CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2023

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: Jessica Buck; Mark Garmo; Kaitie Guzowski; Leslie Payment; Vanessa Willett; Patrick Beagle, Mayor

ABSENT: Excused: Russ Meredith; Steve Hartman

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 Willett and second by Payment to approve the Meeting Agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments:

None

Approved 11/28/2023

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Board Member Buck to approve the September 26, 2023, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

None

Executive Director Report: October 24, 2023

Executive Director Cloutier summarized her report which is included in the DDA packet for today. Executive Director Cloutier indicated the DDA was not approved for the RAP Grant for the West End Commons. For clarification, the DDA asked for a total cost of $574,128.00, with the RAP Grant to be $287,064.00. Main Street Oakland County's contribution would have been $143,532.00 and the DDA's contribution would have been the same, both giving 25%. There is still a possibility that the DDA may get those funds from Main Street Oakland County, which we are awaiting to hear. There is a follow-up call on Tuesday with Main Street Oakland County and the MEDC regarding the DDA's application.

Assistant City Manager Benson, City Manager Brown, Director of Community Services Magee, and Executive Director Cloutier participated in interviews for the branding, logo, and signage services. It was narrowed down to one firm. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

Due to the intersection closure, Executive Director Cloutier indicated she decided to create an Open for Business contest where there is an entry form on the website to upload receipts when people dine or shop in downtown Wixom. The contest runs through October 31st. Every week in November, there will be a drawing on Facebook Live for a package of gifts cards to be given away. Executive Director Cloutier stated she spoke with the City's senior coordinator at the community center and some of the senior citizens had receipts, but they are not tech savvy, so she made a hard copy entry form to staple receipts.

Old Business:

A. Election of DDA Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

At the September 26, 2023 DDA meeting, Board Member Buck was nominated for Chairperson and the current DDA Vice Chairperson Osburn was nominated for Vice Chairperson.

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MOTION by Board Member Garmo and second by Board Member Payment to approve the nominations made at the September 26, 2023 meeting for Board Member Buck for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson Osburn for Vice Chairperson.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

B. Approval of 2024 DDA Meeting Dates

There was a discussion regarding the 2024 DDA Meeting Dates. The meeting dates, traditionally, correspond with City Council meetings. City Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month.

Board Member Garmo suggested to hold one or two DDA meetings during the evening. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated there are some special meeting dates that normally would be scheduled in the evening. Also, there are no meetings held in June or December. Vice Chairperson Osburn indicated the May and August meetings are flip flopped and should be corrected. The by-laws would need to be adjusted and corrected to make the revisions discussed. The by-laws do state to meet at least once per month per the schedule adopted by the Board each year.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated she took the notes and will bring this back to the DDA Board at the November meeting.

C. Block Party

Executive Director Cloutier commented the Block Party was a huge success. At the September 26, 2024 meeting, the DDA voted to keep the Block Party as the 4th Saturday in September. After the meeting, Executive Director Cloutier notified the businesses. Drafting Table sent a message indicating their Octoberfest weekend is, traditionally, the 4th Saturday in October. The Block Party and Octoberfest did not interfere with each other this year because September had five Saturdays this year. For the next four years, the dates would conflict. Drafting Table coordinates with four other breweries in the area and the other breweries would not move their date. Executive Director Cloutier indicated she looked at all the other possible dates. Parks and Recreation's Bark in the Park is held on Sunday, the third weekend in September. The Promotions Committee is not happy with bumping the Block Party to the first weekend in October. There was a discussion regarding the best date in September for the Block Party. City Manager Brown commented the Board could work with DPW to manage if it was the same weekend as Bark in the Park.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated if a date is not scheduled today, we may lose out on booking the same band as this year.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented Director of Community Services Magee had walked in the meeting. He indicated to her that there is a need to reschedule Block Party from the 4th

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Saturday to a different date. Bark in the Park is the third Sunday, the 22nd of September, 2024. Assistant City Manager Benson asked if there were any concerns from the community services perspective of having the Block Party the day before Bark in the Park. Community Services Director Magee commented there was not a good response when the Block Party and Bark in the Park was held on the same weekend. Community Services Director Magee indicated she would go back and revisit their schedule; they picked a weekend that there wasn't a lot going on, initially, and good weather.

Chairperson Buck commented after discussion of the dates, it is recommended to give Executive Director Cloutier the power to approve the date of September 14, 2024 or September 21, 2024, based on her decision of finding out the band's availability and in the best interest of the City of Wixom.

MOTION by Vice Chairperson Osburn and second by Willett to give Executive Director Cloutier the power to approve the date of September 14, 2024 or September 21, 2024, for the Block Party, based on her decision of finding out the band's availability and in the best interest of the City of Wixom.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

D. DDA By-Laws

The DDA By-Laws have not been reviewed or updated since 2017. The Organization Committee has diligently reviewed the By-Laws and are making recommendations throughout the document that the Committee feels reflect the current functions on how the Wixom DDA operates, currently, and will provide a more cohesive guide into the future. Provided to the Board is the red-lined copy and a clean copy of the DDA By-Laws.

Chairperson Buck indicated at the September 4th meeting, the proposed by-laws were reviewed. Minor adjustments are included in the packet.

City Manager Brown stated on page 5, it should be corrected to indicate the DDA shall meet at least once per month, unless there is no business on the agenda, and except for the months of July and December. Assistant City Manager Benson stated, the DDA Board shall meet regularly per a schedule adopted by the DDA Board each year prior to the start of the following year. "At least once per month" will be replaced with "regularly".

Chairperson Buck inquired about the regular order of business stated in the by-laws. City Manager Brown stated, it says, shall have the discretion to change the order of business. It states the Chairperson can change it before or during. Assistant City Manager Benson suggested to strike Section 1; Section 4 will become Section 3.

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MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Vice Chairperson Osburn to approve the DDA By-Laws in the packet except for the note about the schedule of meetings to meet regularly, and also to strike Section 3, on page 6, regarding the October meeting saying a different agenda.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the next step is for City Council to approve the by-laws.

New Business:

A. Branding, Logo, and Signage Services

Executive Director Cloutier commented she covered this topic, briefly, in her report. There were eight proposals received for branding, logo, and signage services. It was narrowed down to four firms which were provided to the DDA Board with the breakdown of those firms. After the interviews, the committee decided to choose Guide Studios, Cleveland, Ohio.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated Guide Studios was not the lowest bid, but they felt it was the best fit, and specialized in this work, comprehensively. Guide Studios does branding, logo and signage work. The committee felt confident in their team, and they felt the price was fair. A copy of their proposal document is included in the agenda packet.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated the plan was to do this as a DDA and City project, with both picking up 50% of the cost. The proposal amount from Guide Studios is $57,050. She recommended for the DDA to approve the amount, not to exceed $30,000.

City Manager Brown commented Guide Studios, overall, had the best combination of traction, if you will, for the majority of the committee looking through the packets of proposals. The quality of work in terms of the logos, the fact that they have a comprehensive capacity in all the different areas, and working with a larger team as opposed to a single contact on one piece of business was a factor. City Manager Brown indicated the proposal amount was less than expected, even if it is not the most inexpensive proposal. Overall, Guide Studios stood out in terms of being City Manager Brown's favorite, without a doubt.

Executive Director Cloutier concurred with City Manager Brown. Guide Studios was her favorite, they stood out in their approach and the conversation was very natural.

Executive Director Cloutier stated the interviews were held on Zoom, except for one company.

Board Member Payment inquired if there was any concern that Guide Studios was not local to Wixom. Assistant City Manager Benson commented this was something that they had thought about, but, ultimately, they weren't as far away as the two of the other firms. They felt it was a positive, as they don't have any pre-conceived notions regarding Wixom or their position in the

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area. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated he had spoken to some of the references, the clients that are similarly positioned and Guide Studios was able to help them. Guide Studios will be doing some work in-person. The committee felt comfortable that we are close enough that it won't be a problem for them to get here and be able to work with us when needed.

City Manager Brown commented the firms all booked in person time, so they did not see that as being a big issue. Also, the quality of their work in terms of the logos, there is a nice spread of concepts that they put forth in other communities that makes him think they are creative. They had some nice sign concepts that shows creativity. It is co-branding, the DDA and the City, but they will complement each other.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated, if the DDA and City Council approves this, the expectation is to have a steering committee comprised of DDA members, and Council members. There will be plenty of opportunities for the DDA to be a part of shaping the outcome.

MOTION by Board Member Guzowski and second by Board Member Willett to approve the recommendation to contract with Guide Studio with the DDA's portion not to exceed $30,000.00 to be paid from Special Studies Services Account, #248-729-956481.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

B. Strategic Planning Meeting

Chairperson Buck stated there was a Strategic Planning meeting held on October 17, 2023. She thanked everyone who was in attendance. The priority project sheets were included in the packet.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated they have not incorporated the feedback from the meeting onto the sheets yet; they did not have time before sending out the packet, but also, in case there were any other thoughts, they wanted to have the space to include those comments. An updated sheet will be provided to the DDA Board at the November meeting.

Board Member Guzowski commented she thought about Board Member Hartman's comment regarding the walking path and the Mission Statement. Board Member Guzowski indicated she supported his comment. The mission here is to bring people downtown to the businesses. Board Member Hartman's comment, for those who were not in attendance, stated we are all in support of removing the power lines, but that does not necessarily bring people downtown, but she supported putting money towards the walking path because that does, along with the playground, and making it a destination. Board Member Guzowski stated she has refocused her mindset after the Strategic meeting. Board Member Willett indicated, for those who were not in attendance at the Strategic meeting, City Manager Brown had an idea to do a special lighting installation around the path, which could change colors for different seasons. It would be something for people to visit and see. This would be very much like Glenlore Trails but on a smaller scale; done by the same company. Chairperson Buck indicated she agreed because burying the power lines was

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too expensive and we need to focus on other things. She thought it was a great idea, but the lighting needs to happen after the installation of the playground.

Chairperson Buck stated she was, definitely, thinking about Board Member Hartman's comment. During the Spooktacular event, she reiterated that the sidewalk in front of Wixom Liquor is a disaster; it is so different than the other sidewalks. The sidewalk is very narrow, and it is very dangerous. Improving this area is, definitely, still a top priority in her mind.

Board Member Payment indicated she was not at the Strategic meeting, and asked if there was any discussion or conversations regarding the walking path, keeping the people safe, in reference to the incident that happened downtown on the Michigan Air Line Trail. City Manager Brown stated different creative ideas, for example, concrete lettering that says Wixom, could be an option.

Information:

A. Committee Reports/Updates

Chairperson Buck commented she wanted to make sure that each committee has a chairperson, a designated person, it does not have to be a DDA board member. The person would be responsible for making sure the discussion is led at the meeting, taking some notes would be helpful. Those notes would be either sent to Executive Director Cloutier or herself and inserted into the Minutes; or that person could speak at the DDA meetings. She stated if anyone would like to become a chairperson of one of the committees or knows someone who would like to become a chairperson, to reach out to see if they would be interested. Chairperson Buck stated she would like to have that instituted by next month, of who is going to be the designated person for each of the committees to report and take charge at the meetings, as well.

Board Member Willett commented it is not Executive Director Cloutier's responsibility nor is it meant for her to be a chairperson of any committee. She is a liaison between the committees and the DDA Board. Board Member Willett stated we need people to step up, and she agreed with the consistency in that we cannot cancel meetings; people commit, the dates can't continue to be changed or the meetings cancelled. People will not be interested and think that the Board is not vested.

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- Promotions Committee

Chairperson Buck stated the Spooktacular event was very well attended. There were at least 360 kids and does not include the adults in attendance. Many of the participants heard about the event via Facebook. There were great suggestions in making this event even better next year. There were participants from Wixom and also from neighboring communities. Twenty businesses

participated in this event. Pumpkins were donated by Ashgrove Marketing from Long's Orchard. The weather was great.

Chairperson Buck indicated if there are any comments or suggestions, to bring those comments to her or to the Promotions committee. There will be a Promotions committee meeting held on Thursday. A budget should be set to buy the candy for the businesses. There were volunteers to help some of the businesses that didn't have enough employees to pass out candy. Chairperson Buck thanked Board Member Willett for purchasing full size candy bars for the event.

Executive Director Cloutier indicated Sip N Stroll would be held on October 25th. Board Member Meredith would not be in attendance. There will be a group, Warriors for Warriors, who are raising money for St. Paul's Pediatric Cancer Research. Warriors for Warriors will be selling sponsorships for their basketball pink out game for the jerseys and handing out materials, as well. October is breast cancer awareness month. Executive Director Cloutier thought it would be a good idea to partner with a local charity. Warriors for Warriors is in their 11th year. They are excited to attend.

Executive Director Cloutier asked for volunteers to help at the DDA table at the Sip N Stroll event for an hour or two. Chairperson Buck indicated she would be there from 5 to 7 p.m. The first 250 participants will receive a Sip N Stroll bag with the Sip, Shop and Stroll logo, and downtown Wixom on it. Also, the first 50 ladies will receive gift cards to be included in the Sip N Stroll bag. This is a non-registered event. Typically, 200 to 300 people attend, depending on the weather.

- Design Committee

Executive Director Cloutier commented the Design committee discussed the art policy and to incorporate murals, along with other art installations, downtown, potentially. The Design committee will meet next week.

Board Member Guzowski commented she is considering becoming the Chairperson for the Design committee, and she would like to meet to discuss this. She indicated that the committee could discuss options for funding since we did not receive the RAP Grant.

- Economic Vitality Committee

Board Member Willett commented the Economic Vitality committee met last night. In attendance were Board Members Guzowski, herself, and Will. They went over some surveys, which Board Member Willett will have completed this week. She indicated Board Member Guzowski had some comments in which some of the businesses did not know about the DDA and would be interested in participating in more events. Enterprise was one of the companies. Board Member Willett

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stated the surveys should be done annually. There was also discussion of the road closure at the committee meeting.

Board Member Guzowski indicated the Board should be doing more communication. She thought it would be beneficial for the businesses to have one place to go for updates on what is going on and to keep everyone informed. Enterprise car rental indicated they have started printing out information such as, for example, which way to get onto the freeway. She thought this would be helpful for the downtown businesses. Also, this could be a way, when people rent cars, for them to know Wixom has a great downtown, post the main restaurants on these sheets that they are handing out. It is another opportunity for advertisement for the downtown.

Vice Chairperson suggested to create a Facebook group page for the businesses. Emails could be lost for a lot of the businesses; social media is key. Executive Director Cloutier indicated there are many Main Street Oakland County communities that have a private Facebook page for the businesses.

Board Member Willett stated the last item she wanted to discuss was at the budget session where each committee would have cash, so that if each committee comes up with ideas to help the businesses, they can put something together and have funds for it, put some ideas together. They don't have to be $100,000 ideas but they can be $2,500 ideas, so if they don't spend all the budgeted money, there are things that they can do to assist the businesses.

- Organization Committee

Executive Director Cloutier, Vice Chairperson Osburn and Chairperson Buck met last month to discuss the transition of leadership and the committee chairpersons.

Board Member Guzowski stated she supported the idea of having committee chairpersons. She indicated she would like to share some of her experiences, and likewise, as her new work/job is run by a board. Board Member Guzowski indicated it is very beneficial to have someone in charge, taking minutes, so that items are documented, and you have a checklist of items.

B. Downtown Business News/Events

- 2023: October 21 – Spooktacular Treat Hunt
- 2023: October 25 – Sip N Stroll – Halloween Edition
- 2023: November 22 – Downtown Dazzle Kicks Off
- 2023: December 1 – Tree Lighting Festival
- 2023: December 13 – Candy Cane Lane
- 2024: January 3 – Wednesdays in Wixom Kicks Off

Public Comments:

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None

Executive Director's Comments:

Executive Director Cloutier thanked Chairperson Buck, Board Member Willett, and Kelly Monahan, who is a part of the Design committee, and also Ashgrove Marketing for the donation of pumpkins, for all their time and organization for Spooktacular. She stated she heard great things about the high school volunteers from St. Catherine's school in Wixom. They will continue to reach out to them for help on our events. The Derby Day contract will be on the agenda for November. Chairperson Buck indicated the Derby Day event will be held on May 4th, 2024. They will be playing with the Star Wars theme with the medals, and T-shirts. Chairperson Buck thanked everyone for their time and dedication to the DDA Board and committees.

Board Members' Comments:

Board Member Guzowski commented she has been walking to the businesses doing the Economic Vitality surveys during the last couple of weeks. She stated it makes her feel proud to be a part of this group and thanked everyone for putting in their time and efforts into the DDA. We are all doing great things.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Board Member Willett, second by Board Member Payment 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

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