



VIRTUAL Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors

Downtown Development Authority Meeting

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021 @ 8:00 AM

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PASSWORD: FERNDAL

PHONE: 929 205 6099 (TOLL FREE)

MEETING ID: 833 7097 1044

1. ROLL CALL

CALL TO ORDER: 8:04 am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jacki Smith in Massachusetts, PJ Jacokes in Pleasant Ridge, Sarah Brown in Ferndale, Janice Semma in Royal Oak, Chris Johnston in Pleasant Ridge, JeDonna Dinges in Grosse Point, Nathan Martin in Ferndale, Mayor Melanie Piana in Florida

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jerome Raska

STAFF PRESENT: Lena Stevens, Executive Director; Sommer Realy, Engagement Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Jordan Twardy, Community and Economic Development Director
- Sheryl Stubblefield, Finance Director
- Theresa Robinson, Fire Chief
- Jenny Marr, Ferndale Area District Library
- Tim Pare, Michigan Stage: Broadway in the Burbs

2. ELECTRONIC MEETING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- a. **Acknowledgment of the City of Ferndale Electronic Meetings Policy**

Executive Director Lena Stevens reminded the Board of the current state law regarding the continuance of electronic meetings, as recognized by Ferndale City Council in their previous meeting. The law requires designated time for audience participation to allow public comment for connection. Extension is in discussion at State level.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Member Jacki Smith, seconded by Vice Chair Chris Johnston to approve the agenda as presented with an addition of 7.a Introduction of Fire Chief Theresa Robinson.

AYES - Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Janice Semma, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

4. CALL TO BOARD MEMBERS

Members are provided an opportunity to share general updates, recovery planning strategy, questions, concerns, etc.

Member JeDonna Dinges offered an update on the racial inequality within her residential neighborhood and thanked the community for positive support.

Mayor Melanie Piana stated she is attending the State of Michigan CARES Act meeting to discuss possible funding and will provide an update at the next meeting.

Treasurer Sarah Brown offered an extension of thanks to Denniz Zumma of LIV Ferndale for community support.

Chair PJ Jacokes stated Go Comedy! has received a stage grant that helps the business reopen in summer.

5. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Reports from community organization representatives in attendance, including but not limited to Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce, Ferndale Area District Library, 8 Mile Boulevard Association, etc.

- a. Jenny Marr, Ferndale Area District Library announced they are hopeful to enter Stage 4 with limited in person capacity in April of 2021. March is reading month. Virtual programming continues with possible courtyard virtual gardening, Pizza and Politics including Mayor Piana.

6. CALL TO AUDIENCE

Members of the public are invited to speak on any topic. No more than three minutes.

- a. No call to audience.

7. PRESENTATIONS

a. Introduction to Fire Chief Theresa Robinson

Chief Robinson, a 24-year veteran of the Lansing Fire Department, has served in a variety of fire service roles, including Firefighter, Paramedic, Fire Instructor, Training Chief, and most recently as Assistant Fire Chief. She was the first female Training Chief and Assistant Fire Chief in the Lansing Fire Department's history. She stated that coming from a large department to a smaller one, she is excited for the opportunity to be more hands-on and integrated in the community. Encourages community to stop by and say Hello. Chief Robinson mentioned how great it is to work with the talented men and women of the Ferndale Fire Department. She is looking forward to building relationships with all departments.

b. Broadway in the Burbs Event Concept Presentation

The Ferndale DDA has been approached by Tim Pare of Michigan Stage to create an outdoor, socially distanced event in Summer 2021. Broadway in the Burbs, is proposed as a community driven musical theatre showcase series, presented by Michigan Stage and the Downtown Development Association of Ferndale. Michigan Stage is a nonprofit launching officially in Fall 2021 with a mission is to expose new audiences to the performing arts, and in doing so nurture a curiosity to explore new cultures,

communities, and opportunities. Founder Tim Pare moved to Ferndale with the intent to launch this organization and has been volunteering with the Ferndale Arts and Culture Commission. The Broadway in the Burbs musical revue will focus on celebrating the supreme talent of our community, performing alongside professionals and inspire others to build and follow pathways to experience more performing arts near home. The baseline program is based on a program entitled Off Broadway in the Boros produced by The Bushwick Starr and Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment. DDA estimates \$3000-\$6000 for sponsorship in addition to other revenue.

Member Jacki Smith expressed support and provided [Opera MODO](#) as a possible lead for local talent.

Chair PJ Jacokes and Treasurer Sarah Brown are in support of project with the title "Broadway in the Burbs"

c. Social Districts Update

The Ferndale DDA approved the Ferndale Social Districts plan on Feb 11, 2021, followed by approval of the Ferndale City Council on Feb 22, 2021. Executive Director, Stevens provided an operational update. Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) has approved the City of Ferndale's Social District. Local User Agreement is in development for launch to participants the week of March 8. Draft agreement and local user agreement have been provided to all members of the board, council members and local businesses. Once a participant has filled out the Local User Agreement, the DDA will assist with individual business applications to the MLCC. Marketing and promotions plan is in development. Staffing costs are TBD, conversations are ongoing with DPW about ensuring litter control over the weekends. It is likely that much of this work can be completed within the existing budget for the Downtown Maintenance Contract. Printed cups are quoted at approx. 24 cents per cup, with a sponsor potentially identified. An initial order of 20,000 cups is in process. Target launch date of April 15 but will be determined by MLCC licensing and cup/sticker delivery. There is no deadline to participate.

d. MEDC Match on Main Grant Application Update

Executive Director, Stevens provided a review and update on the Ferndale DDA application to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Match on Main Grant Program for 2021. The Ferndale DDA applied on March 5, 2021 to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Match on Main Program. This was the first year that Ferndale was eligible to apply for this grant, and the process was undertaken solely between the February and March meetings of the DDA Board of Directors.

On February 17, 2021, the City Manager alerted the DDA Executive Director about a funding opportunity from the MEDC. The Match on Mail Grant awards up to \$25,000 to Michigan economic and community development organizations, development authorities, and government units in eligible regions to assist small businesses that are in downtown areas. Eligible uses of funds include business infrastructure, marketing, technology, renovation, design and layout, and activation of outdoor spaces. The program began in 2019, and in 2021 it is the first cycle in which Redevelopment Ready Communities (RCC) like Ferndale were eligible to apply. It is anticipated that this will be

an annual program, which will provide Ferndale more time to prepare a process for the 2022 grant cycle. On February 25, the Ferndale DDA determined which projects to include in the application by emailing emailed local businesses informing them of the Match on Main opportunity and requesting a response to a short online survey by March 2 to declare eligibility and state interest in applying. The survey was also sent directly to the DDA Board of Directors with a request to share, and direct outreach was undertaken by staff to businesses thought to be eligible.

While the timeline was short, it allowed for a level of openness and transparency in the selection process. Four businesses submitted potential projects to expand their businesses through Match on Main funding. A review team consisting of DDA staff, the DDA Board of Directors Chair and Treasurer, the Ferndale City Manager, and Ferndale Community Economic Development Director convened to review responses and discuss the selection of businesses to be included in the grant application. The following criteria was utilized to assess the proposed projects: number of jobs to be supported, amount of private funding to be leveraged, square footage to be activated, retain, or attract anchor businesses, historic preservation, long standing impact versus short term/temporary/seasonal. The job creation, match funding, and space activation scoring priorities were selected as they were aligned with MEDC imperatives and are universally accepted metrics for economic development projects. The other criteria were used because they reflected local priorities of supporting district anchor businesses, preserving historically significant buildings, and elevating permanent improvements versus temporary upgrades.

Among the four initial inquiries, only three were deemed as eligible for the grant. The two businesses presented in this application received the highest scores based on matrix with above criteria. It should be noted that one application was from a business owned by a member of the DDA Board of Directors. This business and individuals' position were not taken into consideration and was not involved in the decision-making process in any capacity. Estimated cost associated is \$1250 for grant writing services to Charlie Grose of GrantWorks Detroit.

Vice Chair Chris Johnston shared his appreciation and supports the resource made available.

Treasurer Sarah Brown requests the DDA offers resources for all grants that are available, as was included in email newsletters at beginning of pandemic.

e. Budget Workshop #2

Director Stevens provided an overview of the information shared in the budget meeting earlier in the month. Highlighted: website has been updated to reflect the current budget, budget is only within TIF jurisdiction, DDA funding cannot be spent outside of that district, all funds must be spent each year. Expenditures the executive director has authority to authorize include printing and marketing, such as graphics at The dot's ground level windows; grant support, such as the cost for Charlie Grose of GrantWorks Detroit fee and will be addressed at the following board meeting.

The DDA Board of Directors was asked to adopt the FY21-22 budget on March 11, 2021. This is the second budget workshop to address questions. The Board is being asked to consider this an 'Executive Budget' which was designed by the Director to reflect the

priorities of the Board in the good faith. While substantive changes to the budget are not ideally undertaken during this meeting, a budget review and potential amendment can be scheduled for early July 2021. The DDA budget process is separate but aligned with the City of Ferndale. Annually, the Ferndale DDA Board of Directors and Executive Director recommend a budget for the next fiscal adoption process.

The board does not formally adopt a budget for any fiscal year until it has been approved by the City Council. The Board may, however, temporarily adopt a budget in connection with legal requirements for any revenue bonds issued. The City of Ferndale and the DDA create a budget on a 3- year timeline, called a Triennial Budget. This helps to keep the perspective that a budget does not simply impact a single year.

Expenditures are only considered authorized for the upcoming budget (FY21-22).

Typically, the board would have a draft budget in January, however given the demands on time for DDA staff, as well as that of our board members, the draft was first made available on February 24. A review or amendment process can be scheduled for early July once the Treasurer has been properly on-boarded and can provide recommendations.

Chair PJ Jacokes inquired if more revenue comes in does the board have to allocate the funds quickly. Executive Director, Stevens stated no since decisions can be made during the mid-year review.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Treasurer Sarah Brown, seconded by Mayor Melanie Piana to approve the consent agenda as presented.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Chair PJ Jacokes, Member Jacki Smith.

All ayes, motion carries.

9. REGULAR AGENDA

a. Approval of Restaurant Relief Grant Process

Executive Director Lena Stevens provided an overview of the Restaurant Relief Grant Process. This funding will work with existing restaurants, new restaurants, and a toolkit. Mini grant includes \$48,000. Restaurants must offer primary dining service. Grant opportunity will be open for a week but not time limited. Eligibility and approval process necessary. Can be giving funding for past or upcoming patio expenditures.

Chair PJ Jacokes clarified if bars who serve food are included; Director Stevens confirmed they are eligible. Chair Jacokes asked if a committee is necessary to confirm eligibility; Director Stevens stated that is not necessary.

Member Nathan Martin asked if local bloggers or media outlets would be able to promote marketing strategies for local establishments. Director Stevens agreed that would be a good use of the DDA's budget.

Motion by Member Jacki Smith, seconded by Treasurer Sarah Brown to approve attached Grant Guide for the Restaurant Relief Grant program funded by the Oakland County Phase Two Restaurant Relief Program to support dine-in restaurants, bars, and cafés during COVID-19.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Janice Semma, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

b. Approve FY21-22 Budget

Motion by Treasurer Sarah Brown, seconded by Vice-Chair Chris Johnston to recommend that the Ferndale City Council adopt the DDA Budget for FY21-22.

AYES – Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Janice Semma, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- a. Expenses Updates
 - i. Executive Director Lena Stevens provided an overview of expenses within the last month – the grant writer, snow removal, and social district cup sponsorships.
- b. Upcoming Events/Promotions
 - i. Ferndale Pride Road Rally on April 10, 2021
 - 1. DDA will host a clue.
 - ii. Affirmations Bench Installation begins in April
 - iii. Mother’s Day promotions in mid-April
 - 1. Messaging will be as inclusive as possible.
 - iv. Parks and Recreation Drive-in Movie
 - v. DIA Inside Out Art Program
 - vi. All events are discussed month-by-month following the CDC State guidelines.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Treasurer Sarah Brown, seconded by Member Jacki Smith to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 A.M.

AYES – Mayor Melanie Piana, Member Nathan Martin, Member JeDonna Dinges, Member Janice Semma, Member Jacki Smith, Chair PJ Jacokes, Vice-Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown.

All ayes, motion carries.