CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2024

This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority came to order at 7:33 a.m. with the following individuals in attendance:

DDA MEMBERS: Carissa Osburn, Vice Chairperson; Board Members: Mark Garmo; Kaitie Guzowski; Steve Hartman; Patrick Beagle, Mayor

ABSENT: Excused: Jessica Buck, Russ Meredith, Leslie Payment, Vanessa Willett

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 Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Guzowski to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments:

None

Approved 3/26/2024

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Guzowski to approve the January 23, 2024, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

None

Executive Director Report of February 20, 2024

Executive Director Cloutier overviewed and gave some highlights for her Activity Report, February, 2024.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated the Derby Day registration page is live, and people have already signed up for the race. She attended many MSOC meetings, and monthly manager meetings. There is a very successful start to the branding logo and signage services with Guide Studios. Two weeks left for Wednesdays in Wixom, which has been very successful. She met with City staff regarding the updated costs for the Civic Center playground, which will be discussed today. Many Main Street Oakland County communities are collaborating to provide workshops to their communities, their businesses, etc., such as Oxford and Lake Orion. Main Street Oakland County is bringing together Highland DDA, Lyon Township DDA, South Lyon DDA and Wixom DDA to collaborate.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated City staff has had some conversations with Marvin Poota regarding their property on Old Wixom Road around the BP Station. He indicated it is too early to say where the discussions may go.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated they will be getting their posters shortly for Derby Day; a QR Code will be on the posters. There was a suggestion to work with the corporations and Total Sports for exposure of the flyers for Derby Day. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated Executive Director Cloutier met with several of the hotels last year, but it is hit or miss whether they are receptive.

Old Business:

A. Renton Redevelopment

Approved 3/26/2024

Over the last three months, City Staff has received a respectable reception and level of interest in the Renton Redevelopment Area, including numerous phone calls, meetings, and even formal site tours/visits. Given the complex nature of major development projects, as well as the uncertain nature of the national economy, Assistant City Manager Benson indicated they have always known that they may not be successful in their first attempt in marketing the Renton Redevelopment Area. The City knows that they may need to take additional steps to find the right partner at the right time. They can confirm that to date, the City has not received any formal proposals.

Feedback from developers and next steps have been provided to the City Council and Assistant City Manager Benson will provide this information to the DDA Board.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the above synopsis summarizes this topic relatively well. There were no proposals for the first round of marketing for the Renton Redevelopment area. They got a good reception and talked to a lot of different people who have expressed various levels of interest; concerns about the railroad is an issue, specifically, for residential. There were extensive conversations, but their conclusion for not giving a proposal is because of their concern of a bank not lending on a residential project that close to an active rail line. Assistant City Manager Benson stated he disagreed because it is done in Royal Oak. Also, the City may look at redoing the sidewalk near Mack Park to improve the area while still seeking out development partners.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated the City may investigate real estate brokers or partners to work with the City and/or various kinds of firms to find the right group that can help market the site. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated if we can more directly market the site to perspective end users then they can bring developers with us. It is his goal to have an RFP seeking demolition proposals out toward the end of the month, and after approvals by City Council, to have the demolition by some point this summer.

B. Civic Center Playground

On February 15, 2024, City Staff, Library Director Dickson, and Executive Director Cloutier met to discuss the updated cost proposals for the Civic Center Playground. Through this discussion, many options were reviewed and considered to decide what option would meet the overall objectives and budget for this project. Key factors for this project include overall budget, DPW project schedule/capacity, ground surface, and company installation vs. community build option.

BY 2023/24 Budget for Civic Center Playground:

CDBG Funds	$ 75,000
DDA Contribution	$250,000
Total:	**$325,000**

Approved 3/26/2024

Option 1:	
Equipment	$ 69,714
Install	$ 50,290
Demo & Site Prep	$ 25,392
Grass Surface	$ 78,134
Total:	**$223,530**

Option 2:	
Equipment	$136,216.67
Install	$ 96,376.80
Demo & Site Prep	$ 25,392.00
Grass Surface	$127,052.00
Total:	**$394,041.97**

Option 3:	
Equipment	$208,556.84
Install	$140,346.00
Demo & Site Prep	$ 40,260.00
Grass Surface	$149,756.25
Total:	**$538,919.09**

Option 1 with installation, demo/site prep, and grass surface, due to the overall budget, DPW schedule/capacity, and feedback from residents at the library regarding the surface is recommended to the DDA Board. Option 1would also allow for contingencies and extra pieces to be added to the Loop, i.e., benches, drinking fountain, etc. This would achieve phase one build out of the Civic Center Playground and the Loop that all entities wish to achieve.

After thoughtful discussion, we are recommending the approval of DDA funds of $250,000.00, currently, budgeted for the Civic Center Playground from Transfer Capital Contributions Special Projects account #248-966-995.004.

Executive Director Cloutier stated they have been talking about the playground for a very long time. Last week, City staff, Library Director Dickson and herself met with DPW to go over the updated costs. The three options were discussed on what is going to make the most sense for the budget. After discussion, they thought Option 1 would best fit, which is the lesser option in terms of equipment, but it also fits into the budget of $325,000, which would allow for contingencies, and some extras such as benches, drinking fountains, etc. The breakdown of costs is listed above for Option 1. Grass surface will be installed instead of wood chips. The grass surface (pictured in the packet) is virtually maintenance free and accommodating to all abilities; wood chips is not as ADA friendly. The overall cost is $223,530.00. The install would be summer, 2024.

Approved 3/26/2024

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated there are contingencies involved, but in total, we assume less than $325,000.00, unless additional benches and other things are added.

Parks and Recreation Supervisor Kathy Venegas gave some background that the playgrounds come in age groups: 2- to 5-year-olds, and 5-to-12-year-old. Option 1 has a 5- to 12-year-old structure along with the swing set; because it is a tot lot, there are 2-to-5-year old's that use that space. Instead of installing swings, the thought is to switch out the swings and install a 2- to 5-year-old structure. The structure would be a little more expensive, but the cost would be within the limits of the $325,000.00 overall budget.

Parks and Recreation Director Deanna Magee indicated the playground was well thought out, and they met a few times to discuss all the options and decided on a good recommendation.

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Hartman to approve spending up to $250,000.00 from Transfer Capital Contributions Special Projects account #248-966-995.004, for the Civic Center Playground.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

New Business:

A. National Main Street Conference

Every year, Main Street America holds an annual conference to gather Main Street/DDA directors, stakeholders, and many others to share best practices and learn from the experts in the Main Street Program. This year, Executive Director Cloutier was invited to attend the conference May 5th – May 8th in Birmingham, Alabama by MSOC. This invitation is, typically, reserved for communities that are designated Select level within the MSOC program. Wixom being a Partner level community and is seen by MSOC as Select level within the MSOC program. Wixom being a Partner level community and is seen by MSOC as a rising community that is on the verge of being designated Select, this is an honor to be invited. Part of the invitation is to have registration fees covered by MSOC. It is recommended the approval of funds to cover costs for airline travel and hotel stay from Professional Development/Conferences account #248-729-956.019, not to exceed $1200.00.

Executive Director Cloutier stated Main Street America holds an annual conference to gather Min Street/DDA directors, stakeholders, and many others to share best practice and learn from the experts in the Main Street Program. This year, the conference will be held in Birmingham, Alabama.

Mayor Beagle asked if the $1,200.00 would cover all expenses including meals. Executive Director Cloutier answered yes.

Approved 3/26/2024

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Garmo to approve the funds to cover costs for airline travel and hotel stay, not to exceed $1,200.00, from Professional Development/Conferences account #248-729-956.019, for Executive Director Laura Cloutier to attend Main Street America annual conference to be held in Birmingham, Alabama, May 5th through May 8th, 2024.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

B. Downtown Flower Basket Maintenance RFP

The Wixom Downtown Development Authority (DDA) added hanging flower baskets to the light posts downtown via a contract with Landscape Design & Associates, LLC of Brighton, Michigan in 2021. These hanging baskets have been well received by the community and help showcase the district in the months with beautiful color. With the expiration of our current contract in 2023, the DDA released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Flower installation and Maintenance in January, 2024 seeking a three-year contract. This longer contract will ensure early ordering of flowers, allow for ample growth of flowers in baskets ready to be installed and provide a longer-term relationship with the selected vendor. Proposals were due on February 1st. While 19 landscaping firms reviewed the RFP, only one submitted a bid for the installation and maintenance services. Landscape Design & Associates, LLC submitted its bid for a three-year contract with pricing which is enclosed in the packet.

The contract includes the purchase of 78 hanging flower baskets to be placed on designated street poles with two baskets per pole in Downtown Wixom. The contractor, Landscape Design & Associates, LLC of Brighton, Michigan will provide the flower baskets, installation, daily watering, weekly fertilizing, and other maintenance form May, 2024 through September, 2026.

While the proposed costs are higher than we currently have budgeted in each fiscal year, we are not projecting the need for an immediate budget amendment for Fiscal Year 23/24. This is because the Downtown Flowers account has currently spent $33,120 of its $50,000 budget for watering in the summer of 2023; after July 1st, which leaves a balance of $16,880 for the remainder of fiscal year 23/24. The projected expense with this new contract will only be $14,469 through June 30thth, as well will owe $6,553 for the flowers and installation, and only one month's expense for water ($7,716) which is due starting June 1, 2024, for services rendered starting in May, for a total 23/24 expense of $14,469 in FY 23/24. The remainder will be due and expensed in FY 24/25. The spreadsheet is outlined in the packet which outlines costs split between fiscal years, which are summarized.

It is recommended that City Council approve a three-year contract for annual Downtown Flower installation and Maintenance with Landscape Design & Associates, LLC of Brighton, Michigan, in the amounts of $14,469 for Fiscal year 2023/2024, $55,292 in Fiscal year 2024/2025, $57,275 for

Approved 3/5/2024

Fiscal year 2025/2026, and $41,562 for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 from Downtown Flowers Account $248-729-956.016.

Executive Director Cloutier highlighted the above summary in reference to the flowers and three-year contract. She stated it not the cost of the flowers, but it is the maintenance which is most of the cost. The cost includes a two-person crew, water, and maintenance every day of 78 hanging baskets.

Parks and Recreation Director Magee stated they have looked for a long time, and this company was the only one which put in a bid. It is at least three to four hours of work each day. She agreed that it was expensive but there is no alternative.

After discussion, it was decided to renew the contract for one year and look for alternatives and/or other options.

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Chairperson Osburn to a one-year contract for annual Downtown Flower installation and maintenance with Landscape Design and Associates, LLC of Brighton, Michigan from Downtown Flowers Account #248-729-956.016.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

C. Executive Director Annual Review

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the Executive Committee will provide feedback to the DDA Board to provide the opportunity for all DDA members to comment on her performance. They will compile the information later this week, send individual sheets for Executive Director Cloutier's review, and then bring it back to the DDA Board for final review at the DDA March meeting. No action for today is needed.

Information:

A. Committee Reports/Updates

- Promotions Committee

Executive Director Cloutier indicated the Promotions Committee has been meeting regularly to discuss Derby Day and starting to work on Block Party. Wednesdays in Wixom will end in two weeks.

- Design Committee

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Board Member Guzowski indicated the Design Committee met and discussed public art and shared ideas. They asked the artist to propose what she can do with the $2,500 allowance. The bikes were also discussed such as reconfiguring and updating them.

An Earth Day initiative was discussed to help clean up downtown and the flower boxes.

- Economic Vitality Committee

Executive Director Cloutier stated the Committee went over the results; a lot of the businesses did not fill out the survey, and the Committee will continue to reach out to the businesses.

- Organization Committee

Vice Chair Osburn stated the Organization Committee will meet on Tuesday. It was discussed to have a Facebook page for local businesses; using email addresses for the businesses is a challenge. A Facebook page would give a forum for business owners to collaborate.

B. Downtown Business News/Events

- 2024: January – February: Wednesdays in Wixom
- 2024: March 8th: Wixom Gala @ 6:00 pm
- 2024: May 4th: Wixom Derby Day Races @ 8:00 a.m.
- 2024: June 6th – August 22nd: Summer Concerts/Family Fun Nights
- 2024: June 27th: Lite the Night Fireworks

Public Comments:

None

Executive Director's Comments:

Executive Director Cloutier thanked everyone for their presence at the meeting and their comments. There will be a nice ribbon cutting for the playground.

Board Members' Comments:

Board Member Guzowski thanked everyone at the meeting for their hard work, and thanked Director Dickson for checking out the other playgrounds.

Adjournment:

Approved 3/26/2024

MOTION by Board Member Garmo, second by Vice Chair Osburn to adjourn the meeting. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:40 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary

Approved 3/26/2024