



**ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MINUTES OF THE JUNE 12, 2023, MEETING, 8:00 A.M.**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was held on Monday, June 12, 2023, 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:** Bowersox, Coe, Frost, Harrison, Idema, Knapp, Leisman, Turan, Vogl

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** 0

**STAFF AND OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Buckley, Moran, Said, Stichman, Suchy, DDA Intern Lizzie Molnar, Parks and Planning Intern Harrison Hill

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** 4

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Harrison, supported by Idema, to amend the agenda to add the Thornapple River Pedestrian Bridge RAP Grant 2.0, as item VI a-1 in New Business. Motion carried.

Moved by Harrison, supported by Bowersox, to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 8, 2023, REGULAR MEETING**

Moved by Coe, supported by Vogl, to approve the minutes of May 8, 2023, Regular Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

**IV. APPROVAL OF PAYABLES – none**

**V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**a-1. Thornapple River Pedestrian Bridge RAP Grant 2.0**

Township Manager, Suchy, referred to his memo outlining the Township's interest in applying for a RAP Grant for a pedestrian bridge over the Thornapple River from Legacy Park to the property on the east side of the river (the property that the Township currently has an option on). Total project cost \$1,500,000.

Suchy explained that he has been working with the Right Place for the grant funding of a requested amount of \$750,000, however, it sounds like it may be approximately \$500,000 granted towards this very important trail connection.

Suchy stated that speaking with Travis Alden from the Right Place, he indicated that the Township could receive additional points on the grant application if they can obtain a third party to commit to a portion of the project (1,500-2,500). He said because the project would have significant impact on the DDA District and bringing pedestrians from the east side of the river safely, he felt he would request the DDA submit a letter of support and contribute a small financial commitment.

There was discussion among Suchy and the DDA Board regarding the property purchase option on the north side of Thornapple River Drive, the amount of a DDA financial commitment and where the other funds come from for the bridge project.

Moved by Harrison, supported by Vogl, to support Ada Township Thornapple River Pedestrian Bridge RAP Grant 2.0 with a letter of support and a \$10,000 financial commitment from the DDA. Motion carried.

**a. Discuss Status of 2017 Parking Study Update**

Stichman referred to the parking study proposal included in the packet. She said the proposed \$18,500 cost was outlined to be split, with Planning paying 70% and the DDA paying 30%, and the DDA approved an \$8,000 expenditure in that fund.

Stichman said the Township Board opted to hold off on taking any action during its May 22 meeting regarding the traffic study allowing for Staff to obtain more information. They asked that it be brought back to the July 10 meeting. The Township Board expressed issues with the timing of the study update given the amount of construction that is taking place. Staff has discussed alternative options to a full update of the study, which includes tasks for the summer intern; field study of parking spaces and collection square footage, uses, and occupancies for the buildings in the parking study area.

Leisman noted that the Township Board was not opposed to doing a parking study, it was more of a timing issue with the hotel being finished, the building next to the hotel and the apartments being finished. Leisman said the Board thought maybe the study should wait six months when buildings are finished and get actual counts.

Following DDA Board discussion, the DDA agreed that the Township could start the study updates by proceeding with the field study and collection of square footage, uses and occupancies this summer with the goal of completing the full update later.

**b. Review Train Bridge Mural Project Update Regarding Road Closure Costs**

Stichman has been working with the Ada Township admin committee on the road closures for the Railroad Mural Project. There was a shift to the Ada Drive road-closure and the admin committee approved a 6-day full road closure with the stipulation of securing flashing road closure signage from Give 'em a Break. The road closure itself does not pose any increase in

cost to the budget, but the cost of securing two flashing road closure signs for two weeks is a total of \$4,000. The Township admin committee is requesting that the DDA pay this expenditure as it relates to the mural project, which falls under the DDA. The DDA budgeted a total of \$67,000 for the mural project in FY23/24. Total project fees outlined by LRCFA totaled \$63,885, so there is currently an additional \$3,115 included in the budget for this project. There was no change for the 3-day Thornapple River Drive road-closure.

Stichman referred to the road closure maps and went over the artists and road closure schedules. Leisman explained the specifics of the admin committee expense approval and the road closure details. Hannah and Aaron from LRCFA were also available to answer questions.

Moved by Idema, supported by Bowersox, to approve the \$4,000 expenditure for the cost of two flashing road closure signs for two weeks for the Ada Drive Mural road-closure. Motion carried.

#### **c. Review and Consider Cost for Mural Ribbon Cutting and Artist Market**

Stichman said she has been working with Lions and Rabbits Center for Arts (LRCFA) to elevate a ribbon cutting ceremony with an Artist Market to be held on Thursday, July 13 from 3-8 p.m. The Art in Ada market would be facilitated by LRCFA with the intention of mentoring the Farmer Market manager and Ada Arts Council for future program coordination. Stichman shared that she would be out on maternity leave at that time, but she has the intention of attending the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Artist Market and can be available to provide any support to LRCFA or Farmers Market manager during this coordination process, if needed. This will also be a support task for Lizzie Molnar, DDA summer intern.

Stichman referred to the statement from LRCFA outlining a total cost of \$7,650 for the coordination of the Artist Market, which includes LRCFA time for planning, vendor coordination/marketing, community & business outreach, volunteer management, music, etc.

There was discussion among the DDA Board, Stichman and LRCFA regarding vendor participation and fees (LRCFA anticipates 40-50 vendors), sponsorship funding, utilizing the Arts in Ada name, increased activity during social district hours, and specific marketing ideas.

Moved by Leisman, supported by Frost, to approve the \$7,650 expenditure as outlined in the statement of work from LRFCA to host with the DDA the Art in Ada Market this summer on July 13<sup>th</sup>. Motion carried.

#### **d. Consider Cancellation of July DDA Board Meeting Due to Staff Support/Availability**

Stichman requested the DDA to consider cancellation of the July 10 meeting due to her being gone on maternity leave and Manager Suchy would just be getting back from a two-week leave.

Moved by Harrison, supported by Vogl, to cancel the July 10, 2023, DDA Meeting due to staff availability. Motion carried.

## **VII. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **a. DDA Financial Report, May 31, 2023**

Stichman referred to the financial outline and mentioned a few main points: Tax distribution totaling \$15,362.73 includes DDA AD VAL and ITF revenue, Special Event receipts totaling \$5,100 includes Beers at the Bridge sponsorship revenues for the 2023 concert series, community events expenditures, phone allowance expenditure, operating supplies/services, contract services, improvement expenditures, and the farmers market activity included vendor registration and sponsorship revenue equaling \$3,660 and expenditures totaled \$656.75 which includes Market Manager payments for April.

### **b. Director/Staff Reports**

Stichman informed that there has been a shift in sponsorship revenue for Beers at the Bridge. Gravel Bottom has expressed that based on advice from its legal counsel, it can no longer be the representing sponsor for the Beers at the Bridge Concert Series. The decision is based on new knowledge that Gravel Bottom obtained over the last month that changed its understanding of Michigan's "pay to play" laws. As a community event, Beers at the Bridge aims to support its small businesses so naturally we want to continue to utilize Gravel Bottom as the main beer provider for our event and will continue to move forward without the Gravel Bottom presenting sponsorship. With additional sponsorships secured this year, staff anticipates that sponsorship revenue will be consistent with revenue from last year. Gravel Bottom will be able to continue to partner as a grub sponsor for the June and August events.

There was DDA Board discussion about alternative sponsors, looking into legal liability/legal counsel for protection on future sponsorships for any Beers at the Bridge event, and/or other events. Stichman said she will be seeking an opinion from our legal counsel.

Haley introduced Lizzie Molnar, DDA summer intern.

Parks Director, Fitzpatrick, gave a few updates. He introduced summer intern, Harrison Hill, who will be working with the Parks programs and the Planning Department through the summer. He provided updates on new fliers for the summer concert series, parks staffing for the Music on the Lawn and Beers at the Bridge (at Legacy Park), Leonard Field renovation, and Wayfinding for Trails and the Village.

Planning Director, Said, informed that the Planning Commission meeting on June 16 at 5:30 p.m. will be the Public Hearing for the Master Plan. Said's hope is the Planning Commission will recommend to the Township Board for their approval of the Master Plan.

## **VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

Harrison shared a few ideas for the pedestrian bridge (public art). Leisman made note that TV-8 came to Ada for a visit. Leisman and Planning Director Said walked around and showed TV-8 some of the historic buildings that have been around for 100

years or more and then showed them some of the projects that have been built and explained about the 10-year project.

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT** - none

**X. ADJOURN MEETING**

Moved by Bowersox, supported by Harrison, to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 a.m.  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

---

Dawn Marie Coe, DDA Secretary

rs:eb