CITY OF WIXOM
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2022

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Absent: 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 Vice Chair Osburn and second by Board Member Cheney to approve the Meeting Agenda, as amended.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.

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None opposed.

Public Comments:

Board Member Cheney indicated she would be resigning from the DDA Board with a letter of resignation included in the packet. Ms. Leslie Payment will be observing today's meeting. Mayor Beagle commented that at tonight's City Council meeting, the approval for Ms. Payment's DDA Board application would be on the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Vice Chair Osburn and second by Board Member Cheney to approve the September 27, 2022, DDA Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

Correspondence:

Resignation of Board Member Melanie Cheney

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Willett to accept the resignation of Board Member Melanie Cheney.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

Executive Director's Report:

October 25, 2022 Report

Executive Director Cloutier is absent today.

Assistant City Manager Benson covered Executive Director Cloutier's report.

DDA Highlights:

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Work continues in areas that were discussed at the strategic meeting on October 19, 2022. Executive Director Cloutier conducted meetings with HRC, Carlisle Wortman and City Staff on the potential project for the West End Common area.

Assistant City Manager Benson and Executive Director Cloutier continue to meet with a prospective business owner to relocate from outside of downtown to downtown. They will be meeting with this business owner and property owner in early November.

There are, currently, three vacancies. Assistant City Manager Benson and Executive Director Cloutier continue to work with property owners and/or realtors to help in any way to fill these vacant properties: Kumon Space; Heath Building; Classic Pilates Center space.

There are two current businesses operating that are looking to sell or find new lease tenants. Neither of these businesses has advertised the vacancies but has reached out to inquire if there are potential businesses that would like to pursue either option: 49046 Pontiac Trail (Buttercream Bakeshop); 49321 Wainstock Street (Thee Hair Stop).

Shop Small Season is upon us and we have been approved for the second year as a Neighborhood Ambassador for the Shop Small program through American Express. This will allow the DDA to receive more marketing materials to help promote the Shop Small initiative. Main Street Oakland County will be here next week to deliver materials and swag that will be distributed to the businesses for the program. Shop Small Saturday is on November 26, 2022.

Old Business:

A. Election of DDA Chair and Vice Chairperson

Board Members Meredith and Osburn were nominated at the September 27, 2022 DDA Monthly Board meeting as Chair and Vice Chairperson. It was recommended that the DDA Board votes to approve these members to the leadership roles of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

MOTION by Mayor Beagle and second by Board Member Willett to approve Russ Meredith as Chairperson and Carissa Osburn as Vice Chairperson for the DDA.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
None opposed.

B. Strategic Meeting Review

The DDA Strategic meeting was held on October 19th to discuss and prioritize upcoming projects that this organization has been presented with in past meetings. A prioritized list was agreed upon

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by members of the DDA Board: One, Renton Area Redevelopment and Trailhead Parking; two, increased funding for Downtown maintenance; three, Pontiac Trail power lines and streetscape; four, West end common area.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented he thought they had a very positive meeting last week for strategic planning. An updated project sheet is included in the packet. There was not a lot of discussion regarding budgeted projects because those have been previously budgeted. On page 2, the four priorities were listed that members in attendance had identified as being the priorities for moving forward. There was a consensus that the number one priority is working to package and turnover the Renton area properties. City Council and the Planning Commission have also expressed this interest. Assistant City Manager Benson also indicated there is discussion relating to the other property owners who are involved in that area and what would happen to those; they are working on both pieces.

The second priority was to evaluate options for increasing funding for downtown maintenance. There are not any updates.

Tied for three and four priorities would be working on the power lines and streetscape between Wixom Road and Chambers on the north side of Pontiac Trail. Then, a semi-permanent build out of the west end common area located across the street from the Drafting Table and BP gas station.

Board Member Willett asked Board Member Garmo's opinion, if the lines are buried between 11/11 Burgers and PNC Bank. Board Member Garmo commented it would be nice; newer downtown areas, new communities do this. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated this could be done, to a certain degree, but it would be expensive to put the power lines underneath the sidewalk. It would take approximately six weeks for construction; close part of the driveways only for short periods of time. Board Member Garmo commented he did not think it would affect his business that much as long as he did not lose power at all; people use their credit cards, he has coolers and merchandise would go bad. They would have to have a backup plan in the case of lost power and switch his business over to something else.

Chair Meredith inquired about the west end common area maintenance. Assistant City Manager Benson commented this area is, currently, maintained by the City.

There was discussion of bond debt and loss of funding. Assistant City Manager Benson commented the DDA is looking at approximately $450K bond debt for the next five years regardless of what happens. The bonding capacity would depend entirely on the plan. City Manager Brown indicated talks will start in '25. They have gone through six or seven out of the steps of this process. Carlisle Wortman will help with the plan. If there is any build out, maintenance will have to be factored in. Currently, the DDA pays a flat amount to cover the current level of maintenance services received.

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Assistant City Manager Benson commented this priority list is very preliminary at this point. Ultimately, the priorities would also come down to timing. There will be more discussion in the budgeting season, but realistically, even with the reallocation of the business development grant dollars, the streetscape project probably would not happen until 2024 or 2025.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented there was not a lot of discussion about the barn or the barn study, primarily, because that's already a budgeted item by the DDA. The intention is to move forward and pursue quotes, and bring those forward to the DDA, and, ultimately, to City Council. Mayor Beagle commented, right now, it is a feasibility study. Mayor Beagle also indicated that if the vote came to Council to sell the barn, he did not know if they would sell the barn. He did not want to see the DDA investing a lot of money and getting their hopes up for something that's not going to happen. Board Member Willett commented, ultimately, if the barn is going to stay there, at least paint the barn so it looks nice, and lock the back door. Board Member Willett indicated the barn would complement the downtown area, it could have bathrooms for downtown events; maybe an area for pop up shops, etc.

C. West End (Klebba) Sidewalk Project

HRC provided renderings for this project.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the DDA had requested to see some renderings of the west end sidewalk plans. This plan was included in the packet. There are limitations to the step down; it is topography at this point.

Board Member Cheney indicated there were issues with the trees and the building. The trees could be a structural concern with the sidewalk and building.

Board Member Rzeznik inquired if the light posts have power. One goal of the Design Committee would be to install lights on all of the trees for Downtown Dazzle. She indicated there are outlets that come out from the ground near Drafting Table. Board Member Rzeznik also indicated she was fine with the planter boxes because they would make people aware there is an elevation change.

Board Member Guzowski commented on her concern that both sides of the street look similar. Board Member Rzeznik indicated the planters in front of Drafting Table are part of the building and is not city property. Board Member Guzowski indicated she liked Board Member Rzeznik's idea regarding the installation of electricity on the light posts and to review the trees in the area from a structural standpoint. Assistant City Manager Benson commented he could confirm everything and unless there is anything else significant, the DDA Board would not see this again until the bids are back for their approval.

D. Committee: Design

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The Design Committee met regarding the West End Common area. From that meeting, a "wish list" of items were noted and mapped out. Executive Director Cloutier, along with Assistant City Manager Benson met with Carlisle Wortman's Landscape Architect, HRC and Director Magee, to discuss the possibilities for this site. In the packet, there is the mapped out property to prepare for discussion.

Board Member Rzeznik indicated a "wish list" came from the Design Committee meeting which included seating, possibly a pergola, restrooms, large yard games, etc. Executive Director Cloutier and Assistant City Manager Benson would work with the new planning consultant, Carlisle Wortman Associates to quote a price for a rendering and plan in place for an RFP to be created and go out to bid. The intention is to bring this back to the November meeting. Director Magee also joined the Design Committee meeting, and similar to the Civic Center Park, this would be a collaborative process.

E. Committee: Economic Vitality

No update.

F. Committee: Promotions

The Promotions Committee continues to meet twice per month. They will host Sip n Stroll and the Spooktacular Downtown Treat Hunt this week. Volunteers are still needed for these events, especially the Spooktacular Downtown Treat Hunt, as there are 360 children registered. A sign-up genius link was sent out to all board and committee members, along with all in our volunteer database. A lot of businesses were interested in participating.

G. Committee: Organization

The Organization Committee continues to meet and discuss volunteer recruitment and retainment.

Vice Chair Osburn commented more volunteers are needed. A volunteer recognition event was discussed and also a part time assistant or intern to have more assistance in leading those volunteer events.

Board Member Willett commented the DDA continues to struggle with getting committee members, volunteers, etc. There was a discussion of the possibility of giving a $5 gift card to one of the downtown shops or restaurants for people volunteering to get them interested. Board Member Guzowski indicated a volunteer event was a good idea. She did not think email is enough, and it is not working. Board Member Buck suggested the next annual meeting for to promote volunteers should be held in the evening.

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New Business:

A. Holiday Lights Quote for 2022 Season

The DDA has partnered with Zoro's Christmas Lighting for the past four years to install, take down, and store the holiday lights at the entry to Downtown. With the continued growth of the trees, Zoro's is no longer able to provide these services to the DDA. Executive Director Cloutier has diligently worked on resolving this matter by contacting a dozen companies in the SE Michigan area that provide these services with resulting in receiving a quote from only one company, Christmas Décor, located in Wixom, MI. Christmas Décor would provide installation, maintenance, take down and storage of lights for $9,000.00. At this time, lights will be installed the second week of November. It is recommended for approval from the downtown Dazzle account for these services of Christmas Décor of Wixom, Michigan for installation, maintenance, take down and storage of the DDA's holiday lights.

MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Board Member Rzeznik to approve $9,000.00 for Christmas Décor, Wixom, Michigan to provide installation, maintenance, take down and storage of holiday lights; funds to be taken out of the Downtown Dazzle account.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.
Motion passes.

B. Michigan Trail's Magazine Advertisement

The DDA provided a paid advertisement for Michigan Trail's Magazine for the 2022 publication which is the fourth publication the DDA has participated in. Michigan Trail's Magazine is the premier publication for all the trail systems in the State. Currently, they are offering a 5% discount for a quarter page, half page or full page ad until October 31st. Provided in the packet is a breakdown of the prices to the coordinating advertisement sizes. It is recommended for approval to place an ad, size determined by the DDA Board, in the Michigan Trail's Magazine's 2023 publication from the Marketing and Branding account.

There was a discussion regarding placing a paid advertisement in the Michigan Trail's Magazine for the 2023 publication; ad size to be a full page ad at the cost of $3,200.00.

MOTION by Board Member Willett and second by Board Member Guzowski to approve $3,200.00 for a full page ad in the Michigan Trail's Magazine for the 2023 publication; funds to be taken out of the Marketing and Branding account.

VOTE: MOTION CARRIED

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All in favor.
Motion passes.

Information:

A. Downtown Business News/Events

2022: October 26th - Sip n Stroll Ladies Night Out - Halloween Edition

2022: October 29th - Spooktacular Downtown Treat Hunt

2022: November 23rd - January 7th: Downtown Dazzle

2022: November 26th - Small Business Saturday

2022: December 2nd - City of Wixom Tree Lighting Festival

2022: December 14th - Candy Cane Lane

Public Comments:

No public comments.

Executive Director's Comments:

No comment.

Board Members' Comments:

The Board Members and Mayor Beagle thanked Board Member Cheney for her knowledge and years of service to the DDA.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Mayor Beagle, 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

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