CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2023

This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority came to order at 7:32 a.m. with the following individuals in attendance:

DDA MEMBERS: Chairperson Jessica Buck; Carissa Osburn, Vice Chairperson; Board Members: Mark Garmo; Kaitie Guzowski; Steve Hartman; Russ Meredith; Leslie Payment; Vanessa Willett (arrived at 7:38); 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 Board Member Meredith and second by Mayor Beagle to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments:

Approved 1/23/2024

None

Approval of Minutes:

Page 2 on the Executive Report, October 24, 2024 should be October 24, 2023.

MOTION by Board Member Meredith and second by Mayor Beagle to approve the October 24, 2023, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as amended.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

None

Executive Director Report: November 24, 2023

Executive Director Report dated November 28, 2023, DDA Activity Report – November, 2023 enclosed in the Agenda packet.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated City Council approved the branding logo and signage services contract with Guide Studio, Cleveland, Ohio. Director Cloutier, City Manager Brown, Assistant City Manager Benson and Parks and Recreation Director McGee will have an internal kickoff meeting in December, 2023 to discuss the process, and layout the agenda to move forward. Assistant City Manager Benson will be reaching out to individuals to form a steering committee. The steering committee will start to meet at the first of the year.

The Wixom DDA social media pages highlighted Shop Small Saturday. Spotlight videos have begun filming. Board Member Garmo was highlighted on the Spotlight video. Executive Director Cloutier is in the process of scheduling additional Spotlight videos.

Dough by Rumi's Passion had a soft opening. There will be an official grand opening and ribbon cutting on December 7, 2023, at a time to be determined. Dough by Rumi's Passion will be selling their savory items such as bagels, bread, pizza dough (frozen), pie crusts (frozen) etc., and will have a deli counter.

Executive Director Cloutier stated she received a call from a Metro Detroit artist who works with communities and school districts. We would pick a theme, and she then works with the school district to have students interpret that theme and create artwork. After a voting process, she creates the mural based off the winner. The students are elementary to high school age. The artist has done a tremendous amount of work in Royal Oak, Berkley, and Ferndale. She is willing to come out and look for locations with us for the mural.

Approved 1/23/2024

Mayor Beagle commented the Sip N Stroll held in October was not well attended. The weather was not the best. Executive Director Cloutier thanked Mayor Beagle and City Manager Brown for volunteering to help. The ladies who attended had a good time.

Old Business:

A. Approval of 2024 DDA Meeting Dates

The DDA Board meets once per month on the fourth Tuesday, except for July and December at 7:30 a.m. and Special Meeting takes place in the evening on off days from the Regular DDA Board Meetings. It was expressed at the October DDA Board Meeting to look at dates for two to three regular board meetings to take place in the evening. After taking into consideration the other Boards and Commissions, and City Council meeting schedules, availability of Council Room B, and internal discussions, the proposed dates allow for consistency and availability of our Recording Secretary. If the consensus of the Board is to hold a few Regular DDA Board Meetings in the evening, the following dates are available: April 24 at 6:30 p.m.; August 28 at 6:30 p.m., and/or September 19 at 6:30 p.m. These are the recommended dates for 2024 Regular Monthly Board Meetings along with Special Meeting dates. It is recommended for approval of the 2024 DDA Regular Monthly Meetings and Special Meeting schedule as proposed.

Chairperson Buck commented the discussion to hold two or three DDA meetings in the evening is to entice the public to attend. Executive Director Cloutier proposed meeting dates for the Board to discuss probable dates. Board Member commented having two or three evening meeting dates was a good idea; the evening dates would have a higher probability of public attendance.

There was a discussion regarding the best dates. The proposed dates were taking into consideration the other City Boards and Commissions meeting dates. The proposed meeting dates are Wednesdays because the DDA's traditional schedule falls on the same days as City Council meetings.

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Willett to approve the 2024 DDA Meeting dates with the changes: April 24, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to replace April 23, 2024 at 7:30 a.m.; September 18, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to replace the September 24, 2024 at 7:30 a.m. meeting date.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Board Member Payment inquired if the DDA By-laws prohibits asking the public to attend the DDA meeting whether they are in the morning or in the evening. The website indicates public welcome. Board Member Payment suggested to comment on the DDA social media to reach out to the public to hear their voices.

Approved 1/23/24

B. MDA Conference Recap

Chairperson Buck, Vice Chairperson Osburn, and Director Cloutier attended the annual Michigan Downtown Association (MDA) conference in early November. All attended great sessions, had many networking opportunities, and learned best practices. Chairperson Buck, Vice Chairperson Osborn and Director Cloutier will provide an update.

Executive Director Cloutier, Chairperson Buck, and Vice Chairperson Osburn attended the Michigan Downtown Association Conference. The Conference was very good.

Chairperson Buck commented she was able to attend the first day of the conference. She indicated it was nice to see so many other cities participate in the conference. Chairperson Buck stated everyone is struggling right now in the post-COVID world. Businesses are struggling. The conference speakers discussed how to get people involved by asking more questions; people will become involved if they appreciate the community, and they have a like for the community. The Spotlight videos will help our community because you will see the small business owner, hear their story, how they came to Wixom, and you will be more apt to shop or dine there. She suggested to interview people that have moved to Wixom, spotlight the residents, not just the business owners to get people to appreciate the City and have a sense of pride in the City.

Executive Director Cloutier commented the overall theme of this year's conference was telling your stories and telling the community stories. The Spotlight videos are telling the stories of the business owners. They discussed to the Promotions Committee to extend the Spotlight videos to the residents, and City Council members telling the stories of the people here in our community. Board Member Payment suggested to have the mural project tie into the story of the businesses. Creative footage could be incorporated of the of the business members telling a little bit of their story.

Board Member Guzowski inquired if materials were received from the conference. PowerPoints were sent out last year. She enjoys watching the PowerPoints from the conference. Executive Director Cloutier indicated she would forward those materials to the Board Members. Vice Chair Osburn highly recommended to watch the keynote speaker. She enjoyed going to the conference.

New Business:

A. Approval of Timing Services Contract with Trivium Racing

The 7th Annual Derby Day Races will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at Sibley Square Park. We have partnered again this year with Trivium Racing. The DDA has a long-standing relationship with this company. The Derby Day committee is confident in the services that Trivium Racing provides. It is recommended to approve the Trivium Racing Timing Services Contract for the 2024 Derby Day on May 4, 2024.

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Executive Director Cloutier stated this will be the 7th Annual Derby Day Race. Last year's race had record numbers with 300 runners and approximately 50 volunteers. She would like to keep the momentum moving forward. The timing services contract is standard as it has been in the past seven years. There is a $150 deposit, $550 fee, then a fee of $6.00 per registrant. There will be a separate start and finish for the race, as in the past. Trivium Racing Timing Services sets up the registration website, the entire course, provide the bibs, the timing, etc. The DDA will promote the race and keep track of the registrations. There will be three races: 5K, 10K and 1K. We have a charity partner, Camp Casey, who receives $5 for each registration. Camp Casey is a charity organization who supports children battling cancer or rare blood disorders. The event has been able to fund six horsey house calls in the five years that we have partnered with them. Camp Casey brings a cowboy/horse party to the child's house to allow them to ride the horse up and down the street. They also provide other programs.

MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Board Member Meredith to approve the Trivium Racing Timing Services Contract for the 2024. Derby Day on May 4, 2024, as it stands.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

B. Wednesdays in Wixom

Wednesdays in Wixom is going into its 6th year and has been one of the DDA's most meaningful initiative. There are now 15 restaurants downtown that will be participating in this initiative. DDA Board and Committee members, along with City Staff will surprise customers at all 15 restaurants and pay their bills each Wednesday from January 3, 2024 to February 28, 2024. Each restaurant will have a set amount and will be shared in a follow-up email asking for volunteers to sign up for a slot.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated Wednesdays in Wixom will begin January 3, 2024 and run through the end of February. There are 15 restaurants in downtown Wixom. Executive Director Cloutier will be sending out the sign-up sheet along with the monetary value for each restaurant. There is a $1,000.00 budget. This budget has never been exceeded. Executive Director Cloutier will add Dough by Rumi's Passion to the list of businesses.

City Manager Brown suggested to have a Promotions banner but not to include dates for marketing/promotions. Executive Director Cloutier indicated she would talk to Parks and Recreation McGee regarding the promotions banner.

C. Annual Presentation

Director Cloutier is responsible for holding two annual presentations per calendar year per PA57 of 2018 to stay in compliance with requirements set by the State of Michigan. The presentation is

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for information purposes only, no action items will be part of the presentation. This is the second and final presentation for the 2023 calendar year. Presentation enclosed in the Agenda packet.

Executive Director Cloutier overviewed the second annual presentation which is required in the By-laws. The meeting dates will be updated. The report can be viewed on www.downtownwixom.org

The presentation is not on the City website. There is a link to the YouTube page on the DDA website and they are housed on the DDA YouTube page. Executive Director Cloutier stated the DDA can be followed on Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and Instagram.

Board Member Guzowski commented she saw the City's new platform for their newsletter. She indicated the platform looks much more professional and was a good investment. The new platform does have video capabilities. City Manager Brown indicated the new platform does have a professional look. There is going to be the ability to text.

Board Member Payment commented she liked the video very much. She indicated she is going to speak for her business. Board Member Payment stated she liked that they shifted the Shop Local to Experience. She thinks that we should capitalize not only our Shop Local, restaurants/bars, but also services. People want to come to Wixom because they need a local place to take their animals to a vet, for example, and because they need services. The services in the community are not highlighted at all; we are missing a big piece. We should give the people the full platform of what Wixom can do such as financial services to protect their assets, helping them with their windshield, etc. Start highlighting what our community can do for somebody on a very personal service level.

Board Member Payment asked if there was a way for the Trick or Treating or Candy Cane Lane, specifically, because the community is separated, there is no local representation on her business' side of the street, to do booths at Sibley Park. The businesses can then also capitalize, and it gives the kids a very pure and safe experience all in one place. She recognizes this would pull the business employees out of their business, but it gives the business owners an opportunity to talk about the business with the people. Board Member Meredith commented to give the business owner an option to set up a booth or have a different configuration. Logistically, it doesn't always seem like it works especially when you don't have a lot of participants. Chairperson Buck indicated she liked the idea. Spooktacular every year has gotten better, and we need more ideas to make it even better; possibly having a Trunk or Treat.

Board Member Willett commented they had a discussion on her survey list for Economic Vitality regarding service businesses. She is hoping that the surveys can help.

Information:

A. Committee Reports/Updates

Approved 1/2/2024

- Promotions Committee

Chairperson Buck commented they are planning Candy Cane Lane. Board Member Meredith reached out to some of the businesses and will reach out to the reminder today.

Chairperson Buck indicated Sip N Stroll was not a well-attended event. She stated we are struggling with the Sip N Stroll events. They were not well attended last year, so they were only having two Sip N Stroll events in 2023.

Board Member Garmo suggested to move the Sip N Stroll event to Thursday or Friday instead of Wednesday. Thursday is closer to the weekend and, possibly, more people would attend. Board Member Payment stated, logistically, it is hard because there is a long walk in between all the stops. In Milford, everything is interconnected for a shorter trip. Any outside event is subject to the weather.

Chairperson Buck stated there was a discussion of getting a trolley to go to South Lyon and Wixom, partnering with a city that is local, possibly on a Thursday or Friday night. Board Member Willett suggested one of the bike rentals that holds several people, to ride and drive them around the City. She did not know the cost for three or four hours but did not think it would be very much.

Board Member Guzowski commented these were all good ideas, and for them to think about joining the Promotions Committee, as well. The Promotions Committee meets at 8 a.m. every other Thursday. The Promotions Committee could use additional manpower.

Board Member Guzowski inquired about the Block Party and securing the band. Executive Director Cloutier commented the band is available on September 21, 2024. The Block Party will most likely be held on September 21, 2024; it is not the weekend of the Parks and Recreation event.

- Design Committee

Executive Director Cloutier stated the Committee has been discussing an art policy. She has some edits and suggestions, internally, which she will bring back to the Committee. The policy sets the guidelines for the mural projects and work with the artists. The Committee meets the first Tuesday of every month at 5 p.m. at Drafting Table.

Board Member Guzowski commented she would like Board members to discuss look at the bikes to refresh them; some of them have flat tires. Executive Director Cloutier stated, in the past, there was an Eagle Scout who repainted the bikes as a project.

- Economic Vitality Committee

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Board Member Willett commented the Economic Vitality Committee's focus was to discuss the surveys. She has had a good response and will follow up with the businesses. All the businesses were sent surveys, including the business services sector. Hopefully, the surveys will bring some insight in how the businesses can participate, the DDA can participate to provide them with additional services.

Board Member Willett indicated the Committee discussed some of the events downtown. She stated there is still friction going on with Parks and Recreation and the DDA. Board Member Willett commented the friction needs to be handled. We are working towards the same things. The discussion of Parks and Recreation putting together the concerts, which are awesome, and Parks and Recreation has done a lot of work, but the banner should state the sponsorship of the DDA. The DDA does sponsor part of the concerts. People should know where their tax money is going. City Manager Brown stated his perception is that this "friction" is getting better and going in the right direction, but it is a valid point. Chairperson Buck stated she agrees on the advertisement. The DDA needs recognition because people are confused as to what the DDA does and the fact that the DDA sponsors half of the summer concerts, and no one knows. City Manager Brown stated they will address the concert series discussion. Board Member Payment commented the DDA can start capitalizing on social media about the things that are being done.

- Organization Committee

Vice Chairperson Osburn commented the Organization Committee dates were switched from Mondays to Tuesday. The next meeting is December 19, 2023.

B. Downtown Business News/Events

- 2023: December 1 – Tree Lighting Festival
- 2023: December 13 – Candy Cane Lane
- 2024: January 3 – Wednesdays in Wixom Kicks Off

Public Comments:

None

Executive Director's Comments:

Executive Director Cloutier commented we had a good discussion today. She thanked everyone for their dedication and commitment to making downtown Wixom better.

Assistant City Manager Benson followed up with the Renton updates: the RFQ is out, there has been media coverage, and discussion with development groups. He will keep the DDA, and the businesses is in the loop.

Approved 1/25/2024

Board Members' Comments:

Board Member Guzowski commented to stay positive, be proud of what we are doing, she is proud to be a part of the DDA. She indicated to send via email as many pictures of downtown events to be used for marketing and social media to Executive Director Cloutier.

Board Member Meredith thanked everyone for their support, he couldn't have had a better vice chair, and he appreciates everything she did.

Vice Chairperson Osburn commented she was shopping in downtown South Lyon, and they randomly asked her to be a model to post on their social media; the owner of the venue was a speaker the next day at the MDA Conference.

Chairperson Buck thanked Board Member Meredith for his service as Chairperson of the DDA. There is no DDA meeting in December for time to enjoy with your family.

Mayor Beagle thanked Board Member Meredith for his service as Chairperson to the DDA.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Board Member Meredith, second by Mayor Beagle to adjourn the meeting. This meeting of the Wixom Downtown Development Authority was motioned and adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary

Approved 1/23/2024