



**ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)
MINUTES OF APRIL 16, 2025, SPECIAL WORK SESSION, 8:30 A.M.**

A Special Work Session of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was held on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. at the Amy Van Andel Library, Community Room #2, 7215 Headley St SE, Ada, MI.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m. by Chair Knapp.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Cloutier, Harrison, Idema, Knapp, Frost, Vogl, Korth, Coe, Turan (8:39am)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF AND OFFICIALS PRESENT: Austin, Suchy, Treasurer Moran,

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Harrison, supported by Idema, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Goals & Objectives Work session #2

DDA Director Kevin Austin instructed the DDA that they were to review the Draft Key Objectives and Goals, as had been constructed following the past 2 Strategic Planning Sessions and provide recommended revisions prior to moving to approve and adopt the guiding policy. Director Austin led them into the first section of the Draft with the “Stop, Start, Continue” exercise.

Idema mentioned that we should remove the “instead” in reference to events because that sounds too declarative instead of leaving room for evaluating valuable opportunities.

Coe stated that a Buy Local Campaign is an expression of the goal of supporting DDA Businesses.

Director Austin asked the DDA Board to discuss Objective 1 and evaluate any modifications.

Harrison noted that we should keep a point of focus that we are accountable to key property owners in the DDA.

Tom Korth stated that he likes the focus but doesn’t want to show favoritism.

Jeremy Frost stated that we should keep accountability with all property owners and emphasize continuous communication.

In discussing Objective 2, the board started focusing on Beers at The Bridge.

Idema noted that she would like to remove the term “image-building” from the BATB reference and maybe change to a “community bonding” focus.

Vogl stated that we should add better language than “don’t mess with the core”, such as “retain the character of the event”.

Idema asked what the “outside vendors” point entails.

Director Austin clarified that they may have discussed whether they should be deliberate about attracting outside vendors or not putting resources toward that end.

Coe stated that maybe they should state that they want to maintain the vibrancy of the event.

In referencing the Farmers Market point the board indicated that we should revise the language of the first point that it is well-managed but always looking to improve.

The board began discussion on the Winter Wonderland initiatives.

Korth stated that we should provide a point to state that we are deliberately looking to assess the impact of this event on the DDA.

Turan stated that we should continue funding this event and the installations connected to it as it has a significant benefit to placemaking in the village.

Harrison asked if there is a space in the park where businesses can sponsor a tree display and asked if there are additional spaces to activate for the holidays.

Korth mentioned that once Covered Bridge Park is finished, it will provide a significant space for activation.

Cloutier mentioned that she received feedback that the downtown area has very few activities for families to do in the winter.

The board began discussion on the Support Local Campaign.

Idema noted that the current statements could be consolidated to express the need to implement and sustain this initiative.

Suchy noted that the statements under this campaign shouldn’t have specific timelines and deadlines.

Idema asked if the ownership of this campaign is up in the air or if one entity is driving it.

Suchy noted that the ABA focuses on the whole township while the DDA is a much more specific location, therefore the DDA should lead and coordinate strategic assistance from the partners.

Korth stated that the DDA is much more complex an entity than the other partners, therefore we need to be considered the lead and delegate roles to our partners.

Coe noted that the DDA utilizes the public purse and therefore should be more accountable as the leadership.

In discussing Objective 3 Beautification and Placemaking, Turan noted that specific timing statements are useful for physical alteration.

Frost noted that timing helps with accountability.

The board began discussion on Objective 4 Public Investment and Maintenance.

Idema asked if the sub notes are more for internal references or if they are useful for the public.

Moran asked if the key objectives are for reviewing progress annually or if they are meant to be more long term.

Harrison stated that they are a good way to evaluate progress in the short term over the year and then refine after the year has concluded.

The board stated that the Pedestrian Infrastructure Investment point is well written and captures the vision that the DDA has regarding this goal.

Director Austin stated that he would edit the document to include the board revisions and bring it to them for review at the DDA meeting on May 19.

V. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Harrison stated that he is very thankful for the continued care and investment that all board members have made in this process of refining and defining our goals.

Idema asked Director Austin if he wanted them at the Ribbon Cuttings.

Director Austin stated that he only sends out invites to the ones occurring in the DDA and if they are available then he would like the board members to make it.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

VII. ADJOURN MEETING

Moved by Harrison, supported by Turan, to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Marie Coe, DDA Secretary

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