

**ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 8, 2021, MEETING, 8:00 A.M.**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was held on Monday, November 8, 2021, 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, Bowersox.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Bowersox, Coe, Harrison, Idema, Knapp, Leisman, Wright, VanderWulp

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Norman

STAFF AND OFFICIALS PRESENT: Buckley, Moran, Said, Stichman, Suchy

PUBLIC PRESENT: none

VanderWulp requested an agenda item be added regarding the need for additional parking in the Village. The DDA Board agreed to amend the agenda to add item to New Business, Section V.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by VanderWulp, supported by Harrison, to approve the agenda as amended to add parking to the New Business. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 11, 2021 REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Idema, supported by Coe, to approve the October 11, 2021, Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Consider Revised Staff Recommendation regarding Strategic Planning Consultant Selection

Stichman referenced the outline in the packet that summarized where the Board left off in the Strategic Planning process and the correspondence received as feedback from the two consulting firms that submitted proposals.

Based on concerns the DDA shared at the last meeting, Stichman said that she had spoken to four local consultants that would be able to facilitate this process. She said that these consultants consist of a balance of individuals that still work for consulting firms as well as retired individuals that were still involved in the consulting arena and she continued to share information about the four firms.

Stichman concluded that one of the concerns she heard from the Board was that the proposals offered were “larger scale” than the Board was intending and thought that it might be more advantageous for the Board to engage in a visioning/goal-setting process rather than a full-on Strategic Planning process and she referred to the specific example in the packet from Lake Odessa.

Stichman stated that staff recommends that the proposals from the The Barthwell Group and Essentiam be rejected before officially moving forward with seeking proposals from additional local consultants.

Idema asked who were the four local consultants. Stichman shared information about the four she researched; a gentleman from The Right Place, a firm located in Lansing, and two separate individuals who are retired but still consulting in the Strategic Planning realm.

Moved by Harrison, supported by Idema, to reject the proposals received from The Barthwell Group and Essentiam. Motion carried.

Stichman said she would continue research with the local four consultants and have proposals and a staff recommendation available prior to the December meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Parking in the Village

VanderWulp spoke of the recently sold property on Fase Street and shared his concern with the volume of cars in the Village and the lack of parking. He said that at one point there was talk of a pedestrian bridge to cross the Grand River from the little red schoolhouse over to the Fase Street property and that he felt that property should be used as a wetland park and parking lot.

Suchy referred to the Fase Street property and said that 8.2 acres of the 27 acres was “buildable” land. The Township has had preliminary conversations with the property owner and developer and have discussed their concepts and the needs of the Township but they have not officially submitted anything to the Planning Commission yet.

Suchy said that the Township Board was well aware of the parking concerns and he shared some specific ideas/plans/options that the Township Board has been working on; the options of property purchases, the expense of properties in Ada, funding, working with Geld for available parking areas, the possible location change of the Township Hall, and the need to increase awareness of the public parking available.

VI. REPORT AND COMMUNICATION

a. DDA Financial Report, October 31, 2021

Stichman reported that the DDA received a payment of \$153,908.86 from the State’s Local Government Stabilization Fund which was a little higher than the budgeted amount of \$150,000. She referred to Farmers Market, Brats & Bonfires and Beers at the Bridge finances included in the packet.

b. Director/Staff Report

Stichman informed that there were no final numbers determined for Brats & Bonfires at the time of the distribution of the packet but she plans on presenting a full recap of finances at the December meeting.

VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Leisman shared that he appreciated the DDA Board discussions regarding the parking and the park across the way and that it was helpful to know some of the DDA priorities. Leisman also gave an update on the review of the terms of officers on each of the Boards and said the DDA would be reviewed this fall.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

VanderWulp stated that he would like to see the DDA and Planning Commission get together on proposals for properties that have the ability to be used for parking in the Village.

There was Board discussion regarding the parking concerns, whether it was a parking problem or a conception problem, updating the parking study and a walkable map, and it was determined that Stichman would revisit the 2017 parking study and include the topic on the December agenda.

Stichman said that it was also important to educate people of where they can park in the Village and she was working on the public parking signs at the Community Church.

VaanderWulp left meeting at 9:00 a.m.

IX. ADJOURN MEETING

Moved by Harrison, supported by Idema, to adjourn meeting at 9:01 a.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

Devin Norman, Secretary

rs:eb