

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET,
TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2019.

Chair Fabbri called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm.

Present: Joanne Bennett, Samantha Fabbri, Autum Hunters, Sandy Rabidue, Ken Walters

Absent: Joe Clark

Others present: Secretary John Dantzer, City Manager Heather Grace, PRT Fellow Mary Bickell, and City Council Member Cathy Zimmerman.

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The Board discussed the new Veteran Banner Program and Chairperson Fabbri noted she received a letter from Kelli Collins, who is coordinating the program, asking if the DDA would like to contribute money to help purchase the banner brackets that are used to hang the banners and then the DDA would also be able to use them as well. It was the consensus of the Board to look and see if they could find less expensive brackets and to hold off on the decision to contribute money till they could find out the exact cost of the brackets.

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The Board discussed the reporting requirement for the new DDA law. It was determined that Secretary Dantzer would look into the requirements and get back with the Board on what they needed to do.

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MOTION BY WALTERS, SECOND BY RABIDUE, TO EXCUSE MEMBER CLARK FROM THE MEETING.

Yes – Bennett, Fabbri, Hunter, Rabidue, Walters

No – None

Absent – Clark

Motion carried

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MOTION BY WALTERS, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD DECEMBER 18, 2018.

Yes – Bennett, Fabbri, Hunter, Rabidue, Walters

No – None

Absent – Clark

Motion carried

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MOTION BY FABBRI, SECOND BY BENNETT, TO APPROVE THE CITY OF WEST BRANCH DOWNTOWN MAINTENANCE INVOICE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,488.19.

Yes – Bennett, Fabbri, Hunter, Rabidue, Walters

No – None

Absent – Clark

Motion carried

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Bids were opened for the “Showmobile” mobile stage. The only bid received was from the West Branch Chamber of Commerce

The Board discussed the bid and it was the consensus that the bid was too low to accept. They also discussed the possibility of reposting the sale in more places or making a counter offer.

MOTION BY RABIDUE, SECOND BY WALTERS, TO MAKE A COUNTER OFFER TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,500 AND PUT IT BACK ON THE MARKET IF THE COUNTER OFFER IS REFUSED.

Yes – Bennett, Fabbri, Hunter, Rabidue, Walters

No – None

Absent – Clark

Motion carried

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Chairperson Fabbri reminded everyone of the upcoming joint DDA meeting.

Chairperson Fabbri also noted she received a letter from Kelli Collins asking for a letter of support for the demolition of a blighted downtown building as part of a demolition grant. It was the consensus of the Board to issue a letter of support. It was also noted that part of the grant process was to note some ideas on what the community would like to see in that area. The Board discussed what they would like to see and a community park with a fireplace and a farmers market were both noted.

Chairperson Fabbri reminded members of the upcoming Community Development Board meeting and that Member Rabidue would not be able to attend that meeting and asked if anyone else could attend on the DDA’s behalf. Chairperson Fabbri noted she would talk with Member Clark to see if he could attend or that she may also be able to attend if he could not

Chairperson Fabbri shared a letter received from Consumers Energy on a “Put your Town on the Map” competition which would award money to initiatives to build a stronger sense of community. Member Bennet noted she would be willing look further into the award.

Member Hunter noted she heard that there may be a new business coming to the empty building where the Downtown Café used to be and noted the bakery was sold and a will remain a bakery.

Member Walters asked about the joint downtown development plan time table. Chairperson Fabbri noted that John Iacoangeli would be at their meeting in February to work with them.

PRT Fellow Bickell asked about the possibility of having the DDA join up with the Retail Merchants and hosting a branding initiation session that could help downtown businesses with ideas on how they could piggy back onto the new branding ideas. Manager Grace also noted that an idea was presented to develop a request for proposal to hire a designer that could help any community businesses develop their own logos based on the new branding ideas. Chairperson Fabbri noted she could work with the Retail Merchants on getting something scheduled once more details are available.

PRT Fellow Bickell also noted the EDC has funds available for the development of second story residential units in downtown buildings and would be willing to hold a meeting with anyone that is interested in the grant program.

Member Bennett gave an update on the recent Planning Commission meeting that she attended.

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MOTION BY FABBRI, SECOND BY RABIDUE, TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL TO APPOINT MIKE COZAD AND CATHY ZIMMERMAN TO THE DDA BOARD.

Yes – Bennett, Fabbri, Hunter, Rabidue, Walters

No – None

Absent – Clark

Motion carried

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The Board discussed flowers for the upcoming year and Member Rabidue noted she has talked with the Greenhouse and the prices would remain the same as last year and they need to get their order in soon. They discussed the possibility of extending the flower program downtown to additional areas. Discussion also centered on painting the flower pots. It was the consensus to order the same amount of flowers as last year and then look at adding some to additional areas at a different time.

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The Board discussed the idea of developing a transfer agreement to transfer their projects to the City in order for it to clear up questions on future maintenance for any of the DDA's projects. It was the consensus to have secretary Dantzer work on an agreement to present to the Board at an upcoming meeting.

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Chairperson Fabbri discussed things to go over in preparation of the upcoming downtown development plan meeting with Mr. Iacoangeli

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The Board discussed the possibility of extending the DDA district and Principal Shopping Districts.

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Chair Fabbri adjourned the meeting at 1:45 pm.