

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13TH, 2024
8:30 A.M., WSCC EDUCATION CENTER
400 RIVER STREET, MEETING ROOM B**

PRESENT: Bruce Allen, Sammie Lukaskiewicz, Karen Goodman, Ben Crowley, Bill Gambill, Tyler Leppanen

ABSENT: Kyle Mosher, Lindsey Swidorski, Deanna Marsh

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Stafford, Nicole Kaminski, Carmen Kott, Sara Herberger, Mayor Pro-Tem James Grabowski

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by the Vice-Chair at 8:30 AM.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Andrew Stafford proposed three amendments to the agenda:

1. Remove *Love Wines, LLC* from the agenda.
2. Add a motion under New Business to approve the 2025 meeting dates.
3. Add a motion under Revolving Loan to approve the transfer of shortfall funds from the general account to the revolving loan account.

MOTION by Bill Gambill second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to approve the amended agenda.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. None.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2024 REGULAR MEETING**

MOTION by Ben Crowley, second by Karen Goodman to approve the minutes from the October 9th, 2024, Regular Meeting.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

5. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Revolving Loan fund balance sheet will be discussed later in the meeting. Spicer Group has completed its façade project and will receive payment in this round. Final payments for the Fall Festival will also be disbursed today.

MOTION by Tyler Leppanen, second by Ben Crowley to approve the October 2024 financials.
Voice vote—Motion approved.

6. **EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

- a. Andrew Stafford provided an executive report update to the board, highlights include:
 - i. The Michigan Downtown Association conference was an informative and valuable experience, with historic preservation being a major topic.
 - ii. Spicer Group is finalizing itemized engineering costs and renderings, which are expected to be available by the December meeting.
 - iii. The RFP from the Northern Hotel will be released for bid soon.
 - iv. This year's façade improvement round is complete, with three applicants receiving recommendations for full funding.

7. REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

a. Facade Grant

i. Facade Grant Ad Hoc Committee Recommendations

i. The Spicer Group has finalized its work for the 2023/2024 grant round and is set to be reimbursed.

ii. Three applications are recommended for approval:

- CC Jewelers: Project Total: \$12,060. DDA Facade contribution: \$6,000.
- Wellnested: Project Total: \$75,000. DDA Facade contribution: \$37,500
- Purple Paintbrush/Clean Lines: Project Total: \$27,644.00. DDA Facade contribution: \$13,822

iii. Two applications were incomplete and unable to receive a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee. Their incompleteness is due to difficulties in obtaining quotes and insufficient design details.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to award the three applicants the full amount requested for the Facade Program.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

ii. Facade Excess Funds

i. Excess funds remain. Options are to let the two applicants submit the missing information for Ad Hoc Committee review or to open another round for all applicants. Karen Goodman and Ben Crowley recommend continuing to work with the current two applicants.

b. Streetscape

i. Spicer is finalizing the numbers, expected by the next meeting. They reviewed unit costs to determine options for expansion or reduction. Renderings provided by Brandon Jenson from Right Side Design are feasible and within a reasonable range. Bill Gambill is optimistic about the progress.

c. Events

i. Event Planner Discussion

- i. The discussion has been tabled, as the necessary parties are not present to move forward. Tyler Leppanen notes there is a significant opportunity for collaboration on this issue, including the possibility of a monthly stipend, and sees value in continuing the conversation in the future.
 - ii. Event Trailer Rental Agreement
 - i. The attorney has reviewed the agreement, and it looks good to go. Sleighbell has requested to use the trailer.
 - iii. Event Trailer Pickup/Drop-off Procedure
 - i. No comments made by the board
 - iv. Street Closure Review Criteria
 - i. The time constraint has been removed, allowing the city to decide on it. Should the DDA need to provide a recommendation, we should receive it with ample time to do so.
 - v. New Procedure for Street Closure
 - i. No further comments.
 - d. Gap Financing - Proposed TIF Plan Addition
 - i. The TIF plan is an important tool to continue improving the downtown area's housing ecosystem. It should be reviewed thoroughly to help create more attractive buildings downtown.
 - ii. Ben Crowley noted that after meeting with Andrew Stafford recently, he is in favor of the program. He questions that currently, the focus is on housing—will it expand to include commercial properties in the future? Bill Gambill believes the plan should be marketed as a housing solution, with the potential for future expansion. Tyler Leppanen noted that the DDA Board has the discretion to limit the scope of the program and that any changes to the TIF plan should align with the organization's overall goals.

MOTION by Ben Crowley, second by Tyler Leppanen to approve the TIF Plan Addition and forward it to City Council.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Revolving Loan Fund
 - i. Venture North Resolution
 - 1. The Venture North Board submitted the resolution to the USDA, committing to take over the fund and use it as originally intended to support entrepreneurship and small businesses.
 - ii. Shortfall amount - Amendment to the agenda, addition of a motion regarding the Shortfall amount.

1. The balance sheet, showing a balance of ~~\$27,985~~ *\$27,850.04 , is included in the board packet for this month. The USDA granted \$29,000 in 2007, with a shortfall of ~~\$1,015~~ *\$1,149.96 and a more recent shortfall of ~~\$1,012~~. The USDA has requested that we cover the shortfall.
 2. The unclear records prior to 2014, due to high DDA director turnover and multiple accounting firms, led to inconsistencies. This prompted the DDA to contract with the Chamber for consistent management.
 3. If the program isn't activated, the USDA will reclaim the funds. Venture North is working on activation and the USDA is only requesting the \$29,000 principal, not the interest.
 4. Sammie Lukaskiewicz has requested that the DDA look into a policy for bad debt.
- iii. Motion to Approve to remove ~~\$27,985~~ *\$27,850.04 from the Revolving Loan Account to Venture North.

MOTION by Tyler Leppanen, second by Ben Crowley to approve a transfer of ~~\$1,012~~ *\$1,149.96 from the general fund account to the revolving loan account and transfer the new total of \$29,000.00 to Venture North.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

b. Shine

- i. No update at this time.

c. Riverwalk

- i. The bid packages have been separated. The electrical bid came in low, while the structural bid was high, there is consideration of rebidding the structural work.
- ii. Regarding the timeline: The EDA would like to see this project completed by next September. The agreement for the North Riverwalk is on the City Council agenda for the 19th.

d. Social District

- i. No significant updates, except for the addition of a new business, The Milwaukee House. There was a lot of discussion at the conference regarding social districts, including granting template rights to businesses, with the designs printed on cups. Some businesses handle all the sticker sourcing themselves.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Ice Melt Skid

- i. The new services agreement has increased the DDA's ownership of materials. Kyle Mosher discussed dissatisfaction with the rock salt used on the sidewalks. We are exploring alternative ice melt options. Under the agreement, the DDA would cover the material costs. The new product is finer, works at lower temperatures, is safer, and more effective. A pallet costs \$900 for 50, 50-pound bags, with a two-year shelf life.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Ben Crowley, to purchase a pallet of ice skid melt.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

b. RFP for Accounting Services

- i. At the request, we have put together an RFP for accounting services and aim to distribute it before tax season. It's important to regularly benchmark accounting firms, as Ben Crowley believes this is essential for us as a public entity.

c. 2025 Meeting Dates Addition to the agenda

MOTION by Ben Crowley, second by Karen Goodman to approve the meeting dates for 2025.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

d. Love Wines Off-Premise Liquor License - Removed from the agenda.

e. Milwaukee House Liquor License

- i. The Milwaukee House is looking to join the social district. The DDA will provide City Council with a recommendation to approve their application.

MOTION by Karen Goodman, second by Ben Crowley, to move forward with the recommendation for the liquor license and to join the social district for Milwaukee House.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

f. West Shore Bank Account

MOTION by Bill Gambill second by Ben Crowley to remove Stacie Bytwork and add Nicole Kaminski to the West Shore Bank DDA Account for check and balance purposes.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

g. Audit Report

- i. We are working closely with the auditors contracted by the city. The draft of the audit is included in the packet. A motion will need to be made to approve and finalize it. There are no major complaints or concerns, just small items to review, including updating the financial policies and getting them approved. There will not be a final presentation on the audit at the next meeting, it will occur at a later date.

MOTION by Bill Gambill, second by Sammie Lukaskiewicz to receive the draft and provide comments by next Friday, November 22, 2024.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

h. DDA Financial Policies

- i. We have not formally adopted financial policies recently; the last adoption was in 2017. These policies should be reviewed annually to assess and make changes if necessary. A process should be developed to evaluate the policies.
- ii. For the next meeting, a list of policies and a review schedule should be provided.

MOTION by Karen Goodman second by Ben Crowley to adopt the presented policies.

Voice vote—Motion approved.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None

11. BOARD COMMENTS

- a. Karen Goodman and Ben Crowley congratulated Carmen Kott on her transition to interim President & CEO

12. ADJOURN

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 11th, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in the WSCC Education Center, 400 River Street. The DDA Special Meeting will follow the Regular Board meeting.

MOTION by Bill Gambill supported by Ben Crowley to adjourn at 9:32AM

Nicole Kaminski
Acting Recording Secretary

Nicole Kaminski