

**MEETING MINUTES  
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Wednesday, October 12, 2022, 8:30 AM  
Berkley Public Safety, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room**



**I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:33 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.

**II. ROLL CALL:**

*Present:* Matthew Baumgarten  
Donna Dirkse  
Desiree Dutcher  
Andy Gilbert  
Chris Gross  
Jenna Hance  
Uli Laczkovich  
Ashley Poirier  
Garrett Wyatt  
Brian Zifkin

*Absent:* Tim Barnes – excused  
Scott Francis – excused  
Matteo Passalacqua – excused

*Also present:* Steve Baker, City Council Liaison  
Ric Chalmers, DPW Liaison  
Matthew Gross, MHG Jewelry  
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director  
Mike McGuinness, DDA Executive Director  
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

On motion by Zifkin and second by Gross, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Regular Meeting of September 14, 2022**

On motion by Gross and second by Poirier, the minutes of September 14, 2022 were unanimously approved by the Board.

**V. LIAISON REPORTS**

**A. City Council – Steve Baker**

Baker reported that at their last meeting, Council dealt with procedural issues (cannabis businesses) and approved moving forward with repairs to Wiltshire Road from Woodward to Coolidge. Engineering work has been finished, and repair work will be done in two phases. They also approved reducing the number of Planning Commissioners from 9 to 7, and rejected the idea that a Councilperson sit on the Commission as a voting member, but that person will attend as a liaison.

He noted that the Historical Commission, which met the previous evening, is finalizing plans for official plaques denoting their state historical status at Pattengill School and the old Firehouse and is working on a planned 2023 time capsule for Berkley's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a village.

Council had a presentation from an Oakland County Commissioner who stressed the importance of the Oakland County ballot proposal funding SMART and extending transit through the entire county.

**B. Community Development –Kristen Kapelanski**

Kapelanski reported that Matteo Passalacqua will be the next Planning Commission liaison to the DDA. The Planning Commission approved the last cannabis business site plan. The Commission is planning a public hearing on the Downtown Design Guidelines. They are discussing an ordinance to limit the number and location of vape shops in the city. Also discussed was a proposal to extend outdoor dining options. A public hearing is anticipated on the new ordinances.

**C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner**

Absent – no report.

**D. Public Works – Shawn Young and Ric Chalmers**

Chalmers noted road repair between Mortensen and Coolidge will be limited to sub-surface.

**E. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad**

Murad reported the Chamber would hold its next Chat the following Friday, and on October 27 the State of the City breakfast will take place at the Event Space at Coolidge and Catalpa. They're also working on their upcoming Kit Home tour for Mother's Day weekend in 2023. Business passes, discount cards to Chamber members' businesses, are being offered to the general public for \$30.00, good through the end of next year. Community organizations and other groups can offer the cards for sale and split the profits with the Chamber.

**VI. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

**A. Financial Report for September 2022**

Gross reported revenues of \$355,000, with \$278,000 available for spending, and an ending fund balance of @\$592,000. Most of the revenues were property taxes allocated to the DDA.

Hance moved to receive and accept the Treasurer's report for September 2022, Dutcher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**VII. ACTION ITEMS:**

**A. Fishbeck Professional Services Contract for Parking Study & Strategic Planning**

McGuinness included a copy of Fishbeck's quotation for a city-wide parking study in the packet e-mailed to the Board. The cost of the study will be shared 50/50 with the City, and the Board's approval is contingent upon the approval of City Council of the cost sharing agreement and parking study/strategic planning proposal. An updated parking study is needed because the previous study done several years prior is outdated. Public outreach and zoning ordinance update will take place after Council's approval. The total cost quoted by Fishbeck is \$32,000.00, with the DDA's share \$16,000.00. The study includes a complete inventory of available commercial, municipal, and multi-family parking in the city. Kapelanski has worked extensively with the firm and noted they do a lot of work in the metro Detroit area

Dirkse moved to approve Fishbeck's quotation for professional services, contingent on approval by City Council, Poirier seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**B. Approval of Quarterly Budget Amendments for Current Fiscal Year**

McGuinness noted that it was timely, and coincided with the City Finance Department's schedule, to address the receipt of increased revenue from merchandise sales (\$5,000) and event sponsorships (\$20,000) and to apply that additional revenue to proposed DDA activities for the 2022/23 fiscal year. He attached a list of proposed budget amendments for the Board to approve as a unit.

DDA Events: Increase from \$10,000 to \$34,000  
Contractual Services: Increase from \$21,000 to \$28,200  
Advertising/Marketing: Increase from -\$10,000 to \$27,800  
Public Art/Placemaking: Increase from \$8,000 to \$48,000  
Streetscape Improvements: Increase from \$31,000 to \$91,000  
Berkley Plaza Project: Increase from \$3,000 to \$8,500 (with reimbursement from the other two entities)

Zifkin moved to approve the list of proposed Budget Amendments and amounts, Dirkse seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**C. Alice's Perfect Fit Alterations Mural Program Application**

As noted in his memo to the Board included in their packet, McGuinness proposed that the application be tabled in order to give the Art and Design Committee the opportunity to review it.

Poirier moved to table discussion of Alice's Perfect Fit Alterations mural program application for one month or until the Art and Design Committee has reviewed it and made their recommendation, Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**D. MHG Jewelers Appeal of Mural Program Application Denial**

Matthew Gross, jeweler and long-time Coolidge business owner, appeared before the Board to appeal the September denial of his application for DDA support of his mural request. He had submitted a rendering of the mural he planned to have painted on the rear wall of his building at 2689 Coolidge. That wall faces the alley that runs behind the buildings on the block; the alley is @18 feet wide. He presented a series of slides showing other buildings with rear wall murals, on the opposite side of Coolidge and along 12 Mile Road. The east side of Coolidge alley is approximately the same width as the west side of Coolidge alley. He designed the mural so that it's above trash receptacles and parked vehicles. The back story of the design he chose is that he has spent some time in Mexico and has set up a fundraiser to establish training for prospective jewelers there and has supplied students with jewelry-making materials.

Mr. Gross also noted that his neighbor on the south side, a bridal clothing business, has many clients who park in the rear of that building, as do clients of his other neighbors, so his mural would be visible to all of them. Most of the businesses on that block use parking facing the alley behind their buildings.

Mr. Gross was requesting a DDA contribution of \$2,500.00 to the cost of his mural (100%). After discussion on the value of improving the appearance of all of Berkley's alleys, Zifkin moved to reconsider the previous denial and award MHG \$1,250.00 to defray the cost of the mural (50% of the request), Gross seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Baker noted that the total award could be amended at a future meeting.

**VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Newest Board Members Desiree Dutcher, Uli Laczkovich Appointed**

McGuinness announced that the Board's two new members had been appointed by City Council.

**B. Downtown Master Plan Formally Adopted by Berkley City Council**

McGuinness reported that the Downtown Master Plan had been formally adopted by City Council, and the plan has been posted to the City and DDA's web sites.

**C. Downtown Design Guidelines Progress**

Kapelanski reported that the Planning Commission had discussions about implementation of the guidelines' qualitative and quantitative standards. She expects a public hearing on the guidelines to be held the end of October, with guidelines finalized by the end of the year.

**D. Coolidge Crosswalks Activation, Enhancements Progress**

McGuinness reported that all interested parties took part in a conference call on activation issues as well as receiving the draft memo from the City's engineering firm, Hubbell Roth & Clark. A few tweaks to the original plan may be in order, noted in the final draft. Kapelanski noted that the "tweaks" mentioned center around the space created when the road was narrowed from four lanes to two. Part of this space may be utilized to make the crosswalks safer and more visible (curbs, signage, longer striping, safety bollards), per Public Safety's input. McGuinness noted the changes might increase the cost \$30,000.00, which the DDA won't have to cover entirely. DPW already has some of the necessary materials on hand and is available to do any restriping needed.

**E. ArtSpace at Coolidge and Catalpa Progress**

McGuinness reported that the signature sculpture is being cast. Another trash can will be installed. Some more bistro tables are ordered. The bases for the art panels are delayed, and that is the only anticipated holdup to formal opening. The space is already being used by students and pedestrians.

**F. BOO!KLEY Season Initiatives Throughout Downtown**

McGuinness reported skeletons have taken their positions all through the downtown. The trolley will be running for Ladies Night Out, with the largest number of participating businesses to date. The events were advertised in *Woodward Talk*. The "Ghost Chase" road race/rally is a new event this season, and as always, more volunteers are in demand. McGuinness thanked event chair, Lisa Kempner. Gilbert noted skeleton sponsorships are rapidly bringing in dollars.

**G. Strong Success of BOO!KLEY Skeletons Engagement**

Gilbert reported 200 sponsors for the adopted skeletons. A few skeletons have been pilfered, and Public Safety stopped some pilferers in the act. McGuinness noted the skeletons are intended to be used year-to-year, and it's important to notify him or Public Safety if you see anyone stealing them.

**IX. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES**

Wyatt reported sports are finishing up. He's working with his teacher-representative to identify future student Board members.

**X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:**

**A. Art & Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua**

Absent – the committee had not met since the last meeting.

**B. Business Development Committee – Jenna Hance**

McGuinness reported the next meeting will be Nov. 10, location to be announced.

**C. Downtown Events Committee**

McGuinness reported the committee would be meeting that night.

**D. Marketing Strategies Committee – Ashley Poirier**

**XI.** McGuinness reported the committee is getting organized.

**Organization Committee – Scott Francis**

Absent – no report. McGuinness noted the committee had not met.

**A. West 12-Mile Committee – Brian Zifkin**

Zifkin reported he and Barnes met, and they're pleased that DDA resources are filtering down to their end of 12 Mile.

**XII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES**

McGuinness reported that El Patio on 12 Mile has resolved its issues with the Liquor Commission and is open for business. There will be a ribbon cutting for Our Neighborhood Academy at 5:00 on Ladies Night Out. The former Sugar Kisses building at Dorothea and Coolidge is expanding south and will house a bakery/ice cream shop. Monger's was approved by the MLCC for a redevelopment liquor license. Kapelanski reported that O'Mara's is working on reopening, possibly by the end of October.

**XIII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS:**

Poirier reported a 10-fold increase in social media contacts and a large increase in "fans" and "shares." Dutcher reported that Perch would be open for Ladies Night Out. Baumgarten noted businesses moving from food trucks or online to brick and mortar seem to be attracted to Berkley's available buildings.

**XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** The opportunity for public comment was offered, and there were no in-person requests to address the body. Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

**XV. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 10:18 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Gross.