

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD JANUARY 19, 2017**

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a meeting on Thursday, January 19, 2017. The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Community Center, 6407 Parkview Avenue.

Members present: Grant Taylor, Chair, Bruce Betzler, Shelly Corakis, Maria Dacoba, Jay Brown, Libby Heiny- Cogswell, Millard Loy, Jack Siegel, Ethan Sivewright and Dick Skalski.

Members absent: Mike Lutke, Julie Hite and Rich MacDonald.

Also present: Julie Johnston, Oshtemo Township Planning Director and Martha Coash, Meeting Transcriptionist.

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairperson Taylor asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Skalski moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Dacoba supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Election of Officers: 2017 Offices of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer**

Chairperson Taylor noted there was not a slate of officers to consider, that each office would be considered and voted on separately.

Mr. Brown wanted to make sure that all members of the DDA are eligible by means of owning property or a business or representing a business in the area.

There were no issues in this area that anyone was aware of; Ms. Johnston explained candidates are vetted by the legal department and subsequently approved by the Township Board. She was sure the Board would not approve anyone not legally entitled to serve, but will review the matter with Township Attorney Porter.

The Chair indicated he would be willing to continue as Chair and asked for nominations for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Mr. Skalski nominated and Mr. Siegel supported the nomination of Mr. Taylor to continue as Chairperson for 2017. Hearing no further nominations, the Chair closed the nominations and asked for a vote. Mr. Taylor was unanimously elected Chairperson for 2017.

Chairperson Taylor nominated and Mr. Betzler supported the nomination of Ms. Dacoba to continue in the position of Vice Chair for 2017. Hearing no further nominations, the Chair closed the nominations and asked for a vote. Ms. Dacoba was unanimously elected Vice Chairperson for 2017.

Chairperson Taylor nominated and Mr. Skalski supported the nomination of Mr. Loy to the position of Secretary for 2017. Hearing no further nominations, the Chair closed the nominations and asked for a vote. Mr. Loy was unanimously elected Secretary for 2017.

Chairperson Taylor nominated and Mr. Skalski supported the nomination of Ms. Corakis to the position of Treasurer for 2017. Hearing no further nominations, the Chair closed the nominations and asked for a vote. Ms. Corakis was unanimously elected Treasurer for 2017.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chairperson Taylor asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes for the meeting of September 15, 2016.

Hearing none, the Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Mr. Loy moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 15, 2016. Mr. Skalski supported the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Johnston noted members received a summary of the meeting of November 17, 2016, but since there was not a quorum at that meeting, the notes are not official minutes and did not need to be adopted.

### **Treasurer's Reports for September - October, 2016 and November – December (unaudited)**

Ms. Johnston presented the Treasurer's Report for September - October, 2016, noting three payments were made this reporting period: two to S & T Lawn Service and one to Siegfried Crandall for accounting services. Total expenditures totaled 1,258.50. Revenues increased by \$500 through interest earned on the DDA's fund balance.

In response to a request from Mr. Loy, Ms. Johnston will provide him with copies of the Bylaws and proposals/bills for lawn services for review.

Ms. Johnston also presented the Treasurer's Report for November – December, 2016. She pointed out three payments were made – the first to S & T Lawn Service, the second to Siegfried Crandall for accounting services and the final payment to the Township for staff support. Expenditures totaled \$873. No additional revenues were reported; however, year-end close-out has not yet been completed so additional interest may be reported later. At this point, the fund balance is around \$605,000.

Chairperson Taylor asked for a motion to approve the two Treasurer's reports.

Ms. Corakis moved to approve the two Treasurer's reports as presented. Ms. Dacoba supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Streetscape Update**

### **a. Car Wash Property**

#### **November Meeting**

Ms. Johnston reported that on October 5<sup>th</sup>, the Streetscape Subcommittee, comprised of Ms. Heiny-Cogswell, Ms. Dacoba, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Skalski, met to review and finalize the Letter of Understanding for the demolition of the car wash at 6532 Stadium Drive. The Letter details the requirements the Oshtemo Methodist Church must meet to receive a loan from the DDA, as well as the grant of a new parking lot. In addition, the Letter detailed the responsibilities of the DDA as part of the agreement.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, the Letter of Understanding was forwarded to Mr. William Selkirk, representative of Oshtemo Methodist Church. An email response was provided by Mr. Selkirk on October 21<sup>st</sup> which indicated he would present the proposal at the next Church Trustee meeting scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Selkirk and any Church Trustees were invited to attend the November 17<sup>th</sup> DDA meeting for further discussion on the terms outlined in the Letter of Understanding.

#### **January Update**

Ms. Johnston said Mr. Selkirk indicated in a November e-mail that the Church appreciated the terms of the loan provided by the DDA, but didn't feel they could take on additional debt at this time. They requested the DDA reconsider an exchange of property. At the November DDA meeting members asked staff to contact Mr. Selkirk to outline the location of the property they would like to exchange for the demolition of the car wash. A map of the two properties was provided to Mr. Selkirk asking for his input. To date, staff has not received a response.

There was extended discussion regarding what type of an agreement would be fair and acceptable to the Township, DDA and the Church. The Board considered what

the Church paid for the property, the square footage involved and what it might be worth, whether a loan might be possible and what terms might be, how the cost of demolition might be part of an agreement or whether the DDA should be responsible for that cost and cost of the parking lot construction, the length of time the Township/DDA should be guaranteed use of the parking lot, whether the agreement should be limited to an exchange rather than a loan and if so, how many square feet from the Church would be reasonable in exchange for the outlay needed for demolition and parking lot construction.

It was acknowledged the only Church interest for now is increased parking, but that there may be a wish to develop sometime in the future and that the Township/DDA has interest in landscaping that corner to meet or exceed Ordinance requirements in order to make the downtown more attractive.

Mr. Brown said any agreement with the Church would have to be approved by their District and that an exchange would be harder to get approved than a joint use agreement. The Church bought the property with the idea that it was the only place they would have for possible future expansion.

Ms. Johnston noted the idea of the exchange was originally suggested by the Church, so she hoped they could be persuaded.

Chairperson Taylor felt that any agreement now should be constructed to cover both demolition and improvements although it may be some time before improvements are completed.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell said the Township needs to be guaranteed use of the parking lot for more than 10 years considering the large financial investment involved.

Ms. Johnston noted it is the DDA/Township vision to make improvements to the downtown corner property and that even if the Church were to build, there would still be parking that could be shared with the Township. The Church should not be expected to contribute financially to that goal.

The consensus of the group was that any agreement should delineate terms for the Church and the Township to share use of the parking lot, that if the Church decides to build on the property in the future the Township be given two years' notice, and the Township be guaranteed use for 10-20 years since its financial obligation of \$55,000 will be substantial. It was felt it would be fair to the Church to base an agreement on a formula using the Township/DDA investment of \$55,000, (est. \$20,000 for demolition and \$35,000 for paving) to determine a percentage for the Church based on fair market value for the property.

Ms. Johnston expected the Church would be happy to allow the Township/DDA to build a nice space. She will verify whether or not the Phase I environmental work has already been done on the property.

b. **9th Street Safe Routes to School Proposal**

November Meeting

Ms. Johnston reported Prein and Newhof prepared a proposal to assist the DDA in submitting a Safe Routes to School grant. The proposal required Township staff to complete a large portion of the grant process. Due to time constraints associated with other projects, staff does not have the time to commit to all of these tasks. At the September meeting, staff indicated they were going to request Prein and Newhof prepare a new proposal with more of the grant tasks handled by their firm.

On September 30, staff met with Prein and Newhof to get a better understanding of the steps involved with grant submittal. During this discussion, it became clear that support from Prairie Ridge Elementary school was paramount to the success of the grant. Staff suggested buy-in from the school should occur before any more time was spent on proposal development. If the school was not interested in participating, assistance from Prein and Newhof would not be needed.

Staff met with Principal Spencer to discuss their role and involvement in the grant process. She was receptive to the possibility of sidewalks along 9<sup>th</sup> Street, but indicated she did not have the authority to decide if the school would participate. She stated she would contact Mr. Alex Lee, Executive Director of the Communications and Public Relations Department for Kalamazoo Public Schools to discuss the project. Principal Spencer indicated she would contact Ms. Johnston within the next week.

Principal Spencer did not think the sidewalk would be used by the school's children but that it would be of benefit to others. She was willing to work with the DDA to seek permission from her supervisor, Alex Lee, to proceed with the project.

Ms. Johnston said, if the school is willing to participate, staff would have Prein and Newhof revise their proposal to provide greater support of the grant process. The intent continues to be to work on the grant proposal during the winter and begin design and easement acquisition (if needed) during the summer of 2017.

January Update

Ms. Johnston reported the elementary school has indicated they do not have the time to participate in the grant process. Without their support, we cannot move forward with the project. Staff and the DDA Chair will be scheduling a meeting with Prein and Newhof to see if there is a way to significantly reduce the amount of time the school would have to commit to the grant proposal to see if they then would be willing to participate. She said an elementary school must be involved for the Township to be eligible for a grant.

At the suggestion of the Board, Ms. Johnston will reach out to the Kalamazoo Public Schools Administration to see if they might be able to devote some time to move the grant proposal forward.

Chairperson Taylor offered to do some legwork for the school if needed.

## **Village Theme Development Plan**

### **a. Plan Update**

#### **November Meeting**

Ms. Johnston noted at the September DDA meeting, a proposal was provided by Wade Trim for the review and possible update of the Village Theme Development Plan. The DDA evaluated the proposal and the discussion resulted in the following outcomes:

- Costs associated with the project should be shared equally with the Township.
- The proposal should be updated to include working with a joint Steering Committee between the DDA and the Township Planning Commission.
- A stronger transportation component should be added to the proposal.

#### **January Meeting**

She reported Wade Trim made the requested changes in proposal and that half of the budget for this project was approved as part of the Planning Department's 2017 budget. She noted if the DDA was comfortable with the proposal staff would present it to the Planning Commission on January 26 for their review and if they are satisfied with the direction, a work schedule will be created to begin the project.

The group was satisfied with the proposal; Ms. Johnston will present it to the Planning Commission at their January 26 meeting.

### **b. Appointment of Steering Committee Members**

Chairperson Grant, Millard Loy and Rich MacDonald volunteered to serve on the Steering Committee. Their offers were accepted by the Board.

## **Any Other Business**

### **a. 2017 DDA Meeting Dates**

Ms. Johnston said the following schedule was in the pattern of DDA meetings, the third Thursday - every other month at noon at the Oshtemo Community Center.

January 19  
March 16  
May 18  
July 20  
September 21  
November 16

The schedule of meetings was accepted as proposed.

### **b. Discussion of Executive Committee**

Since the DDA meets every other month, the group considered how to keep projects moving and members informed. It was agreed the executive members could meet in alternate months and other members who are available were encouraged to attend. The meetings will be posted to conform to the Open Meetings Act and digital copies of the packet will be sent to all DDA members. Chairperson Taylor asked for a motion to formalize this action.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell moved to establish publicly posted meetings of the DDA Executive Committee in alternate months from the regular meetings, at noon on the third Thursday. Mr. Skalski supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Johnston will check the bylaws and with the Township's Attorney regarding regulations of the Open Meetings Act to see whether e-mail correspondence and proxy voting are allowable.

## **Announcements and Adjournment**

Mr. Siegel brought up the need for a sign at the location where Atlantic Avenue meets the new business access road.

It was agreed a sign is needed there. Chairperson Taylor said funds to pay for it would need to come from DDA or private funds. Ms. Johnston will look into a sign design and what it would cost and return to the DDA with that information.

Mr. Brown confirmed DDA meeting dates, agendas and packets will be posted on the Township website.

Mr. Loy told members that although the fundraising effort has not yet been extended to the public, the Historical Society for the Drake House restoration has \$210,000 in funds raised so far, including a \$100,000 grant from Enbridge. \$40,000 is yet to be raised to meet the \$250,000 goal.

There being no further business, Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Oshtemo Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: January 23, 2017  
Minutes Approved: March 16, 2017