

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, October 11, 2023, 8:15 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



I. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 8:16 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.

II. ROLL CALL:

A. Attendance Taken and Quorum Determined

Present: Matthew Baumgarten
Desiree Dutcher
Katie Forte
Scott Francis
Andy Gilbert
Chris Gross
Matteo Passalacqua
Ashley Poirier
Brian Zifkin

Absent: Tim Barnes – *excused*
Donna Dirkse – *excused*
Justin Findling – *excused*
Uli Laczkovich – *excused*
Talia Wittenberg – *excused*

Also present: Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director
Mike McGuinness, DDA Executive Director
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Adam Wozniak, Berkley DPW

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

On motion by Zifkin and second by Gross, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board. Passalacqua then moved to amend the agenda to add a discussion item about the DDA Director annual review after Item C. of Discussion Items, Poirier seconded, and motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of September 13, 2023

On motion by Passalacqua and second by Gross, the minutes of the regular meeting of September 13, 2023 were unanimously approved by the Board.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT:

A. Financial Report for September, 2023

Gross reported that for this period, revenues were @\$61,000 and expenses @\$23,000, the bulk of those being skeletons, marketing, flower baskets, payroll, and streetscape improvements, for a net positive of @\$38,000 for the month.

She also reported she isn't able yet to determine the ending fund balance. McGuinness noted that \$314, 861.00 was listed as the fund balance on the comparative balance sheet as of 9/30. Gross

believes that is an old figure, and McGuinness said cash on hand was listed on the report as \$334,137.69 as of 9/30/23. The discrepancy was not resolved by meeting's end.

VI. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Awarding of Contract for the Coolidge Crosswalk Improvement Project to the lowest qualified bidder

McGuinness reported that City Council had approved the bid from Rauhorn Electric, Inc. for crosswalk improvements on Coolidge in the amount of \$126,905.14 with an additional 10% construction contingency of \$12,690.51 and a not-to-exceed Construction Engineering amount of \$14,862.27, for a total not-to-exceed project cost of \$154,457.92. The costs of this project will be split with the City of Berkley, with the Downtown Development Authority covering up to \$103,486.32 of the cost and the City of Berkley covering up to \$50,971.60 (one-third City, two thirds DDA). The bid is @\$80,000 less than the original bid received for the crosswalk project work.

Public Safety and the DPW have endorsed this approach. The bollards to be installed are crash rated and sunk into the ground. The contractor's bid does not include lane striping.

Passalacqua noted that there needs to be a public record support letter (or e-mail) from Public Safety, and Baumgarten and McGuinness assured him that documentation is in hand.

Forte moved to accept and approve the bid from Rauhorn Electric for the crosswalk project work, minus lane striping, Baumgarten seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Law Office of Rachel Pinch Façade Grant Application

McGuinness noted that after meeting with Attorney Pinch, she submitted the more detailed façade grant application, which was itemized as requested by the Board at the September meeting. Her building is located at the corner of Coolidge and Franklin. Pinch expects to spend in excess of \$70,000 for exterior improvements and is also pursuing County and State grant funding. The DDA façade grant funding will favorably impact those applications as well.

For the current fiscal year, the line item for façade grants is budgeted at \$15,000.00, and with two grants totaling \$20,000.00 already approved by the Board, a budget amendment for at least an additional \$5,000.00 will be needed at some point. The current application is for the maximum \$10,000.00 grant.

Zifkin expressed his preference for funding improvements to retail locations that draw shoppers to Berkley, Baumgarten countering that any projects that improve the city's aesthetic are worthwhile investments. Gilbert was supportive of that, noting that Pinch wants to be involved with marketing the city. It was suggested that the Board could reduce the amount of the award based on the square footage of the building, but McGuinness noted the goal of the program is to incentivize owners to make these kinds of improvements.

Passalacqua moved to approve the \$10,000.00 façade grant to Attorney Pinch, Forte seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Since Gross could not at the time report on an accurate fund balance figure, there was extensive discussion about the 2023/24 total budget for façade grants, appropriate fund balance level, timing of budget amendments, and other monetary issues, and Baumgarten proposed bringing back to the Board a full accounting of anticipated budget amendments. He noted audit numbers should be available in time to present accurate figures to the Board at the November meeting. Passalacqua asked that those numbers be available for Board members to review no less than 72 hours before the November meeting.

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Coolidge Complete Streets Implementation Next Steps

McGuinness reported that this was resolved previously with the Board vote.

B. Downtown Landscaping and Tree Replacement Developments

McGuinness noted this is a continuing item on the agenda until further notice, and noted that Passalacqua has prompted the DDA Board to create a matrix to track who (the DDA, DPW, or a separate contractor) does what and who has subsequent responsibility (for payment, maintenance, etc.). In recent weeks, some downtown trees have been removed.

Wozniak reported two trees were too large for the DPW to remove. Others will be cut flush because of underground conduit. McGuinness noted he and the DPW Director have discussed strategy moving forward and decided to adopt an incremental approach: To do a little at a time and choose replacement trees judiciously. Passalacqua asked that the matrix be complete for presentation at the November meeting, and McGuinness agreed.

C. BOOkley Season Roster of Activities

McGuinness thanked all the volunteers for their efforts, especially Dutcher and her family.

1. Downtown Skeletons Engagement, Decorating, Installations

There are many more skeletons to install. The pick-up/return process has been streamlined this year as well as keeping them safe from thieves.

2. DIY Skeleton Decorating Party at Ullman's Health and Beauty (Oct. 1)

3. Restaurant Weekend with Berkley Chamber (Oct. 6-7)

The zombie shuttle ran for the weekend event, and McGuinness is waiting to hear feedback directly from participants. Gross said Bombshell Treats was thrilled, and Coolidge seemed much busier. Gilbert noted he had a customer from Farmington who heard about the skeletons on social media and came to Berkley for that reason and shopped several establishments.

4. Witches Night Out (Oct. 12)

This will be the final Ladies Night Out of the year, and the trolley will run again.

5. Ghost Chase (Oct. 20)

The event is sold out. Dinner at 24 Seconds is included with tickets.

6. Trick or Treat Stroll (Oct. 28)

7. Monster Mash Block Party (Oct. 28)

The Stroll and Monster Mash volunteers have fanned out to contact businesses with information about participating. McGuinness reported more carnival-like performances.

A press release for BOO!kley is coming soon. A full-page ad ran in *Woodward Talk*.

VIII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported that at their brief meeting the previous week, Council was mostly focused on DDA issues, the crosswalks and Monster Mash. This coming Saturday, 10/14, there will be a gathering at the 100th anniversary as a village with unveiling of a State of Michigan historical plaque commemorating that event and the new time capsule placement. He invited all to wear period costumes.

B. Community Development and Planning Commission – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported the Columbia/Coolidge PUD went to the Planning Commission for a public hearing, which was tabled because not enough members were present. The public hearing went forward and comments collected. That will go forward at the Planning Commission meeting on 10/24. At that meeting they will also review the façade improvement application for the former McCourts' Music building on 12 Mile. The parking study recommendations are being reviewed in committee.

C. Public Works – Ric Chalmers

Wozniak had nothing additional to report.

D. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad reported the State of the City will be held 10/27 at the Collaborative Center. The Kit Home Tour was held 9/30 with 6 Berkley homes on the physical tour. Nearly 120 tickets were sold, some to out of state attendees, and high interest from attendees. The Chamber is in discussion about reviving the Pub Crawl. Darlene Rothman has been hired full time and will be running all of Chamber's events. An outside consultant will be hired to handle their finances. They had such good response they will hold the Kit Home Tour again next year.

IX. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Absent for testing.

X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES: No reports

- A. Art & Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua**
- B. Business Development Committee**
- C. Downtown Events Committee**
- D. Marketing Strategies Committee – Ashley Poirier**
- E. Organization Committee – Scott Francis**
- F. West 12-Mile Committee – Brian Zifkin**

XI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

A. Past Executive Director Vivian Carmody's Passing

The memorial service for Vivian will be held November 17, and a family and friends gathering at a Berkley restaurant, to be decided, the next day, November 18.

B. Michigan Municipal League Conference Participation (Oct. 18-20)

C. Michigan Downtown Association Conference Downtown Berkley Tour (Nov. 1)

D. Michigan Downtown Association Annual Conference (Nov. 2-3)

McGuinness reported that the previous night he presented at the Mayor's Academy where each City department reports to the public about their purpose and finances.

XII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS:

Francis reported that the District is starting Food Truck Fridays at Art Space noon to 1:30, Friday, 10/13, and Friday, 10/27.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: The opportunity for public comment was offered. Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

At 9:24 AM, Francis moved to adjourn to closed session, Forte seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

Passalacqua moved to adjourn the closed session at 9:51 AM, Francis seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

Forte moved to re-open the regular meeting at 9:52 AM, Gross seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

XIV. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 AM on motion by Poirier and second by Gross.