



**ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 8, 2024, MEETING, 8:00 A.M.**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was held on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. at the Ada Township Hall, Assembly Room, 7330 Thornapple River Drive, Ada MI.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chair Knapp.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Cloutier, Coe, Frost, Idema, Knapp, Leisman, Turan, Vogl

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Harrison

STAFF AND OFFICIALS PRESENT: Buckley, Said, Stichman, Suchy, Chief Murray,
Treasurer Moran

PUBLIC PRESENT: 5 members of the community

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Idema, supported by Cloutier, to approve the agenda with an amendment to add the Election of Officers, item III 1. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2024, REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Coe, supported by Turan, to approve the minutes of March 11, 2024, Regular Meeting. Motion carried.

1. Election of Officers

Stichman noted that at the first meeting of the new fiscal year, the election of officers take place.

Moved by Leisman, supported by Idema, to nominate Justin Knapp as Chair, Lindsey Vogl as Vice-Chair, and Dawn Marie Coe as Secretary. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF PAYABLES

**Consider Approval of Farmers Market Programming Invoice from
Community on Canvas**

Stichman referred to the invoice received from Community on Canvas and said this past season the Farmers Market partnered with Cynthia Hagedorn and successfully hosted additional kids programming; hands-on art activities alongside the KDL Storytime.

Stichman said the DDA budget for fiscal year 24-25 includes \$5,500 for Farmers Market programming. She said that the goal is to boost our offerings again this season by continuing the partnership with

Cynthia Hagedorn and she is requesting the DDA invest \$6,000 for a total of 12 weeks of programming (vs. 11 weeks last season). Stichman went over several activities that are offered: imagination tables with drawing, Lincoln logs, building blocks, and plenty of games.

There was DDA discussion regarding the marketing strategies for the kid's programs. Frost mentioned utilizing school newsletters to communicate with the parents and Coe mentioned possibly bringing in local mascots (Griffins/White Caps). Stichman confirmed that she and Cynthia's goal is to make connections with the schools, preschools, libraries, and social media for additional marketing of the kid's programs.

Moved by Coe, supported by Turan, to approve the \$6,000 invoice from Community on Canvas for programming during the 2024 Farmers Market Season and authorize the DDA Director to execute payment. Motion carried.

a. Consider Sponsorship of the 2024 Music on the Lawn Concert Series

Stichman stated that the DDA budget includes \$2,500 for this fiscal year for support of the Ada Township Music on the Lawn Summer Concert series. She referred to the outline on the sponsorship form noting the items included for the Baritone Sponsorship and requested approval from the DDA for the \$2,500 sponsorship for the concert series.

Cloutier shared feedback that she received regarding the concerts. She read the letter that said there is concern that there are too many summer concerts and they would like to see other activities.

Stichman noted that the Music on the Lawn is a Parks & Recreation/History Center event and the DDA supports it. Stichman said she will share the feedback received with Wesley Deason, Parks Director.

Leisman stated that his experience has been that Music on the Lawn is really successful in the Township and the businesses like it and he has only heard positive feedback.

Moved by Turan, supported by Frost, to approve \$2,500 sponsorship for the 2024 Music on the Lawn Summer Concert Series and authorize the DDA Director to submit the sponsorship form with payment to Ada Township Parks & Recreation. Motion carried.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Notice is given that at the April 8, 2024, meeting, a motion to rescind the Board's February 12, 2024, action to approve the Farmer's Market Management Contract and to authorize the DDA Director to sign the same with S. Karrip as the Market Manager for the 2024 season will be brought for consideration and possible action

Stichman said the current Farmers Market contract ended on March 31, 2024. The DDA Board did approve on February 12, based on staff recommendation at that time, to approve a new contract for the 24-25 fiscal year. There was conversation with Stephanie Karrip throughout her time as the Market Manager about communication and expectations. Stichman explained that the new contract was sent to Stephanie back in December and despite conversations with her, no signed contract was returned.

Stichman said she recently spoke with Stephanie and she informed her that based on personal circumstances, she isn't able to fully commit to running the Farmers Market this season.

Stichman said given these circumstances my recommendation has changed. Staff now believes that it is in the best interest of the Township/Farmers Market not to renew the contract. Legal counsel advised that because no action has been taken to execute the agreement, it would be fine to have the DDA Board, at its April 8 meeting, adopt a “motion to rescind” which, if adopted, will have the effect of “un-doing” the February motion of approval.

Moved by Idema, supported by Vogl, to rescind the Board’s February 12, 2024, action to approve the Farmer’s Market Management Contract and to authorize the DDA Director to sign the same with Stephanie Karris as the Market Manager for the 2024 season. Motion carried.

b. Consider Approval of Proposal to Apply to Become a CEDEM AmeriCorps Host Site

Stichman presented an idea for preparing a plan for the Farmers Market this year. She said the Community Economic Development Association of Michigan (CEDAM) is seeking host sites for its AmeriCorps State Program. The program is open to nonprofits, public agencies, and faith-based and community organizations. CEDAM will place 30 full time AmeriCorps members across the state whose terms are expected to begin on September 9, 2024, and run through August 15, 2025. The cost to participate is based on an organization’s budget. If selected, the DDA would be looking at a \$10,000 expenditure, which could be covered by the funds allocated for the Farmers Market Manager depending on the final decision made regarding the contract for this fiscal year.

Stichman explained that AmeriCorps members are intended to help build capacity for host sites and position descriptions can include activities such as small business support, program development, volunteer management, and outreach and marketing. Stichman referred to the draft job description and the Host Site Application included in the packet. She said the position falls within that program development in outreach and marketing for the Farmers Market. Stichman had multiple conversations with CEDEM and Patrick with AmeriCorp is very supportive of this position within the DDA.

Stichman concluded that she has been in the AmeriCorp program in the past and that she has a connection to the program and understanding it, which can be a great path forward to help build capacity for the Farmers Market. She said she will host the Market this season and her goal is to bring in a DDA Intern in May and work with them to be present for the Market and if selected for AmeriCorps, then continue to train that person for the end of the season and have them be on-board for the next Market season.

There was Board discussion about the cost of \$10,000 to become a member and how that works as an employed Intern position and what the application process entails. Stichman further explained the AmeriCorp program, and the funding. Cloutier mentioned that she participated in the Market last season and offered Haley her assistance with the Market this season.

Moved by Vogl, supported by Frost, to approve the staff proposal to become a CEDEM AmeriCorps host site and authorize the DDA Director to submit an application to CEDEM by the April 15 deadline. Motion carried.

VII. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. DDA Financial Report, March 31, 2024

Stichman referred to the financial outline and mentioned a few main points: Tax distribution in the amount of \$181,638.44 includes DDA TIF revenue (DDA Ad Val), \$21,625.70 DDA IFT, and \$277,084.19 DDA Milage Revenue; Beers at the Bridge revenue totaling \$19,200, contract services, engineering services, and legal services. Financial activity for the Farmers Market included vendor

registration revenue totaling \$1,825 and expenditures totaling \$407 (which include the Market Manager's payment for services in February).

Stichman noted that she is working with Staff to provide detailed information on TIF details to the DDA.

b. Director/Staff Reports

Stichman made note of a Shop Local Campaign and that Shelley Cloutier, business owner and DDA member, submitted a presentation outlining how a Shop Local Campaign fits with the DDA's key objectives. Stichman agrees that the campaign could benefit the DDA District by contributing to increased economic success of the businesses and the township. She said she will be reviewing this concept further with the Ada Business Association and DiscoverAda/Baton Collective to outline a potential strategy for implementation. She will provide additional information to the DDA as they move through the process.

VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Idema asked for an update on: 1) the parking study and 2) the pedestrian crossing signage

Planning Director Said addressed the parking study update and explained that when the parking study was last reviewed, the Township Board expressed concern about a couple of major projects that were not completed and want to make sure they are completed before the parking study takes place. Said stated that any execution on our part of the parking study is likely going to wait for the Hotel and the A6 building to open, to get a better idea of what dynamics are involved.

Township Manager Suchy addressed the pedestrian crossing signage and explained that the Township is working with Kent County Road Commission to create a plan of action or policy on how to address, and he provided details on the concept/process. Suchy said once a policy is in place, we will need to identify priorities (i.e., educate community, crossing/signage locations/intersections, crossing counters). Then we will request feedback on the policy from other township boards/commissions before being reviewed by the Township Board.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Rantala, Ada Business Association, spoke regarding the comment/feedback received about too many concerts. She said there has been consistent positive feedback regarding the many events in Ada, but she feels it is important that we listen to all of the feedback from the community (positive &/or negative) to evaluate the best way to move forward.

X. ADJOURN MEETING

Moved by Idema, supported by Turan, to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Marie Coe, DDA Secretary

rs:eb