



Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors
THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2022 @ 8:00 AM
Council Chambers
300 E Nine Mile, Ferndale, MI 48220

1. CALL TO ORDER: 8:07 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair PJ Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Metari Harris, Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vice Chair Chris Johnston, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Mayor Melanie Piana, JeDonna Dinges

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

GUESTS: Jenny Marr, Executive Director of the Ferndale Area District Library; Chief Robinson, Ferndale Fire Department; Roger Caruso, Community and Economic Director for City of Ferndale; Office Andrew Roth, Downtown Resource Officer for Ferndale Police Department; Dennis Emmi, Chief of Police for City of Ferndale; Dan Antosik, Department of Public Works Director

AUDIENCE: Michael Lary, Special Events Director; Joe Gacioch, City Manager

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Member Raska seconded Member Martin to approve the agenda with changes.

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Metari Harris, Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS- None

All ayes, motion carries.

3. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Jenny Marr, Executive Director of the Ferndale Area District Library reports the new parking signs 30-minute free parking have been installed. New landscaping contract is underway. Rain barrel demo in courtyard with Claire Zero Waste Department, will be coming up soon. Concert series at 630 PM launches next week. Reading with dogs, both for adults and kids is a huge success. Looking forward to the July 31 hybrid music night.

4. CALL TO AUDIENCE: N/A

5. INFORMATION ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- a. Introduction of the Downtown Resource Officer:

Downtown Resource Officer Office Andy Roth introduced by Chief Dennis Emmi, expressed the excitement over partnering in this venture. Downtown is rapidly developing with many dynamics, homeless population, and everything else that is complicated. The DRO program is being developed to meet the needs on the community and businesses. Communication and relationships is key. DRO Roth will be building the trust over next few years. Chief Emmi gave thanks, to those who participated in selection process, Lena, and Member Ashkenazi. DRO Roth was welcomed to the podium to introduce himself, he grew up in Sterling Heights, received a bachelor's in science and sociology. His first job out of college was a social worker and from there to the Wayne County sheriff department, followed by one year of probation in City of Ferndale and then this opportunity came about. Excited to be part of the team and be available for the downtown business district.

Board chair Jacokes asked if there is a mission statement. Police Chief Emmi expressed that the mission is to improve quality of life for business owners, visitors, staff, and community for all in downtown and improve the experience. Officer Andy will meet with all businesses within DDA in 1st 90 days and encourage everyone to make time for him.

Member Harris asked about the hours of operation. Police Chief Emmi explained there are no set schedule of hours, schedule will be flexed to meet the needs. The DRO Officer will work one Friday evening a month to help coach the bar detail and evening staff.

Member Raska asked if a report be provided to the district or board. Director Stevens explained that the intention is to have office Andy be an embedded member of community and attend monthly board meetings. However, Director Stevens would like to handle the reporting to the board.

Member George asked if there a plan for this program to expand. Police Chief Emmi expressed, that it could be explored if the need arises. Problems should become less not more. Community Engagement Officer Jillian will continue to do her community engagement and we will all work together.

Member Pawlica inquired whether Officer Andy would have any interaction with bar owners and participate in bar patrol? Police Chief Emmi explained that Officer Andy is a supplement to the existing officers on patrol during the bar hours. He will work close to bar detail officers; network building is important part of program. Interaction with the public will be encouraged with the residents boarding the downtown district including the homeless population creating harmony between all stakeholders and residents.

Member Harries asked if the officer will be in plain clothes. Police Chief Emmi explained that Officer Andy will be in plain clothes yet is still identified by his badge and other gear as a normal officer. Uniform will be worn when the event presents itself.

Introduction of Community Economic Director, Roger Caruso:

Executive Director Stevens welcomed the new CED Director, Roger Caruso to the podium. Roger shared that he grew up in Ferndale and attended Hazel Park schools prior to moving to Colorado where he lived and worked in both public and private sectors for 17 years. He expressed his desire to realign code enforcement dedicated staff to downtown district.

5.b Update on Fire Department Business Registration Program

Fire Chief Robinson encouraged members to get to know her and to reach out directly at any time. This program replaces CRARP and allows the Fire Department to identify, mitigate, educate, and gain awareness. Business inspections should take place every year and report chemical storage. These inspections prepare the Fire Department for an incident in event that it becomes a need for protection. If a business has already paid for their yearly CRARP, it applies to this new program. The program is designed to gain hazard knowledge and awareness in a personalized one on one fashion. Proactive approach to safeguarding businesses. One on One opportunity to discuss questions you have or need. Businesses are asked to register and schedule an inspection starting July 1 each year. Brochures are available to help understand the process with a QR code that takes them right to the form for easy and streamlined as possible.

Member George asked if this is mandatory. Fire Chief Robinson expressed that the inspection is mandatory but does not like to use that word. If the businesses is undergoing renovations or the property is vacant, you are already working with the Fire Department, so the inspection process is taken care at that time. When the business moves into the space, it is important to share the registration details at that time.

Member Raska brings attention to the form not allowing for the tenant, business to submit without having property owner information included. Tenant, business owner and landlord do not always know everything about each other. Requests the form allows for a tenant, business owner to still be able to submit with out having to fill out the landlord information.

Member Martin asked who does these inspections, third party or internal? Fire Chief Robinson explains that now and moving forward the Frist Department staff will executing all inspections. Fire extinguisher inspections are outsourced, and business will receive letter from another source about those inspections.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

a. *Approval of Minutes from June 2, 2022*

Moved by Member Raska seconded Member Martin to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Metari Harris, Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS- None

All ayes, motion carries.

7. Regular Agenda

7.a Contract extension for Landscaping and Maintenance with the City of Ferndale Department of Public Works in an amount not to exceed \$185,440,000 for FY23. Additional approval for Addendum A for Snow Removal and De-Icing Services in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 for FY23.

Lena Stevens reviewed the history about why we work directly with DPW staff and not source out. The FY23 contract reflects changes to the snow removal and de-icing services based on the needs experienced in the pilot. Minor changes have taken place such as clarification on special events and this contract does not cover labor done during special events. Contract reflects the addition to a fuel and inflation sur charge. DPW Director, Dan Antosik is available to answer any questions anyone may have. Board acknowledged a correction needed to the amount listed on agenda, the second comma is supposed to be a period, \$185,440.00

Members George and Raska expressed their satisfaction with the friendly staff and appearance of the hanging baskets.

Budget for FY21/22 was \$172,000.000. Increases to the FY23 are \$3,000 plus \$10,000 for snow removal and de-icing.

Motion to approve Contract Extension for Landscaping and Maintenance with the City of Ferndale Department of Public Works in an amount not to exceed \$185,440.000 for FY23. Additional approval for Addendum A for Snow Removal and De-Icing Services in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 for FY23 moved by Member George and seconded by Member Raska.

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Metari Harris, Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS – None

All ayes, motion carries.

7.b Consideration of Salary Grade Structure for the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority & Annual Salary Increase for DDA Executive Director

Executive director, Lena Stevens began the presentation by mentioning the topic may be awkward. A big part of this agenda item identifies a rate structure for the DDA to be a

part of the current adopted fee structure with the rest of City Staff.

Each year, the Ferndale City Council adopts an updated Grade Structure for Non-Union Salary Positions. The Ferndale Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Executive Director proposed that the Ferndale DDA be included in this structure in the future to clarify policy and ensure equitable pay scales.

Currently, staff of the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority (DDA) are not included in the City of Ferndale Grade Structure of Non-Union Salary Positions. Including the DDA in this structure serves to clarify policy in the hiring process and helps ensure that pay within the Ferndale DDA remains comparable to similar positions with the City of Ferndale and to neighboring communities. While the DDA Executive Director maintains the responsibility for all personnel decisions, establishing structure is a critical part of creating continuity in operations.

The DDA Board of Directors were asked to do the following:

- (1) Approve the proposed grade structure which lists the Engagement Manager in Grade 1, and the Executive Director in Grade 5
- (2) Approve an annual pay rate increase for the Executive Director. To date, only cost of living increases have been requested by the Executive Director considering the pandemic and its potential impact to the budget.

(1) PROPOSED GRADE STRUCTURE The proposal sets the following pay grades: Engagement Manager in Grade 1, and the Executive Director in Grade 5. It also sets policy for annual pay rate increases of 2% for cost of living and 2.5% based on annual review of performance, in line with City of Ferndale policy. The proposed Salary Grade for the Executive Director was established in consultation with the City of Ferndale Director of Human Resources. It is representative of a salary study completed in FY22 as well as comparison to similar roles within the City of Ferndale. Note that the pay rate, or step, within the set grade for the DDA Engagement Manager will be determined by the Executive Director in accordance with the bylaws. The original rate of pay for this position was set based on previous pay rates of the Ferndale DDA only and did not take into consideration relevant positions with the City of Ferndale.

(2) REQUESTED INCREASE FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR All salary increases for the DDA Executive Director should be approved by the DDA Board of Directors. The bylaws do not give the Executive Director the authority to establish or increase their own rate of pay. Currently, the salary range for this position was set through discussion with the DDA Board of Directors during the hiring process. No formal policy is in place for any position within the Ferndale DDA. Setting a Salary Grade for the Executive Director is important for continuity of policy, however the "step" within that grade is a matter for the DDA Board of Directors to consider based on performance/merit. In FY22, the Executive Director of the Ferndale DDA requested that analysis of DDA Director and/or equivalent positions be included in the salary study being conducted by the City of Ferndale. The

Ferndale DDA Executive Director had no role in collecting the resulting data. The results of this study are attached for reference. Please note the current pay noted does not indicate years of service. It is also important to note that Birmingham and Farmington Hills may not directly comparable to the Ferndale DDA due to their size and complexity but are still included for reference. At the time of hiring, the current Executive Director's salary was \$74,000. Cost of living increases of 2% have been applied twice in July 2020 and 2021 for a current salary of \$76,989.60. This was a decision of the Director considering the pandemic's uncertain impacts to the budget. The DDA Executive Director is now requesting a pay rate increase of 5.5%, equivalent to Grade 5, Step 4: \$81,150. This would be retroactive to July 1, 2022. If a 2% raise had been applied in July 2020 followed by a 4.5% raise in July 2021 and 2022, the Executive Director requested salary would be \$82,426. Annual performance review sessions have been held between the DDA Director and the City Manager, and an annual review from the DDA Board of Directors will become a standard practice going forward.

Item Costs DDA full time salary costs are included in General Ledger #248-000-706.000. In FY22, the amended budget for full time salaries was \$122,160. The current FY23 budget set aside \$127,805 for full time salaries, which represented a 4.5% increase for both staff members. Under the proposed pay structure, this would be increased to approximately \$134,000. Costs for taxes and benefits will increase in relation to the pay increases. It is the opinion of the Executive Director that this is reasonable and can be accommodated by the Ferndale DDA budget. Revenue for the Ferndale DDA has continued to rise steadily for the past decade. While the Headlee Override expiration in FY26 is a consideration, it is the opinion of the DDA Executive Director that staffing remains the most vital resource, especially if increased efforts for grant research becomes a necessary party of operations.

The salary numbers presented were based upon the department and overall salary study.

Board Chair Jacokes stated that grad 1 and grade 5 seem fair.

Member George mentioned that in the private sector, a raise requires an explanation of what more the person will provide or do to validate the increase in salary. (Members Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica departed) In response, Stevens stated that the executive director position will continue the communication and facilitation of Woodward Moves, continue to clean house, and complete a level of organization.

Member Raska stated that adopting this format is a good step in right direction, it is a long time coming and appreciated this happening. Member Raska also shared his opinion that the impression is more that executive director works for the City Manager but not the board and recommends and would like to see that executive director is more for the board.

Motion to approve Proposed Salary Grade Structure for the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority and Annual Salary Increase for DDA Executive Director moved by Member Raska and seconded by Member George.

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Metari Harris, Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS – None

All ayes, motion carries.

9. Call to Board Members & Other Business *Members are provided an opportunity to share general updates, recovery planning strategy, questions, concerns, etc.:*

Member Raska inquired over the changes taking place in the Chamber and DDA involvement with ribbon cuttings. Executive Director, Stevens stated that she is setting a policy and outline and will be able to implement standard process. Member Raska responded from experience, a standard process is not that welcoming and to be sure to accommodate all the needs of the community.

Executive director, Stevens provided information on those outside of the DDA district regarding the status of the Chamber of Commerce. It is unsure but it appears as though currently it is dissolving and the CED department is taking the lead on ribbon cuttings moving forward. The marquee at Nine Mile and Woodward was managed by the Chamber of Commerce and discussions on whether the Ferndale Community Foundation will be responsible are taking place.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Raska seconded Member Harris to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 AM

AYES – Chair PJ Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Metari Harris, Nathan Martin, Toly Ashkenazi and Council Member Greg Pawlica

NAYS – None

All ayes, motion carries.