

**FERNDALE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2017  
8:00 A.M.  
FERNDALE CITY HALL  
300 E. 9 MILE  
FERNDALE, MI 48220**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A. Roll Call 8:02 a.m.

**DDA Board Members Present:** Mindy Cupples, Jay McMillan, Jerome Raska, Pj Jacokes, Jacki Smith, Michael Hennes, Blake Scheer and Chris Johnston

**DDA Board Members Absent:** Blake Scheer and Mayor/Council

**Staff Present:** Barry Hicks, Cindy Willcock, Torri Buback

**Guests:** April Lynch, Kara Sokol, Sheryl Stubblefield and Jordan Twardy, City of Ferndale, Matt Zook, Ferndale Area Chamber, Anthony Morrow, Pulp Detroit, Carol Jackson, Ferndale Literacy Project

B. Dismissals: Dean Bach and Mayor/Council

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Director Raska, seconded by Director McMillan to approve the agenda as presented. All Ayes, motion carries.

D. Approval of Minutes: April 2017

Motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Scheer to approve the Minutes for March 2017 as presented. All Ayes, motion carries.

**II. Consent Agenda**

A. June 2017 Council Brief

B. Budget (handed out at meeting)

ED Hicks gave background on the Council Brief, noting it recaps events and echoes his recent Council presentation. Regarding the library millage, with the assistance of Chair Bach contact was made with DDA attorneys Howard & Howard work is being done on how debt obligations may qualify the DDA to capture at least part of the TIF during the length of the contract obligations, although an agreement with the library will probably still be required. A joint meeting to discuss design guidelines was held with the City, DDA and Planning Commission. He also noted that he sent out an email forwarded from the MDA regarding advocacy fundraising and recommended that the DDA make a contribution of \$250-\$500. Other items discussed were a recap of a conversation with the Executive Committee regarding employee contract proposed changes, including resetting dates to align with the fiscal year to make for greater ease with raises, budgeting, etc. This item can be further discussed in August or September. He has requested a tech visit from MSOC to focus on parking and a communication plan.

Motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Raska to pull the Council Brief and Budget Report out of the Consent Agenda for discussion. All Ayes, motion carries.

Motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Jacokes to receive the June 2017 Council Brief.

Discussion: Director Smith inquired as to when the Board would get a peek at the DDA strategic planning and ED Hicks explained that he was hoping to have something at this point, but is still working on it. Director Smith noted that she would like to see it before Council does, because she's going to get questions. She also asked for clarification on how much the DDA would be losing due to the change in legislation affecting the library millage and it was noted that for half the year it would be approximately \$25,000 and can then range from \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year.

All Ayes, Motion carries.

Motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Scheer to accept the Budget Report.

Discussion: Director Smith noted that the property tax is significantly lower because of the decrease of the Headlee override and the decrease of library TIF, which the DDA doesn't know what is going to happen. The largest expenses are personnel and facilities maintenance, plus the DDA is dipping into reserves for **The dot**. Discussions on facilities maintenance have been ongoing and ED Hicks noted that the budget will be in the negative through 2020, depending on what happens with the library millage. Director Smith requested clarification on how far down the property tax capture was. City Manager Lynch stated that Finance Director Stubblefield can attend the August Board meeting and provide a 5 year history and answer any questions. Questions should be forwarded to ED Hicks who will forward them to FD Stubblefield at least two weeks before the August Board meeting. Director Hennes noted that to the point made earlier, if Worry Free/facilities maintenance is moved out of our budget or the work is given to the DPW, that would void the existing contract/obligation and potentially take the TIF back off the table. It doesn't appear that DPW assuming facilities maintenance for the DDA is moving forward at this time.

All Ayes, motion carries.

### III. Call to Audience

Carol Jackson spoke on behalf of Jack Aronson and his foundation, The Artichoke Garlic Foundation. After selling Garden Fresh to Campbells, the Aronson's asked the schools what they could help fund and the superintendent suggested a literacy program to address those students coming into the district with no reading skills. The Ferndale Literacy Project has revamped a space with computers, a coffee bar, seating, etc. for students that want to read independently. A reading specialist was hired, along with supplying a lot of books. In its first year the program helped 45 students, with the schools identifying 100 for the coming year. The Foundation doesn't take in any money, it gives it out, and needs community support to help keep it going and to that end Jackson distributed information on donating. Director Cupples asked for an

electronic version, stating that it might make it more convenient for people to donate. Director Johnston noted that as a Ferndale Schools parent he goes in and reads to kids and has noticed a huge difference in reading skills, so this program is very helpful.

IV. Community Organization Reports

A. Chamber of Commerce

Matt Zook

New Chamber Executive Director Matt Zook introduced himself, noting that he had been here a little over 2 months and that he is very much focused on the Chamber being involved in the community and bringing the community and business together. Director/Chamber Chair Raska pointed out that Zook comes with previous Chamber as well as tourism experience and they are very happy to have him. Zook said among his ideas are putting together a restaurant association and a trade event for mead.

B. Ferndale School District

No report available. The district has hired a new Superintendent, Dania Bazzi who is scheduled to start on July 1.

V. Presentations

A. Construction Communication Strategy, Pulp Detroit

Anthony Morrow of Pulp presented part of the **Ferndale Forward** media kit. ED Hicks explained that a meeting was held with him, Morrow, City Manager April Lynch, City Director of Communications Kara Sokol and QM, the communications firm engaged by the city, in order to get all parties on the same page of a communication strategy for the upcoming project. August 2nd at 6:30 in Council Chambers the Planning Commission will meet to review the preliminary PUD documents, including the site plan. Work has begun in addressing construction worker parking with a few churches having been identified and Republic Parking has made suggestions as well. The valet services are also going forward and while Assistant City Manager Joe Gacloch is on paternity leave ED Hicks and Michael Lary will be talking to Star Trax who are helping set up a citywide valet system. Hicks noted that his goal is for that to be implemented a few months before construction begins. City Manager Lynch said that she believes the discussion was to begin the program during the Thanksgiving holiday. Logistics are also being worked out to address loading zones. While the communications plan is still being worked out, the DDA has launched the **Ferndale Forward** brand in its e-newsletter. The project will be known as **The dot**, although the **Ferndale Forward** brand is meant to carry beyond just that and be used for other downtown development projects, new art pieces and other ways to use that brand to tell a narrative of what's happening downtown. QM will be producing a brochure that the DDA will spearhead in getting that information out to the business community, while the City is working on how to get it out to residents. Hicks noted there are other things going onto the website, marketing in particular, and he'd like to see a map online that is artistic, creative and clickable and you will be able to see the projects, there will be a link to **The dot** (at this time he was not sure if that would be on parkferndale or another site). He is coordinating with the CED Department to get the information that is going to populate the map fields and also going to work on a **Ferndale Forward** brochure and an overall communication strategy, the content to be provided by QM, but that will take on the Downtown Ferndale brand.

Director of Communications Sokol provide additional into the role of QM, noting that the City is working with them to handle all communications for **The dot**, including all marketing and branding. The name is meant to be relatively short-lived and encompass this project only and will be phased out shortly after completion. She noted that the City has a communication plan flushed out on how to handle the residential plan and there will be a library of materials and those will be available to the DDA. There is a brochure specifically for business owners that encompasses all the resources they might need including there to go for assistances, what resources are available, etc. A second brochure will be for businesses to give to visitors and that will be higher level and include a large overarching view of what is happening and can be used as a resource piece for businesses to use for their customer base. All materials will link back to a micro site that lives off of the parkferndale website, but won't be parkferndale. Materials should be available by the end of July, with the site up in August and all materials printed by the first week in August. City Manager Lynch noted that as needs arise, we can work through QM to create more materials. ED Hicks explained that this team is meeting every other week. CM Lynch said the timeline goals are to have the discussion August 2nd at the Planning Commission, where the plans will most likely be 75% done, because the architects will want feedback in addition to the steering committee that has met with the PC, then there could be one more PC meeting and the project could go to Council in September, but to be safe 3 full meetings with the Planning Commission are being considered. Right now she feels the project is on track for a January 2018 groundbreaking. She also noted that the construction companies say it is better to start in January. She encouraged the Board to attend the August 2nd PC meeting at 6:30 and an email will be sent out through the DDA about the meeting.

Director Smith asked to have discussion about what **Ferndale Forward** is being used for and Pulp's Morrow noted that Pulp will be telling a story that can be told for the next few years if we want to continue to use the plan they have begun to put together, noting that what was handed out at the meeting didn't represent the finished plan, it is just more of a worksheet of what's the story we're going to tell and how it's going to be told. This information will go into a media kit for businesses, kind of a simplified, more concise version of the **How the West was One** plan. The plan will also have a messaging strategy for social media. Director Smith noted that she thinks there need to be some additions such as how we can help and it needs to be big, on its own page, something that will give ownership of the information to the businesses. She is also a fan of bullet points, maybe a section on "What happens when things go wrong", a schedule of construction, getting businesses together, community forums, round tables, and having all that pre-scheduled. She also requested a mobile friendly link with the information that she could include in every event she does. ED Hicks explained that was something that has been talked about, how to communicate during events and a meeting is scheduled for October to discuss this with the City Special Events Committee. Director Smith explained she was speaking about her in-store events and DofC Sokol said that **The dot** specific site will contain a mobile friendly link with that exact information. Smith also expressed concern about the potential of valet service ending at 9:00 when events might not end until 10. CM Lynch said that the valet program is considered a starting point and may very well end up different based on feedback.

Director Cupples said that in regards to constant feedback, having outreach business meetings once or twice a month should begin as early as September and a snort summary of the meetings should be sent to those that can't attend.

Director Hennes noted that he likes the opening paragraph of the Pulp plan, as it is much shorter and to the point.

Additional communication and marketing ideas were discussed such as bag stuffers, table tents, posters, printed to-go bags, yard signs for high traffic areas. Director Cupples inquired about a plan for media coverage and Sokol said there is a 9-month plan for residents and what ED Hicks has will be different. The next step will be to get together and look at how the communication plan for the business district will look. There are different opportunities for media interviews, invitations to events, soundbites etc. so that we stay in the media circuit.

B. Development on Troy Update (video)

Due to time constraints, Board was encouraged to view the video at their convenience.

VI. Call to Committee Chairs & Board Members & Staff

At the recommendation of acting-Chair Johnston, the viewing of the video was skipped in order to have a quorum for Call to Committee Chairs & Board & Staff.

ED Hicks stated the only other action item would be if the DDA wanted to make a donation to the MDA for advocacy a motion would be necessary. The money can be taken from the Printing & Publishing line item, and he suggests donating \$500 to the cause.

Motion by Director Hennes, seconded by Director Hennes to authorize the DDA Executive Director to make a donation of \$500 to the MDA. All Ayes, motion carries.

Director Hennes said that he purchased a bike from the Downtown Ferndale Bike Shop and had a discussion with the owner regarding the impact downtown events have on businesses and attending a Council meeting to discuss the impact the number and type of events has. Director Hennes stated that events need to add value to the City and the City needs to consider the impact on commercial businesses and what value that has. Perhaps other areas of Ferndale could benefit from hosting events and more discussion on this topic is needed. Director Cupples agreed, adding that she feels that for the next couple of years the City should stick with the more Ferndale-centric established events and not just let somebody plop things down anywhere. Director Smith had questions about event communications and who is responsible for communicating with businesses.

Operations Manager Willcock gave an update on DDA events, noting that the Art of the Cocktail raised approximately \$3,500, slightly under last year, but tickets sales were lower. However, the silent auction raised more than 20% more than the previous year. Get Reel Outdoor Movies on Vester launches July 20th with Disney's Moana. Pre-show entertainment (at no cost to the DDA) will be provided by Axis Music Academy and University of Detroit Mercy mascot Tommy Titan. Advertising opportunities are still available.

Director Johnston noted that Pig & Whiskey is this weekend and they have some paid positions available if anyone is interested or knows of anyone that is. He also requested that if anyone hears of any problems, please pass along his cell phone number.

Director Hennes noted that he has instructed all of his employees to keep time stamped punch-out slips for protection as some have been getting stopped by police when leaving work.

**VII. Adjournment**

Motion by Director Raska, seconded by Director Scheer to adjourn the meeting. All Ayes, meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.