



Charter Township of Meridian
Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Rd., Okemos, MI 48864
Monday, June 7, 2021 – Minutes

Members

Present: Susan Fulk (departed 8:10am), Renee Korrey, Bill Cawood, Will Randle, Tom Stanko, and Peter Campbell (joined at 8:02am)

Members

Absent: Scott Weaver, Supervisor Ron Styka, Jim Raynak, and Jim Spanos

Staff

Present: Community Planning & Development Director Tim Schmitt, Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director Amber Clark, and Township Manager Frank L. Walsh

Others

Present: Planning Commissioner Mark Blumer

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Korrey called the meeting to order at 7:32am and read the mission statement.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION BY MEMBER CAWOOD TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER STANKO. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 3, 2021

Member Fulk mentioned that Jim Spanos was not present at the meeting and should be removed from the minutes.

MOTION BY MEMBER FULK TO APPROVE THE AMENDED MINUTES. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAWOOD. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

4. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Monthly Financials

Director Clark reported that the current cash on hand is \$57,320. The DDA mortgage note is \$124,500. So, the total year to date (YTD) is (\$67,198). YTD tax capture is 15,752.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENTS

A. Consumers Energy Bill May 2021

MOTION BY MEMBER STANKO TO APPROVE THE PAYMENTS OF THE MAY 2021 CONSUMERS ENERGY BILL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$109.59. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER RANDLE. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Village of Okemos Update

Member Randle reported he has been meeting with the neighbors and the staff at the Township. There have been changes to the project that are finance centered. Bank are wanting commercial space reduced in projects. Finding retail tenants in this market is proving to be difficult. Removing the 5th floor off all of buildings of project and adding surface parking will save \$4 million on the project. The total residential units proposed was 286 and the new proposal is 200 units. The amended plan includes not building along Okemos Road right now, but building a linear park along Okemos Road. Residential housing along Ardmore that would consist of townhomes on the first two levels and two stories of flats above. Along Hamilton, the building would be mixed use. Douglas J is still planning on being the anchor tenant on the first floor of the building along Hamilton. The choice to build the project this way is driven by economics. Member Randle and staff are working on the amendment to bring forward. This amendment will allow for building to begin in the fall of this year.

Discussion of the DDA's input on the project. Involve the DDA in a collective voice and reaching out to the key stakeholders with Member Randle alongside. Create a subcommittee to create the DDA voice of the project and meet with the local community on the project changes.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Downtown Development Authority Meeting Start Times

Director Clark stated it has been requested to change the meeting start times from 7:30am to 8:00am. Discussion revealed support for the 7:30am start time.

MOTION TO APPROVE ALTERATION OF DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING START TIME TO 8:00AM FOR EVERY REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING. 1-IN FAVOR AND 5-OPPOSED. MOTION IS NOT APPROVED.

B. Downtown Development Authority Loan Forgiveness Letter

Director Clark mentioned the background of the DDA loan. In 2013, a loan agreement was formed by the DDA and Meridian Township Board for \$190,000 for streetlight installations throughout the DDA. 2012 the Township was notified of a tax appeal made by the DDA's largest commercial operator. The tax appeal was approved with a reduction in tax value in 2010 for \$1.2 million, 2011 for \$1.5 million, and over \$2 million in 2012. The DDA as the responsible tax authority then owed this establishment \$84,078.41. At the time the cash on hand was \$ 27,751. To pay the remaining they required additional funding in a loan from the Meridian Township General Fund. The DDA reviewed and discussed a draft loan forgiveness letter.

MOTION BY CHAIR KORREY TO APPROVE THE DDA LOAN FORGIVENESS LETTER WITH EDITS AND SUBMIT TO THE MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP BOARD FOR DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER STANKO. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

9. REPORTS

A. Township Board

Treasurer Deschaine reported the following:

- The Board voted to move forward with the Sparrow rezoning at Jolly and Kansas Road
- Reviewing and approving the Citizen's Survey
- Residents are collecting signatures to put recreational marijuana on the ballot

B. Township Manager

Manager Walsh reported the following:

- Thank you to the DDA for making Mark Kieselbach's retirement party special
- Welcome to Director Schmitt
- 2020 Audit was positive and showed growth in our fund balance to \$10 million
- Assessor is stepping down and working for East Lansing full-time. We have hired Ashley Winstead as the new Assessor beginning on June 28, 2021. She is currently serving as the Assessor for the City of Howell.
- Working on a new building agreement with the City of Mason
- Local road work is underway
- Working on cybersecurity
- Police awards will be on June 24th at 6:00pm at the Marketplace on the Green
- Township is fully re-opened
- Solar program will be underway soon at the Service Center

C. Planning Commission

Planning Commissioner Mark Blumer provided a summary of recent Planning Commission activities.

D. Chair Report

Looking forward to working with Director Clark and the DDA members on external communication regarding the Village of Okemos project changes.

E. Staff Report

Director Schmitt introduced himself. He plans on updating the sign ordinance as one of his first projects.

Director Clark shared that Consumers Energy will be offering two \$250,000 grants to two communities for neighborhood revitalization or arts and culture. The letter of intent is due on June 18, 2021. She is gathering ideas for the grant.

10. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

None.

11. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

12. NEXT MEETING DATE

a. July 12, 2021, 7:30am

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned without objection.