm
2024: October 19th – Spooktacular Treat Hunt, Noon to 2:30 pm
2024: November 27th – January 5th – Downtown Dazzle
2024: December 6th – Tree Lighting Festival, 5:00 to 10 pm
2024: December 11th – Candy Cane Lane, 5:30 to 7:00 pm

Public Comments:

No public comments.

Executive Director's Comments:

Executive Director Cloutier indicated the Board wanted a few evening meetings when the meeting list for 2024 was set. With the strategic meeting at the end of the month and the September 18th meeting being almost 2.5 weeks apart, she asked if the Board wanted to cancel the 18th meeting

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and have the strategic meeting held on September 26th, the regular meeting date. The meeting was set for September 18th, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Assistant City Manager Benson noted the City is being awarded a road safety grant through SEMCOG, specifically, for evaluating pedestrian and vehicular safety in the downtown area. There is a kickoff meeting with SEMCO's selected consultant on September 16, 2024. Then, the next meeting is set for September 23, 2024. The full staff including police, fire, community services, Executive Director Cloutier and himself will be attending. Assistant City Manager Benson stated he will keep everyone advised of opportunities for additional input. Assistant City Manager Benson also indicated the trail is a key component and probably why the City received the grant. Downtown is intended to be pedestrian oriented, and the City is doing a lot of projects to that end. It is an opportunity to get a third-party perspective on safety features we have incorporated or other things the City should consider as we move forward.

Executive Director Cloutier thanked everyone for their attendance at the meeting.

Board Members' Comments:

Board Member Garmo inquired if there is any news on the Heath building. Assistant City Manager Benson stated they have been in contact with the owners, who are in the process of trying to get permits. The City is trying to communicate code requirements for what the owner wants to do.

Board Member Guzowski indicated she liked the burger battle idea, Main Street burger battle. She stated she thought the owners of Crispy Chicken and Burgers should be invited. Board Member Guzowski also indicated she has met with the wife (owner), who has a great personality, and she will talk with her to submit an application for the DDA Board.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the Planning Commission granted preliminary site condominium approval for a new subdivision on the Cavallaro property; along with the conditional rezoning for the 72-townhome project also in the downtown. Both projects are before City Council tonight.

Executive Director Cloutier stated Parks and Recreation contract now stipulates weeding will be handled twice a month, specifically, the planter boxes, due to the vines that are growing in it from across the street that were planted.

Vice Chair Osburn thanked everyone for their support. She stated she was excited in moving forward in the Golden Sachs 10,000 Small Business Program. Vice Chair Osburn indicated she was going through the process in 2016 and through that application process, she was also relocating her business from Farmington to Wixom, and it didn't work out for her to go through the program. She stated she was super excited on the interview in December.

Adjournment:

Approved 10/2/2024

MOTION by Willett, second by Garmo to adjourn the meeting. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary

Approved 10/22/2024