

The Special Meeting for September 10, 2020 of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board was called to order by Doug Roch at 9:02 am in a virtual meeting on Zoom.

Roll Call

Present: Boardmembers J.V. Peacock, Pete Rahm, Doug Roch, Chad Gradowski, Jodi Sullivan, Dee Dee Duhn

Absent – Mayor, Lou O’Donnell; Chair, Robert Kemper, Joe Lindsay

Motion by Duhn, seconded by Peacock to excuse Mayor, Lou O’Donnell, Chair, Robert Kemper and Joe Lindsay from the meeting. Roll call vote, motion carried, 6-0.

Staff present: City Manager, David Richards; City Clerk, Amy Fidler; Deputy Clerk, Nancy Griffin.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Rahm, seconded by Gradowski to approve the agenda. Roll call vote, motion carried, 6-0.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Motion by Peacock, seconded by Roch to approve the minutes of June 18, 2020 and July 9, 2020. Roll call vote, motion carried, 5-0. Duhn abstained – not at June meeting.

Public comment

Peg Kohring representing Neighbor by Neighbor inquired about using the property behind the old hardware store for workforce housing. She also wanted advice on what is expected in a proposal and the process of submitting a proposal. Roch and the City Manager responded they would review the proposal, including drawings, make suggestions and recommendations to be submitted to the Planning Commission. Ms. Kohring was also informed the City provides the application and the process takes 2-3 months.

New Business

- Landscape Replacement on N. Whittaker Street
City Manager Richards provided an overview of the planters in the City, some plants are thriving, some didn’t take and some were trampled by the public. The quote of \$9,384.41 from Nature’s Way is to replenish the plant beds to make them more plush. The City Manager would like a plan for the future so the City can budget for the planters. The plants that didn’t take are being replaced free of charge by Nature’s Way. Abonmarche witnessed the public’s traffic pattern and their treatment of the plant beds and are suggesting boulders and stone blockages, totaling

approximately \$1000, to stop people from walking through the beds. Abonmarche assures the cost to replenish the beds in the future will be less than \$9000 every two years.

Old Business

- **Communication** – Joe Lindsay, Pete Rahm

None

- **Community Outreach** – Dee Dee Duhn, Jodi Sullivan

Duhn sent a request to the NBBA regarding their plans. No response was received.

Duhn is looking for events from the NBBA that will help the businesses downtown. The NBBA did implement the drive-up Farmer's Market on Fridays. Duhn's opinion is the Farmer's Market did not benefit the downtown businesses.

- **Operations** – Robert Kemper

None

- **Economic Development** – Doug Roch, Chad Gradowski, J.V. Peacock

AT&T – City Manager Richards reached out to AT&T in August regarding coverage in the City. No response was received from AT&T. The City Manager explained the project is to add a data collection cell system to channel computer traffic through the cells instead of the existing cell phone repeaters. The project is not to add cell phone repeaters. It is presumed the data collection cells will improve the cell phone performance in the City. Member Rahm is curious if AT&T is waiting on more cell towers and reported there is a new tower at Grand Beach.

The City Manager will confirm the following:

- Is AT&T coordinating cell towers with data collection?
- Invite AT&T to attend a DDA meeting to explain data collection and cell repeaters.

Car chargers in downtown area?

Tony McGhee from Abonmarche informed there is a company called Hageauto.com that installs electric car charger (EV) stations at no cost to the City with a 90/10 split of the profits. Member Roch remarked it is important to include EV stations but would like them located further from downtown.

- Per the City Manager, a proposal from Hageauto is needed then it can be taken to the Planning Commission and then to City Council.
- Tony McGhee to present at the next DDA meeting.

New Businesses in town.

New Buffalo Art Gallery open next to Customs Imports.

The Harbor Grand scheduled to reopen November 1, 2020.

Old Hardware store building is in process of selling with a closing expected in December 2020 with a retail space in the front section and a family business in the back section.

Member Comments

Member Duhn, requested an update on the old Drug Store space. Member Roch responded that Dave Workman reached out to the DDA for funding to which member Roch informed Mr. Workman the DDA does not have funds available.

Member Roch stated there has been a dramatic improvement to the road flooding on N. Whittaker since July 4th.

Adjournment

Motion by Gradowski seconded by Peacock to adjourn the meeting at 9:57 am. Roll call vote, motion carried, 6-0.

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