



MINUTES
 DDA SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
 8:30 AM - Thursday, October 17, 2024
 Back Office Studio - 13 N. Washington

1. CALL TO ORDER (8:33am)

2. ROLL CALL

PATTON DOYLE	P	KAYIA HINTON	A
YLONDIA PORTIS (C)	P	ANDY FRENCH	P
DIETER OTTO	A	PAUL AJLOUNY (V)	P
VALORY BROWN	A (online)	NICOLE BROWN	P
BRIAN JONES-CHANCE	P (8:48am)	BRYAN FOLEY	A
GERRY KREINER	P	COLLEEN KENNEDY	P
EMMY MAURER	P		

Staff Present: DDA: Elize Jekabson, Danya Youssef-Agha City: Andrew Hellenga

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

Patton Doyle motioned to approve the agenda. Gerry Kreiner supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. 9-19-24 DDA Board Minutes

Paul Ajlouny motioned to approve the minutes. Nicole Brown supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES EACH) -

No public comments

6. FINANCIAL / STAFF REPORT

A. Financial Report

Page 18 has all expenses from the last month for board members to review and if they have any specific questions.

Patton Doyle questioned with Fishbeck contract how new spending policy works for expansion of an already existing contract and what did we agree on. Elize would bring expansion of an already existing contract to the board.

Andy French asked if there would be a reserve of \$550,000 in the downtown budget based off of page 10 on the packet. Ylondia mentioned this opens up ideas for downtown.

B. Staff Report

Update on our website and working on getting the new website launched. Open hours for DDA is 9-12 at The Deep End Cafe. Freak Fest was a huge success with business downtown. IGA was approved at the last city council meeting. ExploreYpsi cards were all distributed to the students and are being used everyday. Freighthouse Plaza designs are all set and need to be approved by board. Dec 6th - Ypsi walk

through with stakeholders for success stories, vacancies, and gets people interested in doing development projects.

RAP grant was announced and Elize is going to informational sessions. We will be applying for the grant for the Freighthouse Plaza

New businesses: Beara Bakes, Tanduri Korner, Cold Comfort

Businesses closing: Bobcat Bonnies

Elize welcomed Colleen Kennedy to the board as the new member. Colleen is in real estate and is located inside the same building as Cold Comfort, and Beara Bakes. Colleen is a resident in the city located in ward 3.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Operations and Finance Committee

Emmy presented on committee. Went over the Campfire App proposition and board denial based on lack of experience and customers.

LAITR proposal was approved to be reviewed with the board. Excited for this since it can be tailored to our needs

Freighthouse redesign needs funds other than TIF and bonding money and talked about opportunities to get funding.

Holifest budget was approved

Proposed business:

Ballard st lot cannot be bonded, but Elize did find designs which will save cost.

B. Committee for Equitable Inclusion

Ylondia updated the board at the last meeting. We did meet to talk about our roundtable discussion for next week. Talked about the campus area and how we can get more people there, and discussed creating an affinity group with business owners in that area to get more focus on that area.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. LAITR - Proposal For Services

Elize gave a brief overview on LAITR. They are looking to expand their services and Elize mentioned they received a lot of letters of support with LAITR having a lot of success in Ypsilanti Township.

Ariana Gonzalez presented for LAITR:

Went over LAITR services and how they got started by working in the Washtenaw County Jail. Went over beautification services they offer and how it makes a positive impact for the employees and the city.

With returning citizens having a difficult time getting jobs - LAITR helps people get back on their feet. The pilot program in the Township is going well, and they have just signed a year contract. Most of their clients live in Ypsilanti and members are excited to give back to a city they live in.

Ariana went over services such as litter, snow removal, sticker removal in the Downtown, Depot Town, and W. Cross St. The Depot Town hours will mostly focus on Riverside Park and Frog Island. In the winter LAITR will focus on ADA curb cuts. The hours are flexible with LAITR if there are weeks or months so if we need to scale back we can if there is less work during winter months.

The pilot program we would be signing would be for a one year program. We pay the program 50 dollars an hour. Their employees get paid \$18 an hour. LAITR is increasing employee pay to \$19 an hour with an expected upgrade to \$21 an hour in the summer months. So they are increasing wages for their employees as they get their foundation built. We will be paying LAITR in monthly payments.

Brian Jones Chance motioned to approve the proposal from LAITR. Andy French supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

B. Informational - Bonding Process

Elize reached out to financial councils of the city to get an idea of what it would look like to bond out for \$850,000 or \$1,000,000. Estimates for cost Freighthouse plaza is \$2.6 million, so we need to find outside sources of funding. Bonding for the freighthouse from the Depot Town TIF would tie up all funds for the next 15 years. We need to look at the full costs of the project and see where we can cut down costs. We can't do over a 15 year bond because we only have 15 years left in our TIF and we cannot bond over the years left in TIF.

Elize would like the board to put together a subcommittee for funding for the Freighthouse plaza.

Brian Jones Chance said he would like to see us find funding from outside sources especially since use of life might be less than the bonding length. Brian would like us to consider ongoing maintenance cost when we look at the budget.

Patton Doyle moved to approve a subcommittee to review financial costs. Brian Jones Chance seconded the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

Ylondia appointed the subcommittee board for review of the financial costs for the Freighthouse:

- Brian Jones Chance
- Andy French
- Gerry Kreiner

C. 2024 Downtown Holifest

Elize went over the Holifest plans in downtown. Holifest budget includes carolers, santa, sound system for Christmas music, wrapping stations, and commercials and billboards for the event. Budget for three days including everything is \$14,825

Floor is open for discussion -

Brian Jones Chance asked what type of benefit this brings to the businesses in downtown. Danya went over the feedback they got from business owners downtown from last year. Everyone had really positive feedback. The other concern Brian brought up was tax money spending on religious holidays so prompted that we keep the event away from religious naming.

Andy would like to see tracking information if we can find a way to compare how much Holifest makes an impact on the businesses. Might not be possible to compare from last year, but this year we could set up a baseline for tracking for next year.

Patton Doyle motioned to approve the Holifest budget. Nicole Brown Seconded. Motion passes - 1 no by Brian Jones Chance

9. PROPOSED BUSINESS

10:30 - 11:00 is an informational meeting that is required by DDA law

Andy wants to recognize how much the board and Elize have been able to move forward with with the new budget approval system.

Open discussion on Ballard St - Ylondia would like to see this as a line item for the next meeting

10. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES)

Andrew, mayor, and Chief of police will be here for the next board meeting to review safety plans for downtown.

11. ADJOURNMENT - 10:06 PM