CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (ZOOM) SPECIAL MEETING
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

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 Vanessa Willett, Vice-Chairperson Kristin Rzeznik, Amanda Habbouche, Melanie Klebba-Cheney, Caleb Sheng, John Smith, Wes Umlor, and Patrick Beagle, Mayor

ABSENT: Excused: Kailee Fine

STAFF: City Staff: Steve Brown, City Manager
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 Klebba-Cheney and second by Vice Chair Rzeznik to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

Public Comments:

None

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Correspondence:

A. Executive Director Self Evaluation

Chairperson Willett stated the Executive Director Self Evaluation was included in the packet. She hoped everyone had a chance to review Executive Director Cloutier's comments. Chairperson Willett indicated she was unable to attach all of the responses but everyone did the evaluations which will be discussed in New Business.

B. Invoice - Go East

New Business:

A. Executive Director Contract Renewal

*Evaluation Discussion

Chairperson Willett indicated Vice Chair Rzeznik, Mayor Beagle and City Manager Brown and herself had a thorough discussion/evaluation and review with Executive Director Cloutier. The result of the review was in the satisfactory range.

Chairperson Willett commented it was a very difficult year to do an evaluation on a new position without having a true map created for the Executive Director position with targets due to the Covid-19 situation. The evaluation questions were left to interpretation on the goals. Executive Director Cloutier's evaluation was satisfactory but there is a lot of room for improvement. If the DDA Board chooses to renew her contract, which will be discussed and voted on today, there is a clear direction on goals to be accomplished.

Chairperson Willett indicated she wrote up some Profiles Performance Indicators (PPI) which was not yet distributed to the Board because City Manager Brown will review them. If the Board should move forward with the contract, Chairperson Willett stated she will send that out to the Board Members, so they can be involved in the next year. Those PPI's will be updated annually for the Executive Director position.

Board Member Klebba-Cheney stated in looking at the evaluation, overall, Executive Director Cloutier did an excellent job; it was a very challenging year for her and all of us.

Board Member Klebba-Cheney indicated an area of improvement would be to collaborate with other DDA executives in other communities. Board Member Klebba-Cheney thought it is a great idea to collaborate with neighboring communities to see what has worked and what hasn't worked to come up with different ideas and thoughts. Chairperson Willett indicated this was one of the

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items that was discussed during the meeting which was brought up by City Manager Brown. Chairperson Willett stated now that things are opening up, and people are getting more comfortable as well, this would give Executive Director Cloutier the opportunity to actually go out and meet with other DDA executives from other cities to do a DDA outreach and exchange ideas, etc.

Chairperson Willett indicated further self investment, i.e., education in finance and business was discussed with Executive Director Cloutier, which has become the highlight of the position. With the addition of the Assistant City Manager/Director of Economic Development, a collaboration with the City is going come into play and would be a real opportunity for both parties to work economic development for the City and to succeed together.

Chairperson Willett stated some of Executive Director Cloutier's greatest attributes was her community outreach, going to the businesses and keeping the residents aware of when restaurants and businesses were open and closed; and helping distribute the kits.

City Manager Brown indicated her strengths focused on two things: The fact that Executive Director Cloutier is a local resident from the standpoint of having a DDA Director that is a resident of the town, and her local knowledge; and her pandemic relief work, special project area, in terms of outreach and keeping businesses apprised of opportunities and helping them get through the difficult time period.

Chairperson Willett commented in fairness to Executive Director Cloutier, it was a very odd year, this is a new position, the Board has never managed anybody as a Board before and her position is different than any other DDA Director position. Other DDAs have been operating for a much longer time; they have larger boards, larger committees, and are more established. It was discussed Executive Director Cloutier should be motivating in developing the committee members in gaining committee members and getting them to work as a team to get things accomplished. It is not her job necessarily to do everything for the committee, but it is her job to get those committees established, working well and developing.

City Manager Brown commented there were a couple of areas that he felt he could adequately evaluate performance which was staff development, volunteer development, delegation and control. The challenges of getting people together and having events, not having the option of getting together, personally, was difficult to rate Executive Director Cloutier in those areas. Hopefully this year, there will be more opportunities to have face to face interaction and have a chance to get them excited about working with the DDA. City Manager Brown indicated it is also a challenge to get the point across to people that are very busy that it is worth their time to get involved with the DDA, and try to do something that is going to improve the whole area which will also improve their business.

Board Member Klebba-Cheney commented the DDA really isn't about event planning. It will be important for Executive Director Cloutier to be able to separate event planning and look at

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developing the committees and getting those committees up and running to be active in the community.

Vice Chair Rzeznik commented everyone was in agreement to Executive Director Cloutier's strengths and weaknesses. She did an excellent job in reaching out to the businesses in Wixom and gave as much support with new grant opportunities and information about the new rules. Vice Chair Rzeznik indicated she would like to see Executive Director Cloutier focus on keeping projects moving, so that we get things done in a timely manner.

Board Member Sheng commented Executive Director Cloutier did a great job in notifying everybody about programs that were in place, but next year, she would need to go a lot deeper in terms of alerting people exactly how they can increase their chances of qualifications, etc. Board Member Sheng indicated he did not have a finance background either but he was able to learn and understand how to calculate revenue reduction over one quarter versus the corresponding quarter from the year prior. He stated Executive Director Cloutier has improved at organizing the way she communicates with the Board and she will improve on the economics, as well.

Board Member Smith commented he and Executive Director Cloutier worked together on launching the DDA website. She was always willing to jump in and help get tasks done. Overall, the website was a successful launch and now it has improved even greater. Board Member Smith echoed the strength improvement areas are communication and continuing professional development, in general.

MOTION by Chairperson Willett and second by Mayor Beagle to approve the renewal of the contract for one year with an evaluation prior to the next contract renewal for Executive Director, Laura Cloutier, with the caveat of implementing PPIs and quarterly reviews, as well, at the salary of $45,000 per year. The DDA Board will evaluate the salary in six months.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

*Contract Renewal Decision

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Vice Chair Rzeznik to approve the invoice from Go East in the amount of $1,098 for the medals for Derby Day, May 1, 2021.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

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Public Comments:

None

Board Members' Comments:

Mayor Beagle indicated he echoed the comments regarding the Executive Director's evaluation and he was looking forward to see the DDA prosper this year.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Board Member Klebba-Cheney, second by Vice Chair Rzeznik to adjourn the meeting. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:05 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary

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