

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 27, 2017
121 N. 4TH ST., WEST BRANCH, MI 48661**

- I. Member Jason Stroebel called the meeting to order at 12:13 pm.
- II. Present - Jason Stroebel, Autumn Hunter, Joanne Bennett, Joe Clark, Mayor Lawrence.
Absent - Sandy Rabidue, Samantha Fabbri, Dora Zapczynski, Rusty Showalter.
Others Present - City Manager Heather Grace, GPSCR Coordinator Kelli Collins.
- III. **Additions to Agenda-**
Letter received from Loggers Depot advising they are withdrawing from the Facade Program. City Manager Grace explained the DDA has a procedure to withdraw from the program and request a refund of \$2000 deposit. Questions were raised on any others withdrawing from the program? No other letters have been received. Grace requested that Kelli send a letter to all DDA Facade participants asking they respond in writing if they wish to withdraw from the program.
Motion by Bennett to accept the letter from Loggers Depot requesting to withdraw from the Facade Program. Second by Hunter.
Yes - Jason Stroebel, Autumn Hunter, Joanne Bennett, Joe Clark, Mayor Lawrence.
No - None.
Absent - Sandy Rabidue, Samantha Fabbri, Dora Zapczynski, Rusty Showalter.
Motion voted and carried.
- Trash Cans and Cigarette Receptacles Downtown-**
Grace advised last council meeting it was brought to her attention of the poor condition of these containers downtown. Grace explained she has been contacted regarding the need of more trash containers downtown. Discussion was held on the cigarette containers being unsafe for potential fires and stated if DDA purchases more they should be quality material that will not burn. All agreed this should be discussed for the budget going into our next fiscal year of 17/18. It was agreed the board needs to meet and prioritize what projects they have funds available going into the next year. Grace stated another big project suggested was maintenance of current city parking lots. Grace has been made aware of the parking lot behind the Emporium on N. 2nd Street needing repair. Grace explained many projects were identified by the Sub-Committee Meeting as needing completed, however, the budget only allows for a certain number per year. Grace suggested having a Special Meeting for the DDA on July 10, 2017 at 6:00pm to prioritize and discuss which projects to fund in the 17/18 fiscal year along with the Strategic Plan. Grace recommended inviting the Planning Commission also.
- IV. **Minutes -**
Minutes of the May 23, 2017 meeting were reviewed.
Motion by Hunter to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Bennett.
Yes - Jason Stroebel, Autumn Hunter, Joanne Bennett, Joe Clark, Mayor Lawrence.
No - None.
Absent - Sandy Rabidue, Samantha Fabbri, Dora Zapczynski, Rusty Showalter.
Motion voted and carried.

V. Bills -

Stroebel presented bills in the amount of \$4,189.28.

Motion by Stroebel to pay all bills as presented. Second by Bennett.

Yes - Jason Stroebel, Autumn Hunter, Joanne Bennett, Joe Clark, Mayor Lawrence.

No - None.

Absent - Sandy Rabidue, Samantha Fabbri, Dora Zapczynski, Rusty Showalter.

Motion voted and carried.

VI. Bids - None.

VII. Reports and/or comments -

Chairman - Noted and discussed was the need for replacing the DDA Chairperson.

Member Reports - Clark stated the parking lot behind Emporium has already been repaired last year and did not feel this parking lot was the in poorest condition. He explained if improvements are made to Handicap areas in this lot we would lose additional parking spots. Clark's opinion was that this lot was satisfactory and adequate. He suggested everyone inspect this lot before moving forward with any repairs or construction. Clark stated customers have not been complaining on parking or lots and seem pleased with how things are. Hunter also confirmed she has heard no negativity from customers. Stroebel suggested that the DDA do a walk around town to observe and make note of what needs to be done. Clark questioned if any grants were available for parking lots. Grace reported she has not identified any grants for parking lots but we could look into it for the future.

City Manager - Grace wanted to make aware and share the work the DDA Administrator, Kelli Collins does, and thank her for everything she is doing. Grace stated this job has a lot of "hats" to wear which are not only the DDA Administrator, but the Grants Coordinator, Blight Enforcement, Zoning Enforcement and volunteer coordinator, along with the Administrative Assistant for the City Police. During the past 11 months she has raised over \$47,000 in contributions, donations and grants for the City. Most recently, a Friendship Rock was obtained for our Elementary School which was entirely coordinated by her. Grace explained the concept and what a Friendship Rock is. Collins advised she has received nothing but positive feedback on this project and the school is very excited to introduce it to the children this fall. Collins encouraged board members to go to the City Face Book page to see the pictures and narrative describing what a Friendship Rock is. Several board members thanked Collins for her service and dedication to her job and city.

VIII. New Business -

Stroebel reminded everyone of the Special Meeting July 10, 2017 at 6:00 pm. Grace suggested starting this meeting with a walk through downtown to observe any projects in need of prioritizing. This would help in reviewing the Strategic Plan. Grace will re-send copies of this plan to all DDA members before this meeting.

Motion by Stroebel to approve a walk through downtown West Branch on July 10, 2017 at 6:00 pm prior to the Special Meeting. Second by Hunter.

Yes - Jason Stroebel, Autumn Hunter, Joanne Bennett, Joe Clark, Mayor Lawrence.

No - None.

Absent - Sandy Rabidue, Samantha Fabbri, Dora Zapczynski, Rusty Showalter.

Motion voted and carried.

Stroebel reported an issue with DDA members not making meetings and resulting in the board not having a quorum. Grace volunteered to draft by laws for the DDA on absences. She asked for the number of absences the DDA would require before being removed from the board.

Motion by Hunter to all three (3) consecutive absences from regularly scheduled DDA meetings in a year before being removed from the DDA board. Second by Clark.

Yes - Jason Stroebel, Autumn Hunter, Joanne Bennett, Joe Clark, Mayor Lawrence.

No - None.

Absent - Sandy Rabidue, Samantha Fabbri, Dora Zapczynski, Rusty Showalter.

Motion voted and carried.

IX. Old Business -

Stroebel suggested we discuss the fence at the Pocket Park. Hunter stated she did not feel a fence necessary at this time. The novelty and newness has worn off and people are not causing destruction or harm to the fountain. All agreed it did not seem to be a problem anymore. It was noted the popularity of the fountain as being a destination for pictures of special occasions, weddings, prom, etc. It was agreed to not pursue a fence at this time but to keep an eye on it for future reference if needed.

X. Public Comment -

Stroebel commended the DDA for their commitment and dedication in making West Branch look good and making it a destination point for tourists.

XI. Adjournment -

Stroebel adjourned the meeting at 12:53 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelli Collins
GPSCR Coordinator