

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.

II. **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Andrew Agbay
Matthew Baumgarten
Donna Dirkse
Jennifer Finney
Scott Francis
Maggie Gable
Andy Gilbert
Chris Gross
Eli Hurwitz
Mitchell Moses
Matteo Passalacqua
Razur Rahman
Brian Zifkin

Absent: Petro Drakopoulos – *excused*
Wayne Wudyka – *excused*

Also present: Lisa Howard, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Lisa Kempner, Planning Commission Liaison
Erin Schlutow, Community Development Director

III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** On motion by Francis and second by Agbay, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. **Regular meeting of February 12, 2020:** On motion by Agbay and second by Moses, the minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.

V. **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Moses reported that the income and expenditures did not change much from previous months. It's projected that the ending balance for fiscal year 2019/20 will be approximately \$226,000.

Baumgarten moved to receive and approve the Treasurer's Report, Agbay seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Update on Permanent Executive Director Candidate and Hiring Process**

Gilbert reported that the 7-person review committee had received and reviewed 11 resumes for the position. The team was made up of Passalacqua, Francis, Baumgarten, Gilbert, Norris (Main Street, and Baker (City Council). Semonian had been unable to take an active part for business reasons. Gilbert noted that it was not an easy choice as all of them were positive candidates with varying strengths. Jennifer Finney rose to the top of the list because of her experience with the Berkley DDA and dedication to the city. Moses asked how she was planning to approach her lack of DDA experience in terms of the specifics of the Director position. She noted the educational resources

and training available, especially what's offered by MSOC, and feels she will profit from educational opportunities in economic development. Baumgarten noted that MSOC's Norris sat on the interview panel and was impressed with Finney's current knowledge of the Main Street program and DDA processes.

Zifkin asked how the Director's combined salary and benefit package, which he figured to be approximately 40% of the DDA's yearly budget, would affect the rest of the year's priorities. Baumgarten responded that he calculated the total package of salary and benefits would total @\$108,000. The budget was due for realignment with the Downtown Plan done and more funds directed to physical projects and streetscaping, in addition to the strategy to spend down the fund balance to @\$70,000-75,000. The Board agreed to continue renting the DDA office at Folio and to also use office space that becomes available at City Hall in the future for meetings.

Agbay moved to offer the position of DDA Executive Director to Jennifer Finney on the terms previously discussed, Gross seconded, and all members present, with Finney abstaining, voting in favor of the motion. Gilbert asked that everyone attend the Council meeting on March 16 where Finney is expected to be approved by Council.

B. Update on 2020/21 Budget

Baumgarten passed out copies of the draft, proposed budget for fiscal year 2020/21, which listed income and expenditures by category and then line item. He is conservatively projecting revenues to be flat at \$364,006.00. Moving to Appropriations, some category name changes are suggested: Contractual Services to Full Time Employees; and Board Strategic Planning to Board Trainings (part of which will be augmented by funds/training from MSOC).

In the "Special Events" category, Events combines all events, except Holiday Lights (cost of installation) into one line item allowing for flexibility to move funds back and forth when feasible. No funds are budgeted for "Market Development" in 2020/21.

In the category "Streetscape and Design," the largest expenditure, "Public Art/Placemaking," is the DDA's investment in creation of a pocket park in cooperation with the City Parks and Recreation Department. The next largest expenditure covers the DDA's portion of Phase 2 of the "Wayfinding" project. There are no expenditures budgeted for the "Business Development" category. An item under discussion and not listed on the draft budget is funding improvements to the crosswalks, at a project cost estimated to be \$50,000-60,000. Another potential addition to the budget is funding for improvements to the west end of 12 Mile, such as beautification/streetscaping. Gilbert also noted that no expenditures are listed for the Berkley Local Podcast or additional marketing for 12 Mile business during street reconstruction.

Included in the "Streetscape & Design Category" under the line item "Streetscape Improvement" is planning and design for the old community garden area west of the high school where parking will be developed. Passalacqua noted that the first step is a rendering/basic scope from the consultant of what that area could look like. He recalled that cost was @\$6,500. Moses suggested a meeting of district personnel, a City representative, and a DDA representative with the architect for the whole project.

Passalacqua moved to approve DDA funding not to exceed \$6,700.00 for architectural services (GMA proposal) for a rendering of the Coolidge area between the BP station and Lock City (school district property), covering two meetings and one revision to the rendering. Moses seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

C. Marijuana Business-Funded Aid for 12 Mile Businesses Impacted by Construction

Gilbert reported that the DDA was approached by an organization that would like to gain points needed for marijuana business license consideration by donating \$250,000.00, with the money

donated being used to assist 12 Mile businesses during the upcoming street resurfacing project. The donation is contingent on the marijuana business being awarded a license to operate in Berkley. Gilbert noted that this could be used as a roadmap for approaching other marijuana businesses seeking a Berkley license. Gilbert has a meeting scheduled for 3/13 with the individuals that proposed setting up the fund.

D. Update on Berkley Local Podcast

Gilbert reported that the podcast has continued for the fourth month and is now available on all platforms, which makes tracking interest more accurate.

VII. Student Board Member Updates:

Hurwitz and Gable reported they plan to talk to schoolmates to narrow the interview prospects for their replacements. Hurwitz will be appearing in the high school production of "Grease," which runs March 27 through 29.

VIII. Standing Committee Updates

A. Business Development Committee: Mitchell Moses

Moses reported the committee is working on crowdfunding for their local investment initiative.

B. Design Committee: Matteo Passalacqua (left earlier)

In his absence, Gilbert reported the committee is working on pocket parks and restarting crosswalk discussions.

C. Marketing and Promotions: Jennifer Finney

Finney reported the committee held its business roundtable Feb. 25 and with attendees' input was able to fine tune their events calendar, which includes holding MerriMonth. For Main Street awards, they would like to prepare a video for Berkley's downtown and would like to take part in the Window on Main Street competition.

D. Organization Committee: Scott Francis

Nothing to report in addition to the Director Search.

IX. Staff & Community Updates:

A. City Council – Steve Baker (absent)

In Baker's absence, Baumgarten reported that the Council meeting agenda for their next meeting on March 16 is full with propositions, second reading of proposed ordinances, the CruiseFest committee, and plowing issues on the agenda, in addition to approval of the DDA Executive Director candidate.

Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner/Erin Schlutow

Schlutow reported on stakeholder meetings regarding the Design Guidelines and Overlay District. One of the stakeholders objected to the overlay and the Design Review Board, considering them an overreach, and had circulated a petition in opposition. Two more meetings are planned.

Kempner announced that she will serve as the new Commission liaison to the DDA and that the commission is working on revising how approvals are done (more by administrative approval).

B. Citizens Engagement Advisory Committee – Absent – no report.

C. Chamber of Commerce – Lisa Howard

Howard reported the next Chamber Chat will be held at Chemistry the week of March 16. The Art Fest is scheduled for July 11 and will have Shop for Good Village artisans and their handmade products, and the Pub Crawl October 17 (a Saturday).

X. Board of Directors Comments:

Gilbert urged Board members to be an Art Fest sponsor and also to encourage other business owners to sponsor. He would like as many Board members to attend the March 16 Council meeting as possible in support of the DDA and approval of the new Executive Director, Finney.

XI. Public Comments: None.

XII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Agbay.