

CITY OF HARBOR SPRINGS
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
AND PRINCIPAL SHOPPING DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 6, 2017

Chairman Mossburg called the Downtown Development Authority (DDA/PSD) to order at 8:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 160 Zoll Street, Harbor Springs, MI 49740.

1. Roll Call and Verification of Quorum

Present: Kathie Breighner, Bill Brown, Matt Clarke, Mary Ellen Hughes, Cece Johnston, Rob Mossburg

Absent: Josh Baker, Jeff Graham, Jeff James

Also present: City Manager Tom Richards, DDA/PSD Administrator Rachel Smolinski, Deputy Clerk Michelle Main, and Harbor Springs Area Chamber of Commerce Director Georgia Abbott

Deputy Clerk Main acknowledged that a quorum was present.

2. Approval of Minutes

The March 2, 2017 DDA/PSD Board Meeting Minutes were presented, Member Johnston suggested the following corrections;

- The addition of the word “be” after “will now” in the first sentence of item 6, A, iii, on page 3
- The addition of the word “a” after “the event is” in the second sentence of item 7 on page 4.

Upon agreement of the suggested corrections, a motion was made to approve the minutes.

Motion by Hughes, second by Clarke, to approve the March 2, 2017, regular DDA / PSD Board Meeting minutes, as amended.

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Absent - Josh Baker, Jeff Graham, Jeff James

Motion carried.

3. Financials and Compliance

City Clerk Nick Whitaker presented a brief financial summary detailing the trial balance, where the DDA stands financially after the first quarter of 2016, cash on hand from special assessments, and expenses paid to the DDA Administrator and Corbin Design Services for the Wayfinding project.

Clerk Whitaker also presented a Public Notice summarizing TIF funding in 2016, funds received through special assessment, bond debts, expenses, and initial taxable value.

4. Presentation

Administrator Smolinski introduced Harold Love, Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services Coordinator. Love provided an overview of his role with the organization and what other organizations he partners with, including Networks Northwest, which is their umbrella organization. Love also indicated that his colleague, George Peet, is the City's point of contact for addressing employment needs and issues. Love presented his findings on, and suggestions for dealing with workforce shortages and workforce retention in the area, which was his purpose for coming to speak to the DDA today. Love stated that one of the issues contributing to workforce shortages in the area in the last few years is the lack of affordable housing, which is the bottleneck of growth in our area, further stating that affordable housing is scarce. Love explained that his goal, and that of his partner organizations, is to try to knit together the surrounding communities and their representatives to establish a regional focus on this issue. Love also presented materials and sited a variety of useful online tools and resources.

Administrator Smolinski discussed her role in the affordable housing issue and stated that the community needed to look closely at taking those first steps on the issue in order to keep local businesses vital. Love further stating that this needs to be a collaborative effort between local government, business owners, and community members. Further discussion was had about workforce issues such as transportation infrastructure, and the fact that the economics in the City are not conducive to lower income housing.

5. Administrator's Report

A. Administrators current activities

Administrator Smolinski gave a brief summary of her current activities in the following areas:

- i. Attendance at Harbor Springs Chamber of Commerce business roundtables as well as a business forum held in Pellston hosted by Northern Lakes Economic Alliance,
- ii. Recent discussions with Downtown Petoskey Director, Becky Goodman, about the idea of a micro façade program and the differences in the way parking is structured here in the City and in the City of Petoskey; and

iii. TIF compliance and reporting requirements

B. Committees

i. Wayfinding

Administrator Smolinski reviewed the current status of the wayfinding project stating that the Committee has been very active and that the design phase is now underway after completion of the documentation phase. The design phase should be finalized in the next week, and the Committee anticipates having something to present at the May DDA meeting. Discussion followed about an estimated cost, which will be determined by the design elements. Administrator Smolinski also stated that based on the cost estimate, the Committee may need to look into a “phase in” plan to spread out that cost.

ii. Third Street

Third Street Committee Chair, Tim Knapp, stated that he continues to work on the Holiday Lighting project on Third Street further stating that the health of one of the trees is poor and it needs to be removed. Discussion followed about the process of tree removal and who is responsible for the removal. City Manager Richards reviewed the process for tree removal and how the City makes the determination of what needs to be removed and when.

iii. Waterfront

City Manager Richards stated that the focus of the waterfront continues to be on grant funding for the development of the Harbormaster area, which initially began approximately two and a half years ago. The five year recreation plan was adopted by Council, accepted by DNR Waterways Commission, and a grant application was filed at the end of March. City Manager Richards further explained that it is unclear what type of funding, if any, could result from the grant application, and that the DNR seems to favor new marinas and expansion, not the refurbishment of existing buildings and grounds improvement. If any funding is received it could take up to two years and the City might be better off looking at different funding methods such as local fundraising and private donations. City Manager Richards discussed the dredging funding that was received in the past and how there are often strict requirements and criteria that have been difficult for the City to agree to.

Further discussed were the top needs relative to the waterfront. Administrator Smolinski stated that it might be in our best interest to look at private donations for the waterfront plan and that it wouldn't hurt to explore that option while waiting on any grant funding. It was suggested that this option be explored at future meetings.

iv. Administrative

Administrator Smolinski stated that both the TIF plan and DDA plan renewals are coming due and will need to be re-addressed, which she is working on, in addition to the need to set the priorities for the coming years. These items will be addressed at the May and June DDA meetings.

6. Old Business

Mayor Brown stated that the need for consistency relative to attendance policy across all of the City's Boards and Commissions needs to be addressed and executed. City Manager Richards stated that at the last meeting the board discussed the proposed language and that he is currently in discussions with City Attorney Jim Ramer to determine the appropriate way to update the bylaws. This will be addressed fully at the next meeting.

7. New Business

A. Downtown Lighting

City Manager Richards stated that a few requests have been received suggesting the City explore the idea of leaving the holiday lighting up year-round and the idea was discussed at the last City Council Meeting. Council determined that the suggested idea be discussed at DDA and Chamber of Commerce meetings and that a decision be made in a timely manner on whether or not a trial period is desired. Discussion followed about the types of trees the lighting is installed on, how the foliage differs in the summer versus in the winter, the electric infrastructure, how the lighting is funded, and the consideration of a trial period. The Board, by consensus, determined that the lighting come down for the season and that no trial period of year-round lighting be considered.

B. Update on LTBB Odawa Lawsuit

City Manager Richards provided an overview of the pending lawsuit against the Governor and the State of Michigan which revolves around the interpretation of the agreements made between 1830 and 1855 related to property in the Western half of Emmet County down to the river in Charlevoix. The outcome of the lawsuit could result in the Odawa tribe having jurisdiction over Native American's, their properties, and businesses, resulting in their control over regulation or laws applying to Native Americans in that area. City Manager Richards further stated that the City of Harbor Springs, City of Petoskey, Emmet & Charlevoix Counties have intervened and have hired one Attorney to represent their interests. That attorney, David Otis of Plunkett & Cooney will be speaking at two upcoming meetings, first at the Emmet County Board of Commissioners on Monday, April 10, 2017, and then at the City of Harbor Springs City Council Meeting on Monday, May 15, 2017.

C. Off Street Parking Requirement (action required)

City Manager Richards presented a written briefing and reviewed his recent discussions with Council relative to the City's off-street parking requirements for local businesses, which have been at issue for many years. The parking requirements have not generated any revenue for the City or the DDA, no new parking has been developed, and ultimately has resulted in a negative impact on the development of the downtown district. Mayor Brown stated that Council recently voted to act now, and recommended that the City abolish the parking requirements because they simply aren't working. Chamber Director Abbot stated that parking is revenue generating potential and the alternatives should be studied. City Manager Richards recommended that we clarify that any decision made by the DDA would simply be a recommendation to the Planning Commission. Chairman Mossburg entertained a motion to make that recommendation.

Motion by Hughes, second by Breighner, to recommend to the Planning Commission that the current off-street parking requirements be abolished.

Ayes - 6

Nays - 0

Absent - Josh Baker, Jeff Graham, Jeff James

Motion carried.


8. Public Comment

HARBOR, Inc. representative, Bill Mulder, spoke about an upcoming grass roots effort to establish a new meet-up group called New In Town. The event, will be hosted by Rachel Smolinski, Michelle Main, and himself, and will be held at The Pier this evening from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Mulder explained that event is yet another meet-up event conceptualized by Administrator Smolinski and himself in an effort to bring together individuals that may be new to the area looking to network with other individuals in an effort to gain some insight into the area.

9. Adjournment

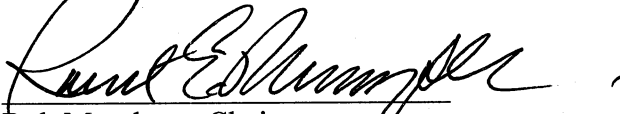
Chairman Mossburg stated that the next meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2017. Administrator Smolinski asked the board to consider moving the date of that meeting due to a Chamber of Commerce event being held that morning. Chamber Director Abbott stated that the Chamber event being held on May 4th is an inaugural business summit for Chamber Members. By consensus, the board agreed that the May 4th meeting be moved to May 3rd at 8:00 a.m.

With no further business, Chairman Mossburg adjourned the meeting at 9:34 a.m.



Thomas C. Richards, Secretary

Approved: May 3, 2017



Rob Mossburg, Chairperson