



**ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 12, 2024, REGULAR MEETING, 8:00 A.M.**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was held on Monday, August 12, 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, Frost, Knapp, Leisman, Turan, Vogl

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Coe, Harrison, Idema

**STAFF AND OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Buckley, Said, Stichman, Suchy, Planner/Zoning Administrator Bajdek, Treasurer Moran, BFG Director Brinks

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** 6

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Vogl, supported by Turan, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2024, REGULAR MEETING AND SEMI-ANNUAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING**

Moved by Frost, supported by Vogl, to approve the July 8, 2024, Regular Meeting and Semi-Annual Informational Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**IV. APPROVAL OF PAYABLES - none**

**V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Consider Cost Share Request for Purchase of Special Event Barricades and Cones**

Stichman noted that Ada Township hosts numerous events annually, and historically, we have borrowed traffic and pedestrian control devices such as barricades and cones from other entities. After discussing with both Parks Director Deason and BFG Director Brinks, it has become evident that we need to purchase our own equipment to ensure availability and reduce reliance on others. Director Brinks contacted several suppliers to obtain pricing for barricades and cones.

Stichman referred to the pricing table that summarizes the vendors and prices and said they propose purchasing barricades and cones from Traffic Safety Warehouse.

Stichman said it is recommended that the total cost of \$6,081.10 be split equally among the BFG, DDA, and Parks and Rec, with each entity covering one-third of this cost. Purchasing our own traffic and

pedestrian control devices will ensure we are better prepared for future events and no longer need to rely on borrowing equipment from other entities.

Moved by Leisman, supported by Turan, to approve the cost share request for purchase of special event barricades and cones in the amount of \$2,027.03. Motion carried.

**b. Parking Study – Update**

Planning Director Said updated on the Parking Study status and referred to the two response proposals received (Fishbeck \$45,000 and Walker \$65,000). Said noted the higher proposed costs are likely due to a more strategic, comprehensive approach that the firms would take vs. the previous 2017 Study. He said that Staff is communicating with both consultant firms to request further clarification and insights about a parking study plan. Said will complete further research at this time with anticipated preparations for a Spring 2025 parking study.

There was DDA discussion about the Spring 2025 parking study date, consider a cost sharing aspect, the intention of the study/will the study solve concerns, and communicating about the traffic study to the public.

**c. Review and Consider Approval of Brand Guide for Ada Farmers Market**

Stichman said that last year a poster was designed to promote the market, but feedback from committee members and community collaborators indicated that the poster was difficult to read and did not effectively capture viewers' attention. Staff requested a statement of work from Lions and Rabbits Center for the Arts (LRCFA) for the development of a comprehensive brand guide for the Ada Farmers Market. This project aimed to collaborate with the artist responsible for last year's poster design to create supplementary brand materials. LRCFA took on the role of project manager, facilitating this process at the artist's request. The goal was to make necessary adjustments to the existing poster design to enhance its readability and visual impact.

Stichman said the project sought to engage the Farmers Market committee actively in the branding process. There were many perspectives on the committee evaluating the brand from different viewpoints. We aimed for Gabrielle Eisma, the artist, to strike a good balance between function and the fun, creative artistic style.

The DDA reviewed the full brand kit attached to the packet and noted some concerns: Cloutier shared concern with the colors of the fruit and vegetables and suggested moving some things around to create more vibrancy. Leisman noted concerns in that Ada is not a village and would like to see the branding be more coordinated with the rest of the Township, DDA, and the new Wayfinding branding (Corbin Design).

Moved by Leisman, supported by Turan, to table the Ada Farmers Market Brand Guide to next month and for Staff to contact Corbin Design for further input. Motion carried.

**d. Consider Potential Options to Clarify the Role and Restructure Farmers Market Committee**

Stichman explained that a Farmers Market Committee was established based on a recommendation included in the Farmers Market Manager Contract. The initial meeting was facilitated by Stephanie Karris, the former Market Manager. The committee was intended to include Stichman, the market manager, DDA board representative(s), vendors, community partners, and sponsors. When Stephanie Karris stepped down for the 2024 season, Stichman assumed the role of interim market manager and took over as facilitator for the committee meetings.

Stichman said the purpose of the Farmers Market Committee was to provide high-level feedback and guidance on strategy and goal setting, rather than managing day-to-day operations or serving as a decision-making body. She said it was her understanding that, in her role as Director and interim Market Manager, she is responsible for managing daily operations and logistics, while the DDA Board serves as the overarching governing body that sets policy and procedures.

Stichman noted that recent committee meetings have revealed varying perspectives on the committee's role, which differ from the original intention. It has become apparent that convening the committee without a formal charge was a misstep on her part. Manager Suchy and Stichman have had numerous conversations around the benefits of establishing a formal charge for any committee as it ensures that individuals are on the same page. She is seeking input from DDA Board members to help clarify the role of the committee and to consider options for restructuring it.

There was DDA discussion regarding the restructuring options (develop a formal charge or pause meetings until the new Market Manager is onboard), who the members are on the current committee, DDA members are supportive of the idea of adding a DDA member and more vendors to the committee. Vogl offered to be on the committee and said she agrees with taking a pause at this time and waiting for a market manager to be involved.

The DDA Board resolved they would pause on the Farmers Market Committee this month and that Knapp, Vogl, and Cloutier would meet for additional discussion and update the DDA at the September 8 meeting.

## **VII. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **a. DDA Financial Report, July 31, 2024**

Stichman referred to the financial outline and noted a few main points: Beers at the Bridge revenue totaling 19,330 and expenditures of \$11,990.90, Progressive Tastings revenue \$991.40 and expenditures of \$1,050, landscaping and beautification expenses \$900, and contract services expenditures totaling \$10,500 (includes to Placer.ai). Financial activity for the Farmers Market included vendor registration and sponsorship revenue equaling \$1,200 and minimal expenditures of \$124.

Stichman provided updates on the Progressive Tastings events and the AmeriCorps position/process.

### **b. Director/Staff Reports – no additional comments were made.**

## **VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

Cloutier inquired about the scheduled July 30<sup>th</sup> Roosters Crow event at the Farmers Market and asked why it was cancelled. Stichman responded that the Parks & Rec Director was out sick, so it was necessary to cancel the event.

Stichman addressed inquiries about inappropriate comments made on the Ada social media page and said that she and Manager Suchy are working with legal counsel for options to remove comments and implementing a long-term policy on monitoring the website for any other issues.

Leisman said as a member of the DDA Board, he fully supports Staff for doing what is needed to keep inappropriate material off our website.

## **IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Pete Wojda, 7275 Schoolhouse Dr., offered a suggestion and a request. He suggested that Ada Township host a “restaurant week” and his request was to enhance the landscape on the property around the mural at the railroad bridge.

Doug Lee, owner of Jamnbean Coffee Company at 590 Ada Drive, shared concerns with the lack of parking available and he offered possible solutions. He also shared concerns about the old oak trees’ condition and said he would like to see a formal movement to preserve the trees.

Township Manager Suchy said he would be in contact with Ada BFG (buildings, facilities, and grounds) regarding the landscaping around the mural and discuss landscape responsibilities/owner responsibilities. Suchy made note regarding Arborists - he and Stichman will further review bringing in arborists, obtain information and proposals, and will inform the DDA of options.

Leisman referenced the comments about the parking conditions and shared some history of the parking options from back in 2015 (block A & B). He assured all that the Township is doing everything they can and continues to work on parking issues.

## **X. ADJOURN MEETING**

Moved by Vogl, supported by Turan, to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

---

Dawn Marie Coe, DDA Secretary

rs:eb