



Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2022 @ 8:00 AM  
Council Chambers  
300 E Nine Mile, Ferndale, MI 48220

**1. CALL TO ORDER: 8:08 AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Pj Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Metari Harris, Toly Ashkenazi and Mayor Melanie Piana

MEMBERS ABSENT: JeDonna Dinges

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

GUESTS: Joe Gacioch, Ferndale City Manager; Michael Lary, Special Events Director for City of Ferndale; Jenny Marr, Executive Director of the Ferndale Area District Library; Heather Van Poucker, Executive Director of the Ferndale Housing Commission; Dan Antosik, Director of the Department of Public Works; David Ogloza, Quix Chocolate; Renee Croft, Ascension Medical Group; Stephanie Anderson, The Living Room Hair Lounge; Jess Minnick, Not Sorry Goods

AUDIENCE: N/A

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*AYES* – Chair Pj Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Metari Harris, Toly Ashkenazi and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS- None*

*All ayes, motion carries.*

**3. COMMUNITY REPORTS**

Jenny Marr, Executive Director of the Ferndale Area District Library Jenny announced the Story Time Trail ribbon cutting takes place on Saturday, November 12 at 1 PM at end of the trail, near Detroit Curling Club. The Story Time Trail, is inclusive and accessible picture book located at Martin Road Park, was in discussions for almost 10 years as a partnership with Parks & Recreation and DPW. Splash pad had to be completed first and then rebuild path for the Story Time Trail. Book club / social club offering reading rainbow at Affirmations. Piece of Politics series, program at UHS. Library is busy, tiny art program – grab kit and paint to add to the exhibition. Tiny Art reception will be towards end of month.

Heather Van Poucker, Executive Director of the Ferndale Housing Commission announced the wait list has opened with a one bedroom available. Available to area businesses and their employees who live and work or is hired to work in business located in Ferndale. Low-income AMI less that 50,150 – 57,300. Cap rent at 30% of income. Approx. 563 a month. Rents flex to meet needs. Application process is online but can

submit paper applications, office is open to help those who need help submitting. Submitting to be on the wait list is the first step, when your name comes up you will be called in to verify. Application goes live on Monday at Ferndalehousing.com.

#### 4. CALL TO AUDIENCE: N/A

*Members of public and audience invited to introduce themselves and share things.*

**David Ogloza, Quix Chocolate** introduced himself by stating he has been open for about 4 months on West Troy Street. Provided sample chocolate to board members. He is looking forward to seeing how foot traffic increases with My Salon Suites opening. Shared information on the Rising Stars program, started by a chef in Michigan that he participates in with two students. Rising Star provides students with disabilities an opportunity to get real life experience in a kitchen setting.

**Renee Croft, Ascension Medical Group** introduced herself and the new location that opened on West Troy. The Ferndale medical center has four physicians and treats all ages, infant to 100 years old in a point of care process. Parking has been tremendous benefit with their unique needs and dealing with corporate payment. GYN is coming on board in January. Hopeful an infectious disease specialist will be joining them soon. Currently open Monday through Friday and hope to add Saturdays.

Stephanie Anderson, The Living Room Hair Lounge announced she has expanded her location to the ground level at the corner of West Troy and Woodward. Walk-ins are overwhelming and is hiring more staff to assist with offering this service. Original location, upstairs will become booth rental. Full-service salon partnering with Paul Mitchell, students from Cosmetology. A lot going on but under control.

Board Members introduce themselves, Metari Harris of Bags & Beads; Omar George, property owner, Sarah Brown of CrossFit, Mayor Melanie Piana, Jerome Raska of Blumz by JR Designs and Toly Askhenazi of SOHO and 215 West.

#### 5. PRESENTATIONS

##### 5.a 2022 Halloween Window Decorating Contest Awards and Trick or Treat Event Summary

Engagement Manager, Sommer Realy announced the winners of the 2022 Halloween Window Decorating Contest: 1. Margaux & Max 2. Bobcat Bonnie's 3. Treat Dreams. In addition, this was also the first year of the DDA leading the downtown Trick or Treat. The turnout was fabulous with a special station for dogs at Maestros' Dog Haus, Police Department at Rainbow Alley and all the vendors in Rust Belt Market.

##### 5.b Overview of Winter Advertising/Marketing Campaign

Executive Director, Lena Stevens explained that this year's advertising campaign has gone from Unbox the Holidays to this organic approach to celebrate the season, Fall in Love with Ferndale this Winter. Woodward Moves was good example of what works, video and carousel posting, provide these items/graphics, moving away from Christmas and

moving into inclusiveness, season and supporting small business. Examples show graphic that incorporate the categories and then real photos will follow. Social media outreach as well as the other items we have for outreach. Website – Visit – Shop, dine, art, and shopping lists. Focused newsletter for updating the listing. Mentioned that Ferndale Dollars eGiftcard is still active and announced a DTE sponsorship for BOGO dollars for some time in December. Members discussed marketing to corporations for bulk purchases for employee gifts along with adding a pinned post on highlights with all those who are participating.

#### **5.c Review of Downtown Snow Removal Policies**

Dan Antosik, Director of the Department of Public Works provided an overview of the Downtown snow removal. The DDA did not fund prior to pandemic, during shutdown we implemented a bit of an assistance using the new equipment to do pedestrians walkways. This year plan is to do snow removal in DDA districts, when possible, to create safer passage for pedestrians. Sidewalks are cleared in district and as needed salt or ice melt when snow measures around 2 inches. Cross walks are part of the city coverage. Freezing rain requires salt to help with slickness of sidewalks. A 5–6-foot path for pedestrian traffic only, not to doors, like what is done in parks. Roads and parking lots are priority, downtown before parks is likely. Last year was smooth, crews did not seem to experience any issues.

Mayor Piana requested, a clear understanding of the non DDA locations and why does not happen for them be made available. Snow Removal is optional for DDA board can remove the service to make it easiest for those not in district to understand. This is optional only, legally the property owner’s responsibility.

#### **5.d Discussion Item: CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. *Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2022***

*AYES* – Chair Pj Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Metari Harris, Toly Ashkenazi and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS- None*

*All ayes, motion carries.*

### **6. Regular Agenda**

#### **7.a Approval of Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Ferndale and the Downtown Ferndale Development Authority**

Executive director, Lena Stevens presented the following information. In September the board discussed the interlocal agreement as another step to professionalize the DDA. Annual and retroactive. Payment will be made for q4 of 2022. Facilities task force and city manager drove the conversation. DDA office use to be at 149 W Nine Mile and moved to 300 E Nine mile as referenced in a memo in 2015.

The Ferndale Downtown Development Authority (DDA) currently utilizes property and services from the City of Ferndale to conduct business. Contributions have been made to

the General Fund to contribute to the cost of these services, however the process for calculating the fees has lacked definition. The purpose of an annual agreement between both parties is to set clear expectations and ensure that the DDA is properly contributing to the cost of the services it uses. In 2016 the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority (DDA) moved its operations into Ferndale City Hall located at 300 East Nine Mile Road. The space is 425 square feet, which includes an inner office and storage space. The DDA also uses several shared spaces within the building including City Council Chambers, conference rooms, and the kitchen. From a memo dated 12.7.2015 from former Director Barry Hicks, the DDA agreed to contribute an amount not to exceed \$25,000 for the construction of the space. The DDA also currently makes use of several services provided by the City of Ferndale including but not limited to audit, payroll, account payable services, and technology capabilities including helpdesk support, software licensing, phone, network and internet technology and support. Use of these services has increased in recent years, as the collaborative relationship between the two organizations has become more consistent.

The proposed agreement sets a monthly payment of \$4,250, or \$51,000 annually based on a flat fee of \$10 per square foot. This payment will include use of the facilities, services, and utilities. In FY22, the DDA was charged \$16,205 for General Fund Admin Allocation, 248-000-961.101. Funding was also budgeted for audit support in the amount of \$1,200. Can be terminated within 30 days of either party. Concerned about transparency on the \$10 sq ft a square foot. Idea is to put into place for quarter 4 of this year and 1-2 quarter next year, then renew every fiscal year. Expressed it is a huge benefit to be within City Hall and over the next few years the collaboration between city and DDA to be in same building.

Assistance from HR and Tech support takes a lot of burden off the staff of two, allowing for focus on the important work. Better reputation as a government entity. Main Street Oakland County was the big push to the DDA having a standalone brick and mortar and over time has evolved to support the needs of the new generation. Hurdle was the perception and now the public to protect the DDA's identity and felt it made us much more reachable. It is a win win to be in city hall, now and a benefit to the City to be seamless.

Mayor Piana expressed that the cyber security investment is an expense that the city provides the DDA would not be able to afford, another highlight of how the DDA is benefiting.

Joe Gacioch, Ferndale City Manager; expressed the synergy between the DDA and city is better than it has ever been. Ribbon cuttings is a prime example. Ascension backed up the positive support and downtown Ferndale's approach.

**Motion by Mayor Melanie Piana seconded by member Jerome Raska to approve the Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Ferndale and the Downtown Ferndale Development Authority, as submitted by the DDA Executive Director**

AYES – Chair Pj Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Metari Harris, Toly Ashkenazi and Mayor Melanie Piana

NAYS- None

*All ayes, motion carries.*

## **7. Information Items from Executive Director**

Jess Minnick, co-owner of Not Sorry Goods and a huge component of community outreach and neighboring businesses is in attendance as the preliminary meeting and next time will sit with the rest of them. Jess Minnick addressed the board, excited to join the board as a resident and business owner, previous experience is with Chamber, marketing director and overall, a creative person.

Executive director, Lena Stevens announced that the DDA will be getting on TikTok to reach new ages for a six-month trial period. 1 or 2 posts and then 1 highlighting a business who is already using Tik Tok. Evaluate in the spring to see if there is value and continue into 2023.

City Website is doing an RFP and the DDA may use the same resource.

First annual holiday event hosted by the City of Ferndale and the DDA, Jingle & Mingle, takes place on November 18 & 19, 2022. This event replaces what use to be a tree lighting celebration. The DDA is providing staff time and sponsorship of the music, live deejays. Special events director, Michael Lary stated that this event is in efforts to activate awareness of the parking structure and part of redevelopment of West Troy to use streetscape with activation of a public space. Event is providing an opportunity to do a food drive with Renaissance Vineyard. Ferndale Elks will be participating by sponsoring \$50 Ferndale Dollar eGiftcard to six winners. Helping those who need help while having fun.

Bags & Beads ribbon cutting takes place on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM.

Budget season fiscal year, mid-year, props to show what we have done in the last year to start thinking about how to spend the money. Think about how money is being spent, next month will be the focus on our budget spending process.

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

Omar George shared experience he had in Dearborn, Trunk or Treat with Mayor. Hopes the board can entertain something like that next year.

Mayor Piana mentioned attending a mobility summit with Oakland County city officials, and shared the following: childcare sponsorship for those effected by covid, still available to other. Stipend for businesses for apprenticeships arbor funds. Will send info to Lena and share with rest of board.

Jess Minnick stated that MiWorks will be launching going pro talent program. Up to 2,000 per employee, huge database, applications are open for a month. Funds come in February.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Chair Pj Jacokes to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 AM**

*AYES* – Chair Pj Jacokes, Jerome Raska, Omar George, Treasurer Sarah Brown, Metari Harris, Toly Ashkenazi and Mayor Melanie Piana

*NAYS- None*

*All ayes, motion carries.*