

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

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 19, 2015

The Oshtemo Charter Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors held a regular meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2015. The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:02 p.m. at the Oshtemo Community Center, 6407 Parkview Avenue.

Members of the Board of Directors present: Terry Schley, Grant Taylor, Fred Gould, Chip Everett, Jay Brown, Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Jack Siegel, Maria Dacoba, Rich MacDonald, Bruce Betzler, and Michael Lutke.

Members of the Board of Directors absent: Stephen Dallas and Glenn Steeg.

Also present was Gregory Milliken, Planning Director.

Approve Agenda

Chairperson Schley indicated he wanted to add public comment as agenda item 2a. There were no other comments on the agenda. Mr. Lutke moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Everett supported the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Chairperson Schley opened the meeting to public comment. There being no public in attendance, he closed the public comment session for non-agenda items.

Approve Minutes

Mr. Taylor noted that with the resignation of Mr. Wenzel, there is no longer a Vice Chair as elected at the last meeting. Chairperson Schley thanked Mr. Taylor for noting that and stated the Board would take that up in the next agenda item.

No other comments or changes regarding the minutes were proposed. Mr. Taylor moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of January 15, 2015. Mr. Siegel seconded the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

DDA Membership Changes

Chairperson Schley introduced Rich MacDonald to the Board. Mr. MacDonald is the Chief Operating Officer at Hinman Company. He has been at the Hinman for 25 years. He is very involved there and has worked with similar organizations for many years.

Chairperson Schley stated that Mr. Wenzel has resigned from the Board due to a change in employment, and he clearly communicated his desire to resign to both the Chair and the Township Supervisor. The Township Board promptly appointed Mr. MacDonald to fill the void and complete Mr. Wenzel's term until the end of 2015.

Chairperson Schley indicated there is a void in leadership as there is no longer a Vice Chair. He asked the Board if anyone would be interested in being Vice Chair. He indicated what the responsibilities would be of the Vice Chair including participation in some of the larger projects the DDA is engaged in.

Mr. Taylor indicated he would be willing to serve as Vice Chair. He has done some work already on these projects as well as on the grant project and coordinating with the church on the car wash property. He could also serve as a strong bridge to the Township Board.

Mr. Betzler moved to appoint Mr. Taylor as Vice Chair for the DDA. Mr. Siegel supported the motion. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Taylor stated this does create a vacancy at Secretary. Chairperson Schley asked for volunteers to serve as Secretary. No one immediately volunteered. Chairperson Schley indicated members should think about it and let him know if they are interested.

Upon inquiry from Ms. Dacoba, Chairperson Schley explained his expectations for the role.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Gould presented the Treasurer's Report for January and February. He explained that there has been very little activity to start the year. The biggest expense was the \$1440 for the property taxes on the Citgo property. He reviewed the invoices to explain expenditures.

Chairperson Schley stated he was surprised that the DDA had to pay taxes as an authority of the Township. He asked why the property would be taxable. And if it is, he asked what the process would be to challenge or question that.

Chairperson Schley asked Mr. Milliken to inquire with Township Staff as to the taxable status of the property.

Mr. MacDonald added that there was legislation passed this summer allowing some properties to have tax exempt status for economic development agencies.

Mr. Taylor moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Betzler seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

9th Street Rear Access Drive

Chairperson Schley stated that a subcommittee of DDA and Township representatives has been meeting to discuss the rear access drive and the idea has been advanced. Mr. Lutke confirmed that there are property owners still very interested in moving forward. The process is nearing completion with the design close to finalization and the final step of financial commitment coming in the near future.

The Township will have a meeting to review the design and estimates with the consultant and will invite the subcommittee. It will then be presented to the Township Board on April 14 before going to the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Schley recapped the history of the design and the project. Both the DDA and the Township have committed funding to the project, and the DDA has pledged five years of maintenance support. There is a need to finalize the cost estimates for the new design to ensure adequate funds are in place.

Mr. Lutke said that the main concern from the user standpoint was with language in the agreement, and those concerns were addressed.

Mr. Brown asked why the design shows two types of asphalt drives. He wanted to be assured there will be allowance for semi-trucks on the drive.

Mr. Taylor indicated that the consultant was well aware of the concern for trucks in the design requirements.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that if this is presented to the Board at the 4/14 work session, attendance and feedback from DDA representatives and property owners would be beneficial. If discussion went well there, application to the PC would be 5/14 or 5/28.

Mr. MacDonald asked if a note could be added indicating what size semi trucks the design has been tested for.

Chairperson Schley stated to members that in 2016 the RCKC will be doing a mill and overlay project on 9th Street from Meridian to I-94. As part of that there will be some intersection realignment that may result in RCKC asking for a minor amount of land from the corner property.

Grant / Loan Program

Mr. Taylor distributed information about a proposed grant and loan program that could be utilized in the Oshtemo DDA area. He said his committee was recommending offering up to two grants of up to \$5000 each. They did not recommend offering loans at this time so as not to compete with financial institutions. The grants would be for exterior improvements only. Information submitted contains eligible and ineligible products. He asked members to review and send him comments. There is a quasi-application process that includes a subcommittee taking in applications throughout the year. They were not sure whether to make it a rolling deadline or a fixed date submittal.

Chairperson Schley confirmed that the committee is asking the Board to review and comment on the information being provided. He asked the committee to review the proposal and make any changes as necessary.

Chairperson Schley stated there will need to be discussion as to the grants and purchases made by grantees and the Township Board. He wants to be sure the DDA is meeting its obligations and the obligations set out in the Ordinance without complicating the grant process.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that she would check with Jim Porter as to how it relates to the purchasing policy.

Chairperson Schley asked members to review and get comments back to Mr. Taylor. He asked Mr. Taylor and his committee to return to the Board with a final set of recommendations and to proceed financially.

Proposal from S&T Lawn Service for Landscape Maintenance

Mr. Milliken indicated that S&T Lawn Service had submitted a proposal to provide landscape services for the Community Center for 2015. He indicated that the proposal was for the same amount as last year.

Mr. Taylor asked if this had been put out to bid. Chairperson Schley indicated that it had not.

Mr. Brown stated that it probably should be put out to bid to ensure efficient use of tax dollars.

Mr. Taylor said that it is probably too late to bid this for this year but would like to issue an RFP for 2016. Board members generally agreed.

Mr. Taylor moved to accept the proposal from S&T Lawn Service for landscape service at the Community Center for 2015 as presented with the condition that the contract be put out to bid in 2016. Mr. Lutke supported the motion. Chairperson Schley stated that it would probably need to be a two-year contract. The Chairperson called for a vote on the motion, and the motion was approved 10-1 with Mr. Brown dissenting as he would like to see a competitive bid.

Streetscape and Beautification Efforts

Chairperson Schley said that the contract with OCBA for the streetscape project was approved, and he distributed a proposed project schedule. He stated that it is likely that there will not be enough money saved by the DDA to do the project simply with savings. Other financing strategies may need to be considered.

Chairperson Schley said a part of the process will be to revisit the design plan that was previously prepared. OCBA has developed a schedule for creating a revised plan and budget. Part of that includes identifying necessary funding. The proposed schedule takes the DDA through to late summer, early fall.

DDA Board members indicated general approval of the schedule.

Chairperson Schley stated that the Township has concern with the status of sidewalks along Stadium, so there is incentive to move forward on that aspect. The subcommittee will continue to do the bulk of the work with OCBA. That subcommittee consisted of Andy, Libby, and Terry along with administrative leaders of the DDA Board. Rich indicated he could join depending on his availability. Chairperson Schley stated he would make sure everyone was aware of meeting times.

CITGO Station Update

Mr. Taylor indicated he hoped to draft a letter to the Church providing them a list of options for moving forward with the car wash property, including perhaps recommending the Church apply for one of the first grants from the DDA. He wanted to pick up the communication with the Church since Mr. Wenzel previously served as the liaison.

Chairperson Schley asked Mr. Taylor to hold off until he had a chance to chat with Mr. Wenzel to find out what the last communication was because there may have been some discussion regarding exchange of land for demolition and therefore no need for grant program usage.

Mr. Taylor asked the DDA members what the priority was for the use of the site – gaining land or tearing down the building.

Chairperson Schley said it could be both.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell said it will probably shake out after going through the design process with OCBA.

Chairperson Schley said there are a lot of opportunities, and we just don't want to lose best options.

Chairperson Schley also indicated that the Board received an updated Due Care Plan for the site from Prein & Newhof. In there, it states that the DDA has an obligation to inspect and document

the site for cracks, holes, etc. on an annual basis. This is something that needs to be done formally with the observations recorded. This will need to be done before October.

Chairperson Schley said there has been discussion of desire to do something at the site in the short term to barricade the existing driveways and block access to the site. It might also beautify the site. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell, Ms. Dacoba, and Mr. Brown agreed to help. The purpose of the group will be to limit access to the undeveloped land for a short time while the property is in its current state while improving its current aesthetics.

Other Business

Chairperson Schley said that the banners were changed, and they looked good.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell said the Township held a Joint Meeting of all boards and commissions and introduced the issues of sanitary sewer service. Private septic systems are failing and are being redeveloped for other uses. The Board will be exploring whether or not sewers should be extended further to the west and how to provide service to existing neighborhoods in the developed portions of the Township.

Mr. Betzler wondered about the status of Feed the World Café. Mr. Everett said that it was temporarily closed for renovations and will reopen in April.

Mr. Gould said that the post office building on Stadium had been hit by a car, and the owner should be notified. Chairperson Schley asked Township enforcement to look into it.

Announcement and Adjournment

Chairperson Schley thanked members for all their hard work.

Mr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:24 pm. Mr. Siegel supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Oshtemo Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority

Minutes Prepared: March 23, 2015

Minutes Approved: May 21, 2015