



MINUTES
DDA BOARD MEETING
8:30 AM - Thursday, January 19, 2023
Back Office Studios - 13 N. Washington St.

1. CALL TO ORDER (8:36am)

2. ROLL CALL

PATTON DOYLE (C)	P	KAYIA HINTON	P
YLONDIA PORTIS	P	ANDY FRENCH (V)	P
DIETER OTTO	P	JEN EASTRIDGE	A
PAUL AJLOUNY	P	BRYAN FOLEY	A
MALISSA GILLETT	P	JOE RITCHIE	P
VALORY BROWN	P	NICOLE BROWN	P

Staff Present: Christopher Jacobs, Elize Jekabson

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

Andy French motioned to approve the agenda. Kayia Hinton supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Andy French motioned to approve the December 15th, 2022 Board Meeting minutes and Joe Ritchie supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES EACH) - none.

6. STAFF REPORT/FINANCIAL REPORT Christopher Jacobs attended a Town and Gown event held by EMU last night. The DDA has been receiving positive press in regards to changes Downtown. Staff asked for a conversation about a letter of support for 705 W. Cross.

Motion by Paul Ajlouny to add Letter of Support conversation for 705 W. Cross to proposed business. Andy French supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

7. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

7.1. Operations and Finance Committee

Andy French gave highlights of the committee meeting. They approved their calendar, and had a conversation considering moving away from the City for finance services.

Staff explained difficulties with changing financial services.

Andy French stated that we should be using an accrual basis accounting system.

In the meantime, staff can put together financial reports that are better to read.

They discussed YCUA construction and 2023 budgets in detail at the committee

Ylondia Portis requested a written document that outlines the benefit and relationship to the City. The board needs to understand trade-offs.

Andy French requested best practices for finances in traditional DDAs.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. 2023 DDA Board Meeting Schedule

Motion to approve the 2023 Meeting Schedule by Dieter Otto, Supported by Joe Ritchie. Motion passed- unanimous.

8.2. Holiday Storefront Competition Summary 2022

Staff discussed outcomes of the Holiday Storefront Competition. The amount of votes were similar to last year. Staff noticed that the majority of votes are cast within the first few days of program launch, and the amount of voting days did not increase votes. Next year, there should be a larger initial push. Kayia Hinton asked for more time for the business owners to prepare. Staff stated that the business owners had two months to prepare unlike last year, but maybe it would be helpful to push the voting day to a week into December so businesses have more time after Thanksgiving to install.

Ylondia Portis asked about businesses that cannot provide gift cards. Staff discussed three options for prizes for businesses who do not have a gift card element to their business, but is open for more suggestions. Ylondia stated that we should revisit inclusive gifts.

8.3. Bicentennial Banners and Billboard Call for Artists

The DDA is no longer considering the banners for a call for art.

Staff has spoken to the Arts Commission and decided to create a panel for judging the artwork including members of all three groups.

Andy French has concerns over footing the entire bill for the billboard and banners if bicentennial can raise the funds themselves, but supports supporting the project in some way.

Joe Ritchie motioned to initially support the Bicentennial Billboard project with consent and use of the billboard space provided by the DDA. Malissa Gillett supported the motion. Motion passed- unanimous.

8.4. 2023 Budget Brainstorming for Districts

The board reviewed the DDA's 2023 goals. They discussed streetscape beautification and its process, and possibly revisiting the bylaws to expand board membership specifically for under represented districts.

Main Street is holding meetings for board members. Board was invited to attend the meetings.

8.5. Special Event Sponsorship - Proposed Changes

Paul Ajlouny brought up a concern about the transition and new events not knowing about the change. Staff suggested allocating a certain percentage of funding for new events for the first year, or offering two sponsorship openings.

Ylondia Portis suggested identifying partnerships for events to fill in gaps in types of programming.

The Board discussed using a rubric for long term events.

Ylondia Portis motioned to accept the special event sponsorship application period, and for staff to create a scoring rubric for the application. The board reserves the right to allocate a portion of the funding for new events during the transition year. Malissa Gillett supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

Andy French asked for Depot Town to lower the sponsorship amount to 6,000 and to not dip into TIF funds. The other \$4,000 should be placed back into facade and rehab grants.

8.6. 2023 Landscaping RFP

The board reviewed the RFP.

Patton Doyle asked for a detailed map to be required from contractors.

Ylondia Portis asked staff if there can be some extra time for the board to review and make suggestions after this meeting.

Andy French motioned to approve staff to move forward with an RFP for Landscaping services. Dieter Otto supported the motion. Motion passed- unanimous.

8.7. DDA Staff Evaluations

The board compiled and shared staff reviews for both Christopher Jacobs and Elize Jekabson and provided positive feedback to both employees.

The board discussed staff bonuses. Last year, staff experienced a lot of stress getting the city to approve and pay out the bonus paid for by the DDA. The bonuses had to go through a budget amended that needed to be approved by City Council. DDA board members found this unnecessary and inappropriate, and budgeted for the bonuses this year to avoid these same issues. The budget had already been approved by the council.

The city has stated to the director that these bonuses would still need to go before council.

Ylondia Portis stressed that there should be a conversation between the City and DDA clearing up any logistical complications before this gets brought to staff review.

Andy French stated that because we budgeted for this, we should be able to pay it out just like any other expense the DDA ever pays out. Staff should not be dragged through this again.

The board called for an executive meeting with the city manager.

Andy French said that regardless, the board should approve and commit to the bonus amount, and deal with logistics on the back end.

Andy French motioned to approve a \$10,000 bonus for Christopher Jacobs, and a \$6,000 bonus for Elize Jekabson, and to have a conversation with the City Manager on how to best move forward. Joe Ritchie supported the motion.

Kayia Hinton asked why the bonuses were not equal.

Andy French explained that the bonuses are based on staff positions and wages. It is regular practice in the industry.

Kayia Hinton stated that just because its regular practice does not mean it is right and we are thanking staff for doing an exceptional job given their job descriptions. It shouldn't be based on because one's job is initially paid more or more important.

Ylondia Portis stated that she will not vote yes today because it sets the DDA up for the toxic situation staff went through last year.

Ylondia Portis motioned to table this item to the next meeting. Kayia Hinton supported the motion. Yes: 5 (Otto, Portis, Gillett, Hinton, Patton); No: 4 (Ajlouny, French, Ritchie, N. Brown); Abstained: 1 (V. Brown). Motion Carries.

Ylondia Portis motioned for the DDA Executive committee to meet with the City Manager to resolve issues pertaining to DDA staff bonuses, and to draft a rationale for the process and how the bonus amounts are decided on. Malissa Gillett supported the motion.

Kayia Hinton reiterated her concern for different bonuses for the same amount of appreciation.

Andy French reiterated that it is based on the job.

Valory Brown stated her rationale for abstaining. Gifts vs. role based bonuses. She stressed that we are trying to solve a problem we are creating.

Nicole Brown agreed that if these bonuses are based on performance over appreciation, the evaluation should be different.

Staff reminded the board that labeling a bonus as a gift can cause unintended issues.

Nicole Brown offered a friendly amendment, that she be included in this meeting as Mayor.

Ylondia Portis and Malissa Gillett accepted the friendly amendment. Motion passed - unanimous.

9. PROPOSED BUSINESS

9.1 - Resolution to support 705 W. Cross

Staff informed the board that 705 W. Cross was denied its marijuana permit by the City on the basis that their work was not complete by a certain deadline.

Because the DDA supported this project through the facade and rehab grant last month, and encouraged this project to move forward, staff feels it is right and appropriate to send a letter of support 705 W. Cross on their appeal. They are within weeks of completing the work, and Wurst Bar has been a staple in the W. Cross district. Losing this appeal could mean losing the proposed establishment, as well as Wurst Bar.

Ylondia Portis motioned to support a resolution to write a letter in support of 705 W. Cross in its appeal to the City from the DDA. Kayia Hinton supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

Other Updates and Comments:

Joe Meyers shared that 300 W Michigan is back on the tax rolls with a \$70,000 revenue increase Downtown. UofM Medicine will be occupying the first three floors of the building.

Kayia Hinton asked for the city to look into the Deja Vu handing out alcohol to the folks on the street during the cleanup of their space. It is heightening the issues already on that corner.

10. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Jose Figueroa - Spark East Account Manager - Introduced himself and thanked the DDA for their work.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 10:50am by Ylondia Portis, supported by Dieter Otto. Motion passed - unanimous.