

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE WYOMING DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AT ITS MEETING OF OCTOBER 1, 2013

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 2, 2013
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY OF WYOMING, MICHIGAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cohen, Harkema (arrived at 8:10 a.m.), Kochneff, Poll, VanderVeen, Van der Klock, VanDuren

MEMBERS ABSENT: Male, Vandenberg, VanTimmeren

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer Ballard, Tim Cochran, Karen Oppenneer, Rebecca Rynbrandt, Tom Yore

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob O'Callaghan, President-Wyoming/Kentwood Chamber of Commerce; Gregg Howard, Metro Cruise Director, Tommy Brann; Brann's, Jerry Degood; Auto Finance

Chairman Kochneff called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Poll and supported by VanderVeen to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2013 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no comments on agenda items.

Treasurer's Report

There was not a Treasurer's report provided.

Presentations:

Metro Cruise: Gregg Howard updated the DDA on the 2013 Metro Cruise scheduled for August 23 and 24. The vendor area will be expanded to include approximately 40 vendors. On Thursday, August 22 there will be a community event to raise money for the Wyoming schools. Fox 17 will be doing a live broadcast of their morning show on Friday, August 23 from 5:00 to 9:00 a.m. Flyers were distributed.

DDA Director's Report

Adopted 2013-2014 Budget: A copy of the adopted 2013-2014 DDA budget is included in the packet.

Adoption of the Updated DDA By-laws: VanDuren explained that at the April 2 meeting, DDA members were given the updated DDA by-laws for review. The changes included the meetings

changing to quarterly and also the addition of the word "City" before Council. A motion was made by Poll to approve the updated by-laws, seconded by Van der Klock. VanderVeen asked about the date of the previous by-laws, explaining that she would like to compare the old by-laws to the new version and for this reason stated she would be abstaining from voting. VanDuren will provide the previous date as requested, to VanderVeen. All other members present voted to approve the updated by-laws.

Special Meeting on September 3, 2013: Scott Smith will be present at the September 3 special meeting to begin the process of resetting the DDA tax base. VanDuren explained that the Citizen's Council group has been contacted and we are waiting for their responses. Nine citizens are needed to participate. It is important that all DDA members are present at the September 3 meeting. VanDuren introduced Tom Yore and Karen Oppenneer, from the Assessor's Office, who were available to address questions or concerns regarding resetting the tax base. Poll asked about the approximate dollar amount of change from where the tax base was originally set. Yore explained that currently the DDA has a negative balance, and once reset, will move to the current assessment roll and by resetting the tax base, this will remove the negative figure and place the DDA at a positive capture for the next year. Yore noted the Assessor's office is seeing a slight increase in sales on commercial properties. Van der Klock asked about resetting the base being time sensitive due to getting it done before the values go up. Yore explained the roll was established by the March Board of Review and once the resetting is acted upon, the current roll will be used. Van der Klock asked about entities that have delinquent tax amounts. Yore explained this will not impact their current bill, and these amounts will stay delinquent. Kochneff asked about tax tribunal cases under appeal and if the DDA resets the taxable value, what impact this would have. Yore explained that appeals and anything that has happened in the past would not be impacted. Yore explained the issue for the DDA is that the taxable value has to move up for there to be a benefit. This will not have any effect on current appeals. Kochneff asked about properties that get purchased by a non-profit organization. Yore explained that a purchase by a non-profit organization does not always mean they would be tax exempt. If they are already exempt, the property is removed from the roll completely and this will lower the DDA base because the exempt property rule overrides the DDA and the property will remain in the DDA base but, the value will become zero.

Marge's Donut Den Trees: VanDuren explained that on June 13 a citizen approached City Manager Holt about the trees in front of Marge's Donut Den being trimmed. Pictures of the trees were provided in the DDA packet. VanDuren noted that the trees were trimmed to the point of having no branches or leaves and that the trees are located on City property. VanDuren contacted Marge, who said she felt the trees would grow back. Heyboer Landscaping assessed the trees and said the trees would never grow back to full capacity. VanDuren explained that the cost for replacement will be charged to Marge. VanDuren asked for comments from the DDA before she goes forth with the replacement of trees. The new trees will be replaced in September. Van der Klock asked why this matter was before the DDA. Kochneff explained it is because the DDA paid for the trees. Kochneff noted the trees in front of Marge's Donut Den were quite bushy and perhaps when Heyboer Landscaping replants the trees, they can be replaced with trees of a smaller nature. VanderVeen asked about the date as to when the tree removal policy was put into effect. VanDuren explained it was created under the direction of the

previous DDA Director, Megan Sall. VanderVeen asked that she be provided with the exact date, as she does not remember the DDA voting on the tree policy. VanderVeen asked if all 28th Street businesses were given a copy of the policy. She also expressed concern that businesses may not be aware of the policy. VanderVeen expressed concern over the current care and replacement of trees in the DDA and questioned the communication between the DDA and businesses within the DDA. Poll explained that the while the City has responsibilities, so do the business owners in regard to being aware of the City's policies and that all policies are easily obtainable from the City. Kochneff commented on VanderVeen's question regarding if all businesses were notified of the policy and he felt it fell under the same process as a city ordinance. Poll explained notifications of new ordinances or changes to ordinances are not sent out to all businesses.

Special Road Project Funding for the Crescent Street: The State of Michigan notified municipalities that there may possibly be special road funding available and requested municipalities submit projects. Public Works selected the crescent street project for submission.

28 West Marketing Promotion Update: VanDuren and Ballard will be attending the International Council of Shopping Centers Conference on July 17 and 18, in Novi. Thumb drives containing a promotional video that introduces 28 West, along with a Fact Sheet about the City of Wyoming will be distributed to developers.

Metro Cruise Drink Booth Volunteer Sign Up: VanDuren explained that the DDA provides a slush machine drink booth at Metro Cruise and historically, DDA members have volunteered to work in one hour increments. The signup sheet is available today.

Wyoming Gives Back Holiday Event: Ballard reported the Wyoming Gives Back Holiday event will be held on Thursday, December 5 at Rogers Plaza. Letters will go out in September to Wyoming Merchants. Merchants that give a donation will be offered the opportunity to host a table at the event. Last year approximately 27 businesses donated, with 20 having tables at the event.

Correspondence: VanDuren reported welcome letters were sent to three new Wyoming businesses including Workforce Employment Specialists, Super Tobacco, and Sweetie Thai.

Round Table Comments:

VanderVeen requested a discussion about the status of the Gateway Project, at the corner of Division Avenue and 28th Street. VanderVeen explained that Jerry Degood from the Division Avenue Business Association was in contact with the City of Grand Rapids and was successful in recently getting the weeds cut down in this area but, it has been a struggle to get it taken care of. Degood explained he has been in contact with the City of Grand Rapids who reports they will maintain it along with lighting the poles at night, however at this time, the irrigation is not turned on nor has the property been maintained. He noted Neighborhood Ventures was originally supposed to be maintaining the property but have not been doing so. Degood suggested possibly a lawn service donating their services for free advertisement on the property.

Tommy Brann explained Neighborhood Ventures is under new leadership and are no longer involved in the maintaining of the property. Brann and Degood both said they were thankful to the City of Grand Rapids for the help they are receiving in maintaining the property. Brann feels this area is a great asset to the City and suggested the Division Avenue Association to contribute to weed control and feels it is not the DDA's responsibility. Degood suggested community service crews to possibly maintain it. VanderVeen suggested the Wyoming-Kentwood Jaycees, or a garden club sharing the responsibilities. Kochneff asked Rynbrandt about the area and Neighborhood Ventures. Rynbrandt explained the challenge with this property is that is owned by MDOT and located in the City of Grand Rapids. Rynbrandt said that upon investigation, no formal document could be located between MDOT, the City of Grand Rapids and Neighborhood Ventures and that the contract with Neighborhood Ventures is null and void. Rynbrandt offered to do more research but, it was her understanding the City of Grand Rapids is taking on the coordination of the maintenance of the property. Poll suggested an organization like "Adopt-a-Highway" or a church organization being the lead organization but, this would have to be approved through the City of Grand Rapids. Poll asked that this matter taken care of within a month.

Van der Klock asked VanDuren about the Blight Elimination Grant. VanDuren explained that some funding may be re-appropriated to other municipalities and said she believes that Studio 28 tops of the list.

Harkema mentioned how nice the lilies on the corner of 131 & 28th Street look. Harkema shared that the construction on 28th Street will begin July 15. Harkema voiced a concern about the panhandlers that stand on the corner of 131 and 28th Street. Cohen explained the business owners between Division Avenue and 131 have been working with the Police Department on this issue. Cohen suggested publicity to inform citizens of the situation. Harkema asked if the Chamber could put something about the situation in their newsletter.

Public Comments

Gregg Howard mentioned Metro Cruise will be at Lamar Park on August 6, 2013 for National Night Out.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 a.m.

Jennifer Ballard
Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office