



VIRTUAL Monthly Meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors
Downtown Development Authority Meeting
THURSDAY, APRIL 13 @ 8:00 AM

1. CALL TO ORDER: TIME 8:06 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Sarah Brown, Treasurer Omar George, Secretary JeDonna Dinges, Jess Minnick, and Metari Harris

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Melanie Piana, Chair PJ Jacobs, Toly Ashkenazi, Jerome Raska

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

GUESTS: Jenny Marr; Ferndale Area District Library

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of agenda as presented.

AYES – Vice Chair Sarah Brown, Treasurer Omar George, Treasurer Je Donna Dinges, Members Jess Minnick, and Metari Harris

NAYS- None

All ayes, motion carries.

3. COMMUNITY REPORTS

a. Jenny Marr; Ferndale Area District Library

Stated the following: The Battle of the Books, 5th year this event has taken place was held on April 14th with 32 teams for 5th graders in a trivia game style competition with reading books. Computer classes are popular. Story time continues at the library. Friends of the Library looking for donations for the upcoming book sale.

4. CALL TO AUDIENCE

a. None.

5. PRESENTATIONS

a. Moderation of Social Media Content, presented by Miller Canfield

Executive Director Lena Stevens provided background of the importance of social media as a form of marketing. Encouraged the board to ask questions and requested any follow up thoughts be sent to her in next couple of days by email.

Ron Liscombe from Miller Canfield presented on screen the facts indicating that as a government entity, we cannot delete comments, or block commenters on our social media pages. It is a violation of the First Amendment for a government entity to delete or hide comments. Real life testimonials scenarios were provided. 1st amendment analysis. Regulation of speech goes both ways, no constitutional obligation for people to be nice to each other. Court cases go under an analysis, what is right or wrong

doesn't apply. Hide verses deleted are functionally the same. A social media policy will be presented and implemented appropriately.

b. Update on Downtown Maintenance Contract, presented by Sommer Really (DDA) and Derek Radell (DPW)

In 2018, the DDA moved the contract from Worry Free to City of Ferndale Department of Public Works. At that time, we were not satisfied and there were more benefits to partnering with DPW, move internal. Commit to partnership with people who care. A three-year contract is approved every year with two options with extensions. The DDA will need to vote to continue the contract in June, and then the council will approve.

c. Woodward Moves Construction Update

Executive Director, Lena Stevens reported that there are continuous lane closures currently for Woodward Moves. On Friday night traffic lights electrical conduit was severed. Woodward is blinking yellow. Nine Mile is blinking red. Pedestrian traffic across Woodward is on hold due to traffic concerns and safety. Mayor has requested auxiliary police to help pedestrians cross over the weekend. Increased and dedicated portal focus near Camborne due to people taking left turns.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of minutes from March 16, 2023

AYES – Vice Chair Sarah Brown, Treasurer Omar George, Treasurer Je Donna Dinges, Members Jess Minnick, and Metari Harris

NAYS – None

All ayes, motion carries.

7. REGULAR AGENDA

- a. None.

8. CALL TO BOARD MEMBERS

Omar George shared his support and encouraged focus reciprocals near Withington for cigarette butts near West Troy as well. Requested crime statistics request during next meeting, including a follow up on the better lighting and security cameras in adjacent parking lot near one of his properties.

Metari Harris inquired about the status of the mural program.

JeDonna Dinges stated that cigarette butts and trash receptacles, near Found Sound, are overflowing.

Jess Minnick provided information on available grants. Stated she would send an email to all members with information. Executive Director Lena Stevens will discuss further with Jess about making a landing page of this information available on our website.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

N/A

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Vice Chair Sara Brown, seconded by Treasurer, Omar George to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 A.M.

AYES – Vice Sarah Brown, Treasurer Omar George, Secretary Je Donna Dinges, Members Jess Minnick, and Metari Harris

NAYS – None

All ayes, motion carries.