

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/MAIN STREET
CITY OF OTSEGO
OTSEGO CITY HALL
June 13, 2022
7:30 A.M.

A Regular Meeting of the Otsego Downtown Development Authority (D.D.A.)/Main Street Board was held Monday, June 13, 2022.

Chairman Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. with the following members present: Toby Esterline, Olivia Andrade, Marissa Andrus, Sarah Knash, Jason Smith and Stacey Withee. Absent: Ben Pobocik, and Sandy Foster. Also present: City Manager, Aaron Mitchell and Economic Development Director, Dave Rayman.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MINUTES

Member Andrade moved to approve the Regular Minutes of May 9, 2022, seconded by Member Smith. CARRIED

TREASURER'S REPORT

Member Withee moved to accept the May 2022, Treasurer's Report, seconded by Member Esterline. CARRIED.

TEAM LEADER UPDATES

Member Withee, EV Committee – she gave an update on the following: Shop Small Win Big.

Main Street Manager Sweeney, Arts Committee – he gave an update on the following: Artisan Market, Art Thing, Art Garden, and Riverfront painting event in early August.

Chairman Bennett, Design Committee – he gave an update on the following: Pavilions various uses and events.

At this time, City Manager Mitchell asked the DDA Board what they envisioned as the uses for the pavilion. Chairman Bennett commented that at some point a discussion need to take place regarding the uses, he asked that if anyone has ideas or input to contact City Manager Mitchell. At this time, a lengthy discussion took place regarding the following: pricing; security deposit, green space, scheduling, signage, alcohol or no alcohol allowed; if less than a certain amount of people – first come-first serve; reservations, and various uses. City Manager Mitchell stated that he intends to discuss this at the next City Commission Workshop Meeting. Member Knash will gather wedding venue information and report back to the Board.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Main Street Manager Sweeney reported on the following:

1. Main Street Office has moved to City Hall

2. Gus Macker update – Chairman Bennett
3. Vibrancy Grant
4. Art Panels
5. Summer Reading Program
6. Moving Work Plans from Maestro to a spreadsheet
7. He reviewed many of the Work Plans and asked if any Board Members were interested in taking them over.

Member Knash asked if a list of the Work Plans/Spreadsheet could be emailed to the Board, so they could review them.

Chairman Bennett commented that he would like to see the Downtown Dollars Program continue through the DDA. City Manager Mitchell will consult with the City Attorney to see if they can still be offered to downtown business or if they have to be available to any city business who want to participate.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. UPDATE OF MAIN STREET TRANSITION

Main Street Manager Sweeney reported that he had met with Chairman Bennett, Mayor Withee, and City Manager Mitchell to discuss the foundation as to how to continue into an advisory board. The partnership with the City was also discussed.

City Manager Mitchell commented that he would like to see a formal resolution forming the Advisory Board which will be community driven. He asked if the Advisory Board should be called TOP – Together Otsego Prospers. Main Street Manager Sweeney commented that he had called Mark McPherson regarding the use of the TOP name, but did not get a response. Main Street Manager Sweeney commented that he is open to other names also. He stated that if any Board Members had ideas to email them to him as soon as possible.

Member Andrade asked why the name had to be changed, since when a 501C3 is formed it will have a new name. She asked if the 501C3 could be discussed after the meeting is adjourned. City Manager Mitchell stated that a name is needed in the interim, since it can't be called Main Street. Main Street Manager Sweeney commented that a legal structure is needed for the year and a brand-new identity. City Manager Mitchell asked when the transition should take place. He stated there needs to be a point of contact, someone who will answer emails, schedule meetings, etc. Chairman Bennett commented that he would like to see consistent meetings. He commented that he would like to see event fund line items have seed money in them, to continue the events or have new events and not have to ask the City for money. He stated that events have to break even and if they do not make money or have "seed money" they would have to be canceled.

Main Street Manger Sweeney asked if there were any suggestions on a name, and it was the consensus of the Board that they needed more time.

Member Esterline asked if one month was going to be enough transition time or if two months was

more appropriate. City Manager Mitchell commented the sooner the better. Main Street Manager Sweeney commented that is not guaranteed that he will be here until September 1st. He stated that it should take place “as fast as possible”, as he will give only two-weeks’ notice when he finds other employment. Member Knash commented that a line item list should be made with tasks and responsibilities. Main Street Manager Sweeney gave an update on the following: he has started the event spreadsheet; a Promotion Team Leader is needed, Facebook, Branding, etc. City Manager Mitchell commented that volunteers will be needed to assist with some of the functions. Chairman Bennett commented that an Advisory Board should be established sooner than later, at least before November. City Manager Mitchell stated that a formal resolution will need to be presented to the City Commission.

ECONOMIC DIRECTOR REPORT

Economic Development Director Dave Rayman provided a written report.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Andrade gave an overview of her conversations with Denise at the City of Plainwell, and the City of Allegan, who rely on 501C3’s and volunteers for their events. She gave examples of the role of the 501C3 and the volunteers. At this time, a lengthy discussion took place regarding the 501C3 and how volunteers are utilized. She also commented they hold monthly merchant meetings. Member Andrade commented that a 501C3 is the way to go. She asked if anyone would volunteer space to hold the meetings.

Member Andrade commented that the mural project is moving forward and should be completed by the end of the summer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Member Andrade, seconded by Member Withee. 8:57 a.m.

Angela M. Cronen, MMC
City Clerk