

**ADA TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 14, 2020, MEETING, 8:00 A.M.**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was held on Monday, December 14, 2020, 8:00 a.m. via video/audio-conferencing, in conformance with Public Act 228 of 2020 concerning temporary authorization of remote participation in public meetings.

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m. by Chairperson, Bowersox.

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

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** VanderWulp

**STAFF AND OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Buckley, Ferro, Moran, Suchy

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** 0

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Idema, supported by Harrison, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 9, 2020 MEETING**

It was moved by Harrison, supported by Idema, to approve the November 9, 2020 minutes as presented. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**IV. STAFF/COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**A. POTENTIAL ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN FY21-22 BUDGET**

Ferro projected a screen share of his staff memo and the revenue and expenditure report included in the packet. Ferro said the proposed annual budgets for the next fiscal year need to be prepared by January 8 and requests DDA input on some items to consider including; staffing consideration, capital projects, and marketing and promotion.

Ferro stated the DDA indicated last month they wish to consider the type of skill and experience desired for the vacant DDA Coordinator position before recruiting for the position. Ferro said it would be advisable for the DDA Board to undertake a strategic planning process to develop direction regarding the role of the DDA in the community and the initiatives you wish to undertake.

There was some Board discussion regarding event inactivity due to Covid and what to possibly expect in the number of events in the immediate future and how and when to budget for the DDA position. The Board also discussed the upcoming retirement of the Planning Director and how that would affect/modify the type of DDA position description to fill for the budget.

Ferro stated you should budget something for the next fiscal year that is a higher percentage of resources than what is currently being budgeted for the DDA, and provided our health environment will be back to 'normal' by mid-year, there will be someone providing more staff resources to the DDA.

Harrison asked Leisman what the Township's perspective was on Ferro's position. Leisman stated he and Suchy have discussed the position, as well as space needs related issues, and the coordination for a lot of different things. Leisman said there will be some major changes made and it makes sense to budget something for that position.

Suchy said Ferro is currently the Planning Director but due to significant needs his position branched into different areas and whoever the replacement is, the Township will make sure the DDA has staff support and is in a position to succeed.

Harrison referred to Ferro's memo and the contract services for strategic planning facilitator. Harrison said the DDA has a need for two different skill sets; someone with vision/sets goals and organizational skills. Ferro has a proposed budget amount of \$10,000. Harrison stated we should put the \$10,000 in the budget and let the Township Board know that this is something we see value in and also see value in including them in the same process.

Idema asked if they could reach out to other DDA's to find out who they have used successfully for strategic planning. Suchy stated we can identify a number of firms and he can reach out to other communities to see who they have used for strategic planning with DDA. Harrison agreed and said let's get some names, skill sets, portfolios and bring someone in to help DDA get the vision which will drive staffing support and budgets.

Coe shared a couple potential capital projects to consider. Coe asked if we should survey local businesses to check on them and see how they are doing during this Covid time to show personal attention and time that the DDA cares. Coe said another capital projects idea is for the beautification of the Village. There is concern that some buildings need improvements (specific concern was the Speedway facility) and if we have some funds budgeted in case we need to do something; like allocate funding for building renovations. Norman suggested a community beautification slush fund. There was discussion regarding the Speedway façade and possible grant/s and or loans for building façade improvements and that could be further discussed with the strategic planning organization.

Suchy stated he noticed the CIP didn't include signage and does anticipate at some point in 20/21 the DDA might be looking at signage and should be included. Ferro stated he has in his notes to add ~~\$4,000~~ \$40,000 for community entrance signs.

Harrison stated another great draw for local businesses and families to enjoy would be the addition of a splash pad to the downtown area. He said they are very popular and maybe DDA should consider cost for that in the budget. The splash pad idea was very well received by all Board members. Suchy stated the Parks and Rec. plan will be going through an update next year and that would be the perfect time to have that conversation with the community regarding a splash pad, more pickle ball courts and/or other amenities that they would like to see.

Ferro touched base on Capital Projects listed in his memo; general streetscape furnishings, benches, refuse receptacles, bike racks, dog bag dispensers and has \$30,000 in the proposed budget. Ferro said we could add the urns that have been discussed and bump the amount to \$40,000.

There was discussion on whether to budget for staff to support marketing and promotional needs or for outside consultants. Coe suggested Seyferth for marketing purposes. Leisman said Seyferth was instrumental coordinating the bridge lighting and the new holiday decorations. Ferro confirmed that the Board agreed to allow budget funds for marketing.

## **B. LIBRARY/COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECT UPDATE**

Ferro stated the library project is going well. Ferro reported that final trade inspections are complete, the code-required signage has been installed, and the furniture is starting to be delivered. Ferro stated we are still on target for an occupancy permit by December 23<sup>rd</sup>. In early January KDL will start their staff move in, as well as shelving and library materials. Ferro said they are still on target for late January completion of the building and ready to be occupied.

Idema asked if Ferro met with Bill Payne about the need for additional funding. Ferro stated Bill has the final number he needs and he is committed to getting that accomplished.

### **C. SIDEWALK JOINT GRINDING, SCHEDULE**

Ferro stated he was notified last week that they would be starting today, 12/14, and they should be out there now.

### **D. ADA VILLAGE GENERAL STORE LIQUOR LICENSE**

Ferro stated the DDA Board recommended approval for a redevelopment area liquor license for the Ada Village General Store and were notified last week by the Liquor Control Commission that the license was denied. Ferro said we still have one license that could be potentially issued to another dining establishment in the Village. Wright asked the reason for denial. Ferro stated it was in reference to not satisfying the statutory requirement in that it would be a business engaged in dining entertainment. Norman asked if the DDA should have a formal notification to Ada Village General Store that rescinds our approval based on the denial. Harrison agreed the DDA should have a formal action rescinding our support to make it clear in the record. Leisman stated part of that could be Jim or Julius confirming that the applicant is not appealing further.

Wright stated the DDA needs to set high level guidelines to be used in the future when a request comes before us to make a determination who should receive a liquor license. Norman agreed with the idea of guidelines. Suchy will work with Ferro to put something together before the January meeting.

### **E. DDA FINANCIAL REPORT, 11/30/20**

Ferro stated there has been very little financial activity with the DDA.

Idema shared a concern about the Farmer's Market and what vendors will be returning. Idema stated they did lose money this year and wondered if Jennie has plans how to "beef it up" for next season. Ferro said he spoke with Jennie and plan on her coming to the DDA Board Meeting in January. She typically does an annual report on the past market season and presents a proposed budget for the following year.

### **V. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT**

Norman stated the Christmas decorations look lovely and when you go through the Village when it's dark, it really does look festive!

Norman asked a procedural question; did George Haga automatically resign from DDA when he retired and

does DDA need to appoint Ross Leisman. Ferro stated by statute the Chief Elected Official is a member of the DDA Board. The DDA Board welcomed Ross aboard and thanked George for the past years.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT - none**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Idema, supported by Coe, to adjourn meeting at 9:26 a.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

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Devin Norman, Secretary

rs:eb