

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WHICH TOOK PLACE ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2008
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, MIDLAND, MICHIGAN

Denise Hufford read Roll Call.

PRESENT: DDA MEMBERS – Jenny Anderson, Bo Brines, Mike Hayes, Jon Lynch, Jack McCandless, Marty McGuire, Ranny Riecker, Mark Ruhle, Jim Stamas, Claudia Wallin

ABSENT: Father Fleming, Paula Liveris, Sue Rabbage

PRESENT: STAFF – Denise Hufford, Keith Baker, Margaret Maday, Stephanie Szostak

PRESENT: OTHERS – John Palen (Midland Issues), Cheryl Wade (Midland Daily News), Neil Hershfield (Dow Chemical Company)

Wallin called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Wallin thanked outgoing Board Member, Doug Chapman for his 22 years of service on the DDA Board. He was the DDA chair for a number of years along with serving as the Design Committee Chair. He was instrumental in the beautification of Downtown. We greatly appreciate his service.

Wallin welcomed Marty McGuire, Director of the Dow Gardens, as our new Board member. Marty has been with Dow Gardens for about 9 months and mentioned the long history Dow Gardens and Downtown Midland has enjoyed.

1. Approval of past meeting minutes

Motion to approve the February 13, 2008 meeting minutes by Hayes. Seconded by McCandless. Approved unanimously.

2. Financial Reports for February 2008

Maday presented the February 2008 financial statement. Motion to approve financials by Hayes. Seconded by Ruhle. Approved unanimously.

3. Reports

a) Design Committee

Anderson discussed the recommendation for downtown benches. Design committee decided to use the existing structure with a composite material for the top. The composite has a 50 year warranty. The colors are mink for the bench tops with painted red posts. This will coordinate with the wayfinding signage. This was the most cost effective solution. Lynch was pleased to see the use of the composite material, which will lower maintenance costs. The cost will be from \$36,000-\$47,000. Thank you to Thad Hallberg for his work providing the designs and color combinations. Anderson read the action item.

ACTION ITEM

The Downtown Development Authority Design Committee has decided on a bench design, material, and color for the new downtown Midland benches. There are 97 benches to be replaced. The estimated cost to replace the current benches with new composite material and repaint the posts is \$36,000-\$47,000.

The Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors hereby approves the new bench design, material and color and authorizes the Design Committee to send out Requests for Bid Proposals.

Seconded by Stamas. Approved unanimously.

b) Organization Committee

Baker reported that the interview committee conducted six interviews and the committee agreed on a preferred candidate. There is no announcement at this time as he is still in negotiations with the candidate. He will send out information as soon as it is official.

Wallin discussed the mission statement. All the sub-committees have discussed. The Creating Cool voted to switch the words “Enable” and “Foster”. Open for discussion. Anderson agreed to change the two words, stating that the Design Committee also discussed changing those words, but did not make a formal recommendation to switch. Lynch moved to accept the updated mission statement and Anderson clarified that the Design Committee did not change the statement, but discussed it.

In response to a question from McGuire, Wallin stated that the driving force was the tone of “enable” and thought that “fosters” set a better tone. Anderson agreed that “fosters” seemed more empowering. Hayes discussed the strategic planning debate. Hayes thinks both words are important and both words keep the downtown focused. Stamas thought “fosters” is more action oriented and feels either works. McCandless agreed with Stamas. Lynch recognizes that the mission statement is for consumption by the general public and we need to keep in mind how people will consume the message in the broader community. Both words are almost interchangeable.

Wallin read the Action Item.

ACTION ITEM

The Midland Downtown Development Authority has decided to update its Mission Statement. The new mission statement will be:

The Mission of the Downtown Development Authority is to foster a dynamic downtown environment that enables economic growth.

The Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors hereby approves the new Mission Statement.

Riecker seconded. Approved unanimously.

c) Economic Restructuring Committee

Hayes reported good discussion at the Economic Restructuring meeting. Raymond James Financial is now downtown.

Hayes discussed availability of two properties on Ellsworth. Both houses have been removed and are now available for development. Contact the DDA office if interested.

The H Hotel's restaurants will be opening mid-May to mid-June with a grand opening sometime in fall, 2008.

Hayes discussed retail recruitment downtown. The Economic Restructuring committee would like to work with Sid Allen, president of the Chamber of Commerce to possibly hire a consultant to help downtown recruit retail and business establishments. Budget matters were also discussed.

Hayes reported 7 downtown vacancies for lease and one property for sale.

d) Creating Cool Committee

Wallin reported that the Summer of the Dragons sculpture series has 20 dragons for downtown. Nine sponsorships are still available for \$750 each. Your sponsorship is recognized through October. Please contact the DDA office for more information.

Wallin reported that June will be a very busy month with the dragons, the Great Lakes Loons All Star Games and the Summer Solstice events.

e) Midland Downtown Business Association

None

f) Horticulturist Report

Szostak reported on her 2008 Spring Bulb plans. 12,000 bulbs were planted in the fall. Tulips, daffodils, and grape hyacinths will start coming up once the snow melts. Annual display will be presented at the April meeting.

Szostak reported that Main Street trees were pruned last month. The tree lights had to be taken down for pruning, but they are now back in the trees. Interviews for seasonal crews have begun.

Public Comments

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Adjourn

There was no further business to come before the Board. Riecker moved that the meeting be adjourned. Hayes seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.