

City of Ypsilanti
Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 16, 2019 – 8:30 a.m.
Minutes

The **Mission** of the Ypsilanti Downtown Development Authority (YDDA) is to undertake district-wide improvements that have the greatest impact in strengthening the downtown areas and attracting new business. The primary goal of the YDDA is to implement positive economic, physical, aesthetic, and community changes in each of our four districts.

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Beth Bashert	P	Ylondia Portis	P
Kayia Robinson	A	Andrew O’Neal	A
Janette Rook	P	Danielle Milner	A
Andy French	P	Ben Harrington (C)	P
Dieter Otto	P	Jen Eastridge	P

III. Introductions

Paula brown corner health

IV. Approval of Agenda (X)*

- Dieter Otto motioned to approve the agenda and Andy French supported the motion. The committee approved the agenda. Motion Carried.

V. Approval of April 18, 2019 Minutes (X)*

- Andy French motioned to approve the April 18, 2019 meeting minutes and Jen Eastridge supported the motion. Motion carried.

Audience Participation (3 minutes each)

Paula is here for Corner health Center. They want to be involved in community events and be informed.

VI. Staff Report/Financial Report (X)

Staff updated the board about Ypsi Cleanup Day, Tech talent development, depot town plaza lights, downtown ambassadors that start work in July.

VII. Standing Committee Reports

- **Operations and Finance Committee (X)***

Rice street - Sidewalk Conditions

The sidewalk conditions on Rice Street from Cross Street all the way to the parking lot is deplorable. 734 Brewery has taken a lot of initiative to find contractors and quotes to fix the problem, but the building owner does not seem interested in the project. This is a gateway into the community, and it could cause serious injury to a bicyclist or pedestrian. The question is, should the DDA be spending money fixing sidewalks that businesses are currently required to fix.

Andy French stated that this may cause other building owners distress, as they have been responsible for maintaining their sidewalks in the past.

Beth Bashert stated that it is a catch 22. The City's budget for sidewalks is completely devoted to paying entirely for curb cuts because of a ADA lawsuit. They cannot help pay for sidewalks at this time.

Ylondia Portis pointed out that it was in the DDA's vision for safe walkable cities. Infrastructure repair is paired with equity.

Dieter Otto asked to make assessments. Rice street needs to be accessible.

Jen Eastridge asked if businesses be responsible for the frontage, but can the DDA help with areas to the side of the store frontage for a complete project?

Ylondia Portis asked if the DDA can consider grants to cover such cost.

Landscaping addendum-

Staff is interested in removing existing metal tree grates in the Downtown areas and fixing those up. The cost to replace the trees that are currently missing are around about \$7500 per tree with new tree grates.

Beth Bashert asked staff to consider tree diversity.

Andy French asked that if they were to make a motion, how do they reconcile the budget?

Christopher will do the numbers and report back. It could be worked out from flower budget.

Ben Harrington would support the motion as it's tangible, and it's needed.

Andy French wants to make sure that the DDA is not going under reserves, and wants to see the budget amended.

Andy French motioned to approve the landscaping addendum, and Jen Eastridge supported the motion. Motion passed- unanimous.

- **Marketing Committee**

Depot Town Signage-

Ylondia Portis presented the Depot Town signage project. Designs are ready to go into production.

Andy French motioned to approve the Depot Town Signage design, and to move into production and installation. Dieter Otto supported the motion. Motion passed - unanimous.

Incentives brochure-

Staff give the board a look at an incentives brochure they've been working on for newcomers to the city.

Andy French suggested to have banks refer to this information. Most new businesses have their first conversations will be with their bank. It would also be good to enter CBO language and * anything that may trigger CBO.

- **Grants Committee**

Grant eligibility-

The grants committee asked the board to review grant eligibility for non-profits. They are an important part of the community but do not contribute to the TIF capture.

Ben Harrington stated that he doesn't see a bylaw conflict.

Dieter Otto drew the analogy of a neighbor not mowing their lawn -it brings down the area, and the neighboring buildings.

Beth Bashert stated that if the DDA passes up a project that is bringing down a community, who are helping we helping?

Andy French suggested to include non-profit status on the scoring process.

VIII. Old Business

V New Business

Maple Street lot-

Christopher Jacobs reported that Operations and Finance Committee are unanimous on monetizing that lot. Either the DDA can hold off until the parking strategy is implemented, or they can get ahead of the Thompson Block and start collecting parking money for further parking improvements.

Beth Bashert stated that the DDA should know timelines for first low hanging fruit, and asked that the DDA wait until the city has more information about next steps.

Andy French is concerned about the timeline.

RAC negotiations-

Ben Harrington updated the board about the current negotiations.

Staff has had the building appraised.

Beth Bashert is worried about conflicts of interests of the current negotiating team, and wants to rethink who will be at this table.

Beth Bashert offered to sit on the new negotiating team.

Beth Bashert motioned that the chair of the DDA create a committee to engage negotiations with Riverside Arts Center. Janette Rook supported the motion. Motion passed -- unanimous.

VI. Proposed Business

Staff Updates

Announcements/Comments

Public Participation:

Paula of Corner Health Center thanked the DDA board for considering the work of nonprofits in this community, and including them in the grants eligibility.

Next Meeting: June 20, 8:30 a.m., Spark East

I.

II. Key: (*) = items requiring Board action (X) = documents attached in board packet