

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 23, 2017
121 N. 4TH ST., WEST BRANCH, MI**

- I. Chairman Showalter called the meeting to order at 12:00pm.
- II. Present- Rusty Showalter, Autumn Hunter, Jason Stroebel, Joanne Bennett, Sandy Rabidue, Mayor Lawrence.
Absent - Samantha Fabbri, Joe Clark, Dora Zapczynski.
Others Present - City Manager Heather Grace, GPSCR Coordinator Kelli Collins.
- III. **Additions to Agenda -**
Rusty Showalter submitted a Letter of Resignation as member and Chair to the DDA. Discussion was held on filling the position as Chair of DDA. Concerns were raised on this position demanding a vast amount of time. Showalter stated the position could easily require 10-15 hours per week. Several suggestions were made. Showalter agreed to withdraw his resignation as a board member but resigned as Chair. Grace stated she will pursue Internship's with local colleges and also develop a job description.
Motion by Bennett to accept Showalter resignation letter as Chair of DDA but continue as a board member and to have Manager Grace pursue Internship's and other options. Second by Stroebel.
Yes- Autumn Hunter, Jason Stroebel, Joanne Bennett, Sandy Rabidue, Mayor Lawrence.
No - None.
Absent - Samantha Fabbri, Joe Clark, Dora Zapczynski.
Motion voted and carried.
- IV. **Minutes-**
Minutes of the March 28, 2017 meeting were reviewed.
Motion by Bennett to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Rabidue.
Yes- Rusty Showalter, Autumn Hunter, Jason Stroebel, Joanne Bennett, Sandy Rabidue, Mayor Lawrence.
No - None.
Absent - Samantha Fabbri, Joe Clark, Dora Zapczynski.
Motion voted and carried.
- V. **Bills -**
Showalter presented bills in the amount of \$164.52.
Motion by Bennett to pay all bills as presented. Second by Rabidue.
Yes- Rusty Showalter, Autumn Hunter, Jason Stroebel, Joanne Bennett, Sandy Rabidue, Mayor Lawrence.
No - None.
Absent - Samantha Fabbri, Joe Clark, Dora Zapczynski.
Motion voted and carried.
- VI. **Bids - None.**

VII. **Reports and/or comments -**

Stroebel questioned the \$2000 deposit and how it would be refunded. It was his understanding this deposit was for the renderings and drawings. Showalter stated due to the DDA being misguided under the facade program, the participants may have signed up under false pretense at no fault of their own. Stroebel questioned who was responsible for the rendering fees of those who withdraw from the program? Showalter stated the DDA needs the support of downtown and in "good faith" should refund those who choose to withdraw. The DDA would cover the fees of those lost. Showalter advised our accountant advised we develop a policy for those who are refunded to avoid any audit errors going forward. Showalter advised businesses are in the process of getting final paperwork required to verify financing from banks for their projects. Some participants are still unhappy with requirements from MSHDA on designs for approval. Rabidue expressed concerns over the estimated costs from the architect and the end result actual costs of the project. Manager Grace recommended we develop guidelines for participants who withdraw to submit in writing their request for refund and decision to not participate in the program.

Stroebel questioned keeping the bathrooms of the pocket park open in the winter. Showalter advised the DDA could keep the bathrooms open year round if they so choose and just winterize the drinking fountain and decorative fountain. It was agreed to keep them open through the holidays and close them sometime in January.

Showalter advised the flags are being laundered. Many new flags have been donated. Mayor Lawrence informed she is expecting approximately 30 flags. Showalter stated we display 38 flags. DPW will get as many up before Memorial Day as possible.

Showalter informed that the flowers are in. The Girl Scouts will plant on June 9, 2017. The Greenhouse will do the concrete planters. Smiley Helpers T-shirts was discussed. It was agreed the Girl Scouts should receive a T-shirt in exchange for their volunteer work. Manager Grace stated Bridget was working on collecting sizes for the girls. DDA will purchase snacks for the girls for that day.

Showalter advised Nancy Griffin has volunteered to maintain the flowers/plants at the Bell Tower again this year.

Brief discussion was held on noxious weeds and grass/blight and the procedure in place for addressing and rectifying the problem. Collins explained that some take longer than others due to vacant lots and foreclosed properties. Others may just not have the means or equipment needed to do it. Collins advised in the last week or so about 10-15 Notice of Violations were mailed.

Showalter advised City Council approved the 17/18 budget which includes the DDA Budget.

City Manager-

Manager Grace reiterated that City Council approved the 17/18 budget which needed their approval before approved by DDA. Subcommittee did meet and make recommendations which she tried to meet as much as possible. Due to the Facade Grant not being done this fiscal year,

at the next Council Meeting will recommend to amend the budget to reflect the line item difference. Questions were raised on the Retail Merchant Contract for \$7500. The 17/18 Budget will be worded to Downtown Events. This allows more flexibility of these funds being used for other groups than just Fabulous Fridays. Manager Grace informed that the Retail Merchants have been asked for a detailed expense of where funds have been used if they want to continue to get this money. This year they have scaled back on events and have only 1-2 Fabulous Friday Events scheduled for summer. The Recreation Committee has stepped up and are trying to organize events for the downtown area.

Motion by Showalter to approve the 17/18 Budget as presented. Second by Bennett.

Yes- Rusty Showalter, Autumn Hunter, Jason Stroebel, Joanne Bennett, Sandy Rabidue, Mayor Lawrence.

No - None.

Absent - Samantha Fabbri, Joe Clark, Dora Zapczynski.

Motion voted and carried.

VIII. **New Business**-none.

IX. **Old Business**-

Showalter advised we have discussed issues he will continue to work on.

X. **Public Comment**-None.

XI. **Adjournment**-

Chairman Showalter adjourned the meeting at 1:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelli Collins
GPSCR Coordinator