CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2023

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 Russ Meredith; Vice Chairperson Carissa Osburn; Board Members: Jessica Buck; Mark Garmo; Kaitie Guzowski; Leslie Payment; Kristin Rzeznik; Vanessa Willett; Patrick Beagle, Mayor

ABSENT: None

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 Payment to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments:

Approved 6/27/23

None

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Willett to approve the April 25, 2023, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

None

Executive Director's Report – May 23, 2023

Executive Director's Report dated May 23, 2023 is included in the packet.

Executive Director Cloutier gave highlights of her report. She indicated the construction of the sidewalk has begun and is included on social media, the DDA website and the City shared the information as well.

Executive Director Cloutier and Assistant City Manager Benson have had discussions with DTE regarding the Renton property, and power lines to see how that configuration would work out. The cost has come down for that property with DTE. They are also meeting with a company to locate areas where EV charging stations could be located in the existing parking lot. The City has been looking at a contract with this company and looking at different locations around the City. Board Member Guzowski commented to do research because certain electric chargers will not charge all vehicle types and to research the costs for charging of the vehicles.

Derby Day was a huge success. Executive Director Cloutier thanked everyone who participated, volunteered and/or came out to help or run. There was a record number of 295 runners this year. This is the most participation for runners. It was a beautiful day. No complaints from runners, and everything went well. She is very excited for next year. She gave kudos to Board Member Buck for stepping up and helping.

Chair Meredith commented the volunteer event was very nice. Executive Director Cloutier stated it was nice for everyone who attended. Deputy Mayor Tom Rzeznik and Councilmember Grunland-Fox also attended.

Vice Chair Osburn inquired about Buttercream Bake Shop, who will be out by the end of May. Executive Director Cloutier indicated they have engaged with the bake shop, but the property is not posted yet; she has been in contact with a potential business who will come in and talk to Executive Director Cloutier and Assistant City Manager Benson.

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Old Business:

A. Professional Services Agreement with Laura Cloutier

Executive Director Cloutier left the meeting for the discussion.

Assistant City Manager Benson gave an overview of the Agreement. He indicated after going through Executive Director Cloutier's performance review, the next step was to put together an agreement for an extension. While working with the City Attorney, they have a new format. In general, not a lot of things changed. The biggest change is instead of having an annual, formal renewal, there would be a four-year contract to be approved by the Board and City Council. The contract would function more as an "at-will" employee in which the DDA would have more flexibility, or it is clearer for the 30-day notice that would apply to her, as well as if she wants to leave the position, both parties can do so for any reason. Assistant City Manager Benson stated the Board is not precluded from posting for the Executive Director position during the four-year contract period, but he would not necessarily recommend doing this.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated there is a more formalized review cadence as well as her reporting requirements such as bi-weekly reports; reports will go to the DDA chair, vice chair as well as City management. There are more in-depth monthly reports to be submitted in the DDA packets. The first review of each year is in September before the new chairperson and vice chairperson. The most formal review will be in March, which is when her compensation would be reviewed. The Board did increase her compensation from $45K for 25 hours a week to $50K for 25 hours a week last year. Board Member Willett commented it is not for 25 hours a week, it is for a minimum of 25 hours a week to get everything done that we need as a Board. Board Member Willett indicated she had an issue with this, and going on the record to say, Executive Director Cloutier was working more hours than that, originally. During COVID her compensation was not approved for an increase by City Council. She indicated, immediately, Board Member Willett reviewed the sheets and Executive Director Cloutier's hours went down to 25 hours a week maximum. Board Member Willett stated the Board will receive more of the same, and the KPIs have not been met yet. She indicated it is not a bad thing, but hopefully, Executive Director Cloutier will grow more into the role; Executive Director Cloutier is lacking in certain areas. Board Member Willett indicated there was discussion regarding hiring a secondary person to do the websites, advertising, marketing, which is needed, and Executive Director Cloutier is not capable of doing at the level which needs to be done, especially during the minimum hours.

Board Member Payment asked if Josh is still onboard. Board Member Guzowski commented it is her understanding of Josh's contract is to keep the website up and running, not necessarily up to date.

Board Member Willett indicated she knew this subject was uncomfortable for everyone, but the Board has a responsibility to the taxpayers and the people to make sure that we are representing

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their dollars and the City's dollars as best as possible. She commented Executive Director Cloutier has done some things great but there is room for improvements. Board Member Willett questioned, for the increased hours and the increase of monies, what additional benefits, tasks and duties is the Board expecting Executive Director Cloutier to do and what is the Board expecting her to hit on the current ones that she is not hitting on. Chair Meredith indicated they are looking at a new set of KPIs. Assistant City Manager Benson commented one of the problems that was run into was the achievability of KPIs or how much she can control the KPIs. For example, attracting two businesses a year. One of the goals, when we do the next set of KPIs is to fine tune those KPIs to be achievable for her, so that she can actually measure it in a way that we can put her performance against that; in an apples-to-apples way.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated he did not disagree with Board Member Willett that the numbers of hours set the expectation. In full transparency, Executive Director Cloutier had requested to look at her compensation again, and she provided some variables from other communities. In comparison to other communities, the others are making more money and having to do less work.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated, as a group and management, as well, is to set those expectations and work with Executive Director Cloutier. The Executive Committee review process indicated she is not perfect, but, they felt good about how Executive Director Cloutier was doing. That is reflected in the compensation along with the work arrangement. Also, the fact that she does not receive any other benefits which is why the addition of five hours to add more to the minimum in terms of what the expected hours are, and to recommend $50K to $55K per year, so that can be accomplished.

City Manager Brown commented it is appropriate that we decide as a Board to funnel comments on the focus point and provide direction for the Executive Director. The point is well taken for the minimum of hours, not the maximum. The flexibility of hours from one week to another was also discussed.

Mayor Beagle commented the contract under Section 1, Retention, states the contractor is required by the DDA to devote a minimum of 30 hours per week; but then under Section 2A, compensation, it stated 30 hours a week. He would like to see "a minimum of 30 hours a week" included and amended in the contract under this section. Vice Chair Osburn commented under Section 1, Retention, Paragraph D, should be "contractor has the right to hire assistants", not "assistance". Board Member Willett indicated Executive Director Cloutier would have to pay for hired help for her. Assistant City Manager Benson stated Executive Director Cloutier could do that independently or if the DDA decides to hire someone. There are two mechanisms but the odds of her doing this is probably unlikely. This was a carryover from the standard agreements for contractors.

Board Member Buck commented if there is a minimum number of hours worked for the Executive Director, there should also be a maximum number of hours worked. Chair Meredith indicated if

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the Executive Director is working 55 hours a week, then it is advised for her to approach the DDA and indicate it is impossible to perform the tasks at 30 hours a week. The contract allows her to balance the hours per week. City Manager Brown commented the City provides day to day oversight to make sure that something like this doesn't happen and will get addressed in terms of balancing the hours. The original scope of services since the original contract has not changed. Assistant City Manager Benson commented this discussion has been duly noted and there are limits to how comfortable City Council is with expanding the staffing capacities, whether contractor services or employees. He asked the Executive Committee to take a deep, hard look at the scope of services. They are very broad and gives the Board the flexibility but understanding that a DDA Executive Director for a community of 17K is covered well.

City Manager Brown commented the KPIs, and the scope of services are two things that the Board should look at and see if they can provide a better, overall or change, not necessarily better, modify in the sense of direction. If there is a change to the scope of services, a revised Exhibit A can be added to the contract.

Mayor Beagle commented in the contract under Evaluation, Section 3, Article A, contractor will have two performance reviews by the chairperson and vice chairperson, September, and March, prior to the adoption. Each DDA board member and the contract shall agree upon a set of key performance indicators, KPIs, shall be determined at the start of fiscal year and evaluated at the end of that year.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented there is another significant change, a provision was added to give the DDA Director position the ability to spend up to $1,500 per month without prior approval but she must bring those expenses to the DDA Board. Also, it must go through the City Manager's office.

MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Mayor Beagle to approve the Recommendation to Authorize the Execution of a Professional Services Agreement for Laura Cloutier to Provide Services to the Wixom Downtown Development Authority as Executive Director in the amount of $55,000 annually, with a term to expire June 30, 2027, as amended with verbiage, and to include " "Increases annual compensation to $55,000", and "increases the number of hours required from "25 to a minimum of 30 hours per week".

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

B. Memorandum of Understanding for City & DDA Cost Sharing for Fiscal Year 2023/24

Assistant City Manager Benson led the discussion for the Memorandum of Understanding.

Assistant City Manager clarified that this will not be a single person in the DPW. Included in the Memorandum of Understanding is the City/DPW's responsibilities to the DDA in exchange for doing this work. It was very important for Assistant City Manager Benson, in working with

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Executive Director Cloutier that the specifics/parameters that didn't exist before are set. There was no minimum expectation of when the parking areas and sidewalks would be cleared. We are now able to add the Air Line Trail maintenance, trash pickup, etc. With that, given that this is funding a full-time employee, it is a little bit more solid than the past Memorandum of Understandings in terms of the ability to be flexible. The Memorandum of Understanding is written to require both bodies, City Council and DDA, to jointly agree to discontinue funding that position for that to end. It is not a big difference than what DPW has been doing but it is formalized to make City Council feel more comfortable. This Memorandum of Understanding will continue for the life of the DDA plan as exists for four years.

Board Member Payment inquired about the process for the DDA to request things to be done by DPW. DPW has an online system to submit a work order, a receipt will be given when the work order has been complete. Board Member Payment asked if there was an order of priority, if you will, especially in the winter months. She was surprised to hear there was no scheduling for parking lots to be plowed. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated those were the lowest priority in the past. They are probably still lower on DPW overall order but there will be some leverage to get this done. Board Member Payment commented they should have some sort of schedule and order of priority based on the businesses and when they open for business. They run a business and older folks walk through the parking lot that is not salted, and not plowed. Board Member Guzowski commented 72 hours is not acceptable for the downtown. For instance, there were two, big snowstorms with massive amount of snow and then it was gone. In 72 hours, technically, it was not plowed at all. City Manager Brown indicated they have had discussions with the DPW director regarding this situation and understanding this is a situation where the DDA is funding 20% of the position. The position is being funded 100% by the DDA, and we are going to take care of the DDA's jobs first then comes back to the City. The focus is on the DDA.

Chair Meredith inquired if once a week in the summer, and once every two weeks in the winter would be adequate to take care of the trash hauling for the downtown. Board Member Rzeznik stated yes, it should; but she did not know especially after the concerts in the summer.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented these are all great points, specific scenarios or situations that can be a problem. There was a provision added for the grievance process. If there is a situation where the DDA or DDA Executive Director feels that the provisions of this agreement aren't being carried out, the City Manager will make the decision. Board Member Buck indicated the Memorandum of Understanding indicates two inches of snow, it should state "and/or ice" because there are times that there is ice as opposed to snow. Also, "the grass/landscaping/weeds mowed attended to once per week should state "as growth requires". She indicated he Air Line Trail is only once per month. She did not know if this was enough. The Air Line Trail looks bad in comparison to other cities. There is a visual difference where the Wixom city limits ends with the overgrowth of the Air Line Trail. Assistant City Manager Benson commented once a month, minimum, was the threshold that Mr. Sikma, DPW, was comfortable.

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The Memorandum of Understanding would be updated every year. The expectations and provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding is in place. The likelihood of the DPW person starting July 1st is unknown.

Board Member Buck commented the DDA contributes 50% for the summer concerts. When the summer concerts are advertised, it is always Parks and Recreation; there is no DDA logo on anything. Board Member Buck stated the DDA contributed 50% last year as well. It has been an adjustment process over the course of the last five years. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated there is still work to do in terms of the relationship between co-branding, etc. The DDA does have a booth at the summer concerts. Board Member Guzowski commented this would be a good opportunity to address with the City project with the rebranding. Board Member Willett indicated Parks and Recreation has worked a lot of years on advertising. City Manager Brown commented he understood in terms of recognition and the promotional aspect; he indicated he did not think anybody outside of this room cares half of much as they do about who contributed or whatever. They will talk about it and see what can be done. People care that it is happening, but it would be a good opportunity to get the DDA's name out there and get some recognition. Board Member Guzowski thought the rebranding City exercise is going to be good for everyone. This would be an opportunity for the DDA to make friends with the City. She stated she lives downtown but she, personally, doesn't care; if there is a nice party going on downtown, that's all she would like to do, she doesn't care who pays for it, and she is happy to contribute to be a part of this Board. Board Member Buck commented it is not who pays for it, it is just the same reason to have the Drafting Table logo on there. People do not understand who the DDA is. It is getting recognition and then volunteers.

MOTION by Board Member Rzeznik and second by Board Member Guzowski to approve the Memorandum of Understanding, Cooperative Services Agreement between the City of Wixom, and The Wixom Downtown Development Authority, as amended.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Board Member Rzeznik to approve the Draft Budget dated May 23, 2023, Budget Amendment for Fiscal Year 2023/24, and recommend approval by the Wixom City Council.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

New Business:

None

Information:

A. Committee Reports/Updates

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- Promotions Committee

Board Member Buck commented there will be a Sip N Stroll held on Wednesday, May 24, 2023. There will be a karaoke truck with a singer, and video game truck in attendance. There will be two Sip N Stroll events scheduled per year.

The next Promotions Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, May 25, 2023, 8:00 a.m. at Backyard Coney Island. They are asking Josh to do some videos including a "how-to" Junction video to explain the Junction rules. They are working diligently on the Block Party getting vendors, food trucks, and activities for adults and kids.

Executive Director Cloutier commented the food trucks include: EJ's Gourmet Streetside cuisine; grilled wraps; Carissa's Kitchen, which is Polish food: pierogis, kielbasa; and Lobster Truck. Their focus for the food trucks is food which is not included in the downtown restaurants.

- Design Committee

Board Member Rzeznik indicated at their last meeting the west end commons were discussed. There wasn't a lot of movement on this subject because they are awaiting funding. She would like to see other lower priced designs in case funding is not received. City Manager Brown commented that was a valid point; the timing on the funding should be happening shortly in terms of what is going to get done, congressionally speaking; then looked at by the appropriate agencies to make those happen.

Board Member Guzowski commented she would like to push on the DTE powerlines to be moved. Executive Director Cloutier indicated the cost is approximately $4 million; the single most expensive cost. The area needs to be reconfigured and try to move them to the center of the property for costs. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated funding would need to be committed to be on the waitlist. A design would have to be made, and then DTE contacted; DTE would look at the design, schedule, and a check would be written for their work. An updated DDA plan, and/or additional grant money/funding would help. Board Member Willett commented she would like to see other things done such as the park areas, the west end, etc., which brings people downtown. Board Member Rzeznik commented Parks and Recreation is working on Mack Park shelter, clock, etc., which we will be seeing soon. The playground is in the master plan. Also, the flower baskets will be going up on Thursday, May 25, 2023.

- Economic Vitality Committee

The Economic Vitality Committee met on Monday, May 22, 2023. There aren't any updates on the Renton property. Board Member Willett commented there are other things that the Economic Vitality Committee would like to work on. They have updated their thoughts on going to businesses and putting together a plan for a monthly focus on the business. They will go out and

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talk to them, maybe a marketing promotion for them and ask them their needs. Main Street Oakland County can help with redoing the business' websites, and the costs could be split amongst the businesses. A total of 19 businesses would need to participate, which would include businesses downtown and the City could help participate with getting additional businesses in Wixom, which would cost approximately $100 per business. The businesses could promote themselves, especially some of the newer businesses. Executive Director Cloutier stated the platform is a centralized website that holds all the websites for the businesses that participate. It is free to the businesses because the County picks up most of the costs, and then the DDA has a small portion of the cost. For a business such as Green Goat who doesn't have an online presence, they could put their products/items they would like to include; but Drafting Table could link their website for their merchandise, gift cards, etc. Many Main Street Oakland County communities are participating in this promotion. Executive Director Cloutier will get the feedback from other communities and businesses on their success and helpfulness for their businesses as a resource.

Board Member Willett indicated the Committee also spoke about doing spotlight features again on some of the businesses and/or newer businesses. A business-to-business community event, not just downtown Wixom, to get some involvement and see who is interested. Lakes Area Chamber would not be included.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented he was disappointed the last time they tried with their event with the Chamber. It was a much bigger event, but the reception was very poor. Board Member Willett indicated they have enough folks here and on the DDA where they could contact the businesses and give them information, get them involved; start with a small, and informal and then maybe there would be better reception.

Board Member Willett stated the Committee spoke about a Junction event to promote the downtown. The EV charging stations, and funding of those stations were discussed, which would bring in more folks into the downtown area, if they have somewhere to charge their vehicles.

- Organization Committee

Chair Meredith commented the volunteers event went well. He thanked those who attended. The Committee is also working on the by-laws to modify the outdated information.

B. Downtown Business News/Events

- 2023: May 24th Sip n Stroll
- 2023: June 1st Summer Concert Series/Family Fun Nights Begin
- 2023: June 22nd Lite the Night Fireworks

Public Comments:

Approved 6/27/23

None

Executive Director's Comments:

Executive Director Cloutier commented she would not be at the DDA meeting to be held in June because she will be on vacation.

Board Member Rzeznik will not be renewing her contract for the DDA Board. Executive Director Cloutier thanked Board Member Rzeznik for her leadership, and all her efforts that she has made during her time on the DDA Board.

Executive Director Cloutier also thanked the DDA Board for renewing her contract.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the Joint Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 31, 2023. He stated he would like to see as many DDA members attend, if possible. It will be a great discussion regarding the Renton project, which will be the focus of the Joint Board meeting. Since the last DDA Board meeting, Assistant City Manager Benson and Executive Director Cloutier had meetings with the Road Commission, DTE, and the engineers, and will have more in depth information, as well as DTE to look at the power lines in that area. No date on when they are coming out.

Board Members' Comments:

Board Member Buck commented the Anthem and Tribute communities, all these homes have their annual meeting on Monday, June 5, 2023. She indicated it would be a good idea for someone from the DDA to have volunteer applications and to briefly speak. She will be in attendance to encourage people to volunteer.

City Manager Brown commented he has had conversations with the people who said the garbage situation outside of Alex's has exacerbated; they are going to try to put the information out there ahead of time to cover that point.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated 11/11 Burgers and Fries has applied for the City's last liquor license as well as an SDM license. SDM license is for sales of beer and wine for off premise consumption. He did not know if the City Council would grant the applications. He would like to hold onto it for either east retail or the Renton Redevelopment Project.

Executive Director Cloutier updated the Board on El Camino's liquor license. She called the MLCC, and they did not give a whole lot of information because she was not their representative for the business. The license is not in the initial review, but they are close to the final review. Once the liquor license is received, Assistant City Manager Benson indicated they are looking to schedule some sort of ribbon cutting celebration for El Camino.

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Board Member Willett commented she was on Fox 2 news for the run, if anyone saw her.

Chair Meredith commented there are four committees, and the committees could use help from the Board Member for all committees. The Committees would be happy to see the participation.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Board Member Willett, second by Board Member Rzeznik to adjourn the meeting. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary

Approved 6/27/23