

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

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting on Thursday, July 16th, 2015. The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Community Center, 6407 Parkview Avenue.

Members of the Board of Directors present: Terry Schley, Fred Gould, Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Maria Dacoba, Bruce Betzler, Stephen Dallas, Mike Lutke, Jay Brown, and Grant Taylor.

Members of the Board of Directors absent: Rich MacDonald, Glenn Steeg, Chip Everett, and Jack Siegel.

Also present was Ben Clark, Zoning Administrator.

Approve Agenda

Chairperson Schley moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Taylor supported the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approve Minutes

Mr. Schley moved to approve the minutes from the May 21, 2015 meeting as presented. There were no comments or changes to the minutes. Mr. Taylor supported the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Gould proceeded to present the Treasurer's Report for May and June to the Board. Mr. Gould summarized the report, detailing the expenditures of various projects being undertaken by the DDA. After his initial presentation, Mr. Gould solicited questions from the rest of those in attendance; none were asked. Chairperson Schley then moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, and Mr. Taylor supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Draft 2016 DDA Budget

Mr. Gould then went on to discuss the upcoming budget document being produced by the DDA, subject to Township Board approval. Explaining the contents of the document, Mr. Gould emphasized to the rest of the DDA Board that the figures contained therein were a "best guess" of what the final DDA budget would be, and that it remained a work in progress. Chairperson Schley then elaborated, explaining that the figures contained in the draft budget, while estimated, represented a carefully conservative forecast of the DDA's final budget. Chairperson Schley went on to further explain that especially the streetscape improvement project's section of the

budget would likely require further refinement. Mr. Taylor then asked Chairperson Schley to provide any more information available regarding what the streetscape improvement project costs may be. Chairperson Schley responded that the project costs by and large had yet to be established.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell, speaking to the conservative nature of the draft budget, reminded members of the Board that the State of Michigan has in the past reimbursed money spent on certain projects back to the Township, but that it was wise to not rely upon such aid when formulating the budget document. Chairperson Schley added that all budget items were flexible with regards to allocated funding, and that money could be moved around within the budget if necessary.

Once discussion ended Mr. Taylor moved to approve the draft budget as presented and send it to the Township Board for their review. Dr. Dallas supported the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Following the approval of the draft budget, there was also some discussion initiated by Chairperson Schley regarding the DDA's involvement in the Township's auditing program. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell elaborated on how the DDA's budget fits within the larger scope of the Township's finances, stating that it varies more than any other specific budget. It was also pointed out that the accountant's report makes special mention of the excellent job that Township staff has been doing with regards to record keeping.

#### 9<sup>th</sup> Street Rear Access Drive

The Board then moved on to discuss the proposed rear access drive to be located near the southeast corner of the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Stadium Drive. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that forms requesting easement rights had been sent out to key property owners along the access street's planned route. Commenting on this, Mr. Lutke then informed Ms. Heiny-Cogswell and the rest of the Board that while he had yet to receive any correspondence from the Township, he was indeed ready to formally agree to grant an easement. Chairperson Schley asked Mr. Lutke to restate his willingness to agree to an easement, which he did. Mr. Lutke also indicated that there were other property owners willing to sign easement agreements.

Once the necessary easement agreements have been agreed upon and finalized by all involved parties, Chairperson Schley continued, then the project could go out for bidding. Chairperson Schley reminded the Board that the DDA was acting only as a facilitator and potential funder for the easement agreements, and that they were not the project's overseers—that is the Township's role.

#### Streetscape Beautification Efforts

Next the Board began discussion of the streetscape beautification project currently being overseen by the DDA. Reviewing the project's progress thus far, Chairperson Schley expressed the last design charrette had a reasonable turnout including some from the Church next to the Citgo station. It was also explained that the next workshop would be more of a refinement of the improvement plan, and that it should result in a refined proposal suitable for presentation to

various interested stakeholders, such as the area church group. Chairperson Schley also mentioned that the manager of Tall Oaks Apartment homes suggested to him that it would be helpful if any forthcoming plans and concept sketches be posted on the Township website.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell and Mr. Taylor then informed the rest of the Board members that some of the information necessary for County collaboration on the non-motorized paths for the area had been submitted to the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) with little definition. All of the required forms, continued Ms. Heiny-Cogswell, would need to be filled out before the Road Commission's Board will even consider reviewing the project. Thus far the information that has been passed onto the RCKC includes a rough project cost estimate from OCBA, the consulting firm heading up the streetscape project.

Chairperson Schley noted to the DDA Board that OCBA is behind schedule by approximately one month. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell suggested that a representative from the Road Commission may want to attend the next design meeting. Chairperson Schley suggested that the next meeting with OCBA may be better if only DDA and leadership and Township officials are present to give a chance to the project sponsors to vet their final interests.

#### Citgo Gas Station Update

Mr. Brown asked for an update regarding the ongoing improvements being made to the site of the former Citgo gas station at the northwest corner of Stadium Drive and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell then directed the Board to the relevant section of the budget and draft budget that contained details on the project in question.

#### Grant & Loan Program Development

Mr. Taylor explained to the rest of the Board that he had sent some of grant program documents that he had drafted to Attorney James Porter to ensure that the language was legally valid, and that the next step after Mr. Porter's review and revisions would be to pass the proposed program documents onto the Township Board for their approval.

Mr. Taylor then inquired of the rest of the Board what the proper protocol should be regarding how businesses within the DDA apply for grant money and how applications for funding should be reviewed. Chairperson Schley suggested to the DDA Board that a sub-committee should perform the initial vetting of applications, providing approval recommendations to the DDA Board for final award. It was also realized that an application and approval process was in need of final document formalization, and that many business owners within the DDA are yet unaware of the existence of program.

Mr. Taylor also brought to the Board's attention that \$10,000 of unclaimed funding remained in the 2015 DDA budget and that he was unsure whether or not the money should be rolled into the same section within the 2016 budget, or if it should be reallocated within the 2015 budget. At this point in the year, Mr. Taylor emphasized, any business that did wish to apply for the funds might not be able to obtain them until either November or December, providing some rationale for rolling the money into next year's budget instead. Chairperson Schley then asked the Board

how the allocation should be handled if not used for a cycle: would the fund simply continue to increase? Ms. Heiny-Cogswell recommended that the allocation simply be reabsorbed into the DDA's General Fund, as is customary for unspent budgeted items. Chairperson Schley then asked that all information and forms be assembled and ready and distributed to DDA Board members in advance of the September DDA Board meeting so the DDA Board could review the package in advance of the meeting and give it all final approval at the meeting for public use. Mr. Taylor then informed the Board that he would work with Attorney Porter to have all aspects of the program with comments including an application form ready by September.

### Any Other Business

Dr. Dallas informed the Board of the continuing high frequency of traffic collisions that occur at the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street and that just recently there had been an incident at that location. Chairperson Schley noted that traffic patterns in that part of the Township, as well as on nearby streets such as West Michigan Avenue, have changed significantly in recent. Echoing Dr. Dallas' and Chairperson Schley's statements, Mr. Lutke mentioned that in the area of the driveway to his business, he has also seen an uptick in collisions.

Mr. Betzler inquired about the progress being made by ITC Transmission on the new power line corridor that will run through the Township. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell explained that tree clearing was currently taking place in various parts of Oshtemo, including near Fire Station #2, and that the utility poles and lines are targeted to be erected by the end of the year. Chairperson Schley also commented on ITC's activities, saying that their level of communication with affected property owners regarding the exact placement of the poles had, in his experience, been insufficient. Mr. Brown, on the contrary, had spoken to a few property owners within the Township who had been quite pleased in their dealings with ITC. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell then informed the Board that there was still a legal proceeding against ITC, and that the Michigan Municipal League as well as the Michigan Township Association had joined Oshtemo in filing briefs with Michigan's Supreme Court regarding the need by ordinance to bury the power lines near major streets.

Dr. Dallas asked if anyone knew how the Harding's grocery store at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Stadium Drive had been faring since Costco had opened. Mr. Taylor stated that he often shops at that particular Harding's and that it typically seems to have a decent amount of customer traffic. Both Mr. Gould and Chairperson Schley expressed their desire to cultivate a stronger relationship between Harding's and the DDA.

Ms. Dacoba stated that she had heard that The Birches Banquet Hall may be interested in erecting new buildings at their site, and she inquired if anyone on the Board or at the Township had fielded any inquiries from representatives from The Birches. No one present had received any questions.

### Adjournment

Chairperson Schley moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Oshtemo Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Minutes Approved: September 17, 2015