

Downtown Development Authority

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 1, 2017
Noon, Council Chambers



City of South Haven

MISSION STATEMENT: The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is to be a leader in helping to fulfill the City of South Haven Municipal Plan; through planning, funding, and development of projects within the DDA District which promote, encourage and contribute to the overall economic growth and development of the community.

1. Call to Order by Olsen at noon.

2. Roll Call

Present: John Braun (12:20 p.m.), Bob Burr, Sue Frederick, Jim Marcoux, Kevin Whiteford, Andrea Olson

Absent: Chris Campbell, Scott Maxwell, Sally Newton

Also present: Wendy Hochstedler, Finance Director

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Whiteford, second by Burr to approve the March 1, 2017 regular meeting agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes – October 12, 2016

Motion by Marcoux, second by Whiteford to approve the October 12, 2016 special meeting minutes as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

5. Interested Citizens in the Audience Will be Heard on Items Not on the Agenda

None at this time.

6. The South Haven Memorial Library will give a presentation on their proposed expansion project.

Jim France, South Haven Memorial Library Director. Spoke about the proposed renovation and expansion of the library which will go on the ballot May 2 in both city and township.

France explained that a millage has to pass in both the city and the township in order for the project to move forward. Renovation and expansion is to be funded by a loan from the United States Department of Agriculture, so if the millage passes the project can start as soon as possible this fall. The project includes a lot of needed upgrades as well as an addition for collection space and meeting space. France noted that he always hears about the parking situation around the library and noted that the United States Postal Service owns the parking lot between the post office and the library.

France explained that the plan is to remove the back stairs and place a switch-back ramp which will extend from the large city parking lot to the library. The library currently has two entrances and the plan calls for closing the east entrance; expanding the west entrance; talking with the post office to see if they will allow addition of a couple more handicap spaces in the parking lot closer to the new expanded entrance; a new memorial garden in place of the existing east entrance and remodel the entrance wing. Part of the reason for closing off the east entrance because it gives space to add three new restrooms. France noted that the original library opened in 1959; these are the same bathrooms, not accessible, no heat in any of the bathrooms, both public and staff. In that wing, there are no light switches in the library; have to turn the circuit breakers on every morning and off every evening. A street side atrium is one of the additions heading out toward the street and an addition to the back which will add square footage. The project will also address the roof situation; it will address the basement situations – one basement has had steady water in it, constantly wet, not standing water but want to be able to use it for storage space.

Looking at the current community room and its occupancy limits, France noted that for larger programs, can have, for example, 88 kids in for Ice Breaker; 124 people for the Halloween party. The project is looking at a wall that will open up to the children's area, to allow more space for those larger programs. France noted that the library currently has 3 HVAC systems and the project will be addressing the air circulation, the current one is original and has been through many patches and repairs and because the original library expanded into two other buildings there are multiple systems. A new addition for collections will be on the back; project will lose staff parking spaces, and looking at doing carpeting and other interior upgrades to get the building where it needs to be. ADA compliance, bringing the lighting up, addressing HVAC, and improving the basements, which tend to be wet, to where they need to be to continue services.

Olsen asked if there were grants available, France said grants are all focused on programming, not building expansion or capital improvements; need the millage to back the USDA loan application.

7. DDA will be presented with the Proposed Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Budget.

Hochstedler presented a budget for 2017 to 2018. This budget year starting July 1, 2017 is when the properties for the carve-out for DDA 2 are removed from the district, which resulted in a decrease of the predicted tax capture. There was a question earlier about a reduction of the taxes from 2014-15 to 2015-16, that was due to the debt in DDA 1 that was paid off. The reduction was just the school tax portion that was able to capture to pay that expense. There was no impact on overall DDA operations. With the carve-out, a reduction of about \$95,000. Hochstedler noted she updated the DDA 1 numbers this morning but overall

there is about \$100,000 in revenue drop. The line in the middle share appropriation that represents the loss from the small taxpayer reimbursement. Hochstedler pointed out that expenses are not much different than last year. Downtown Wi-Fi will probably not be done in 2017 and will have to see if we are ready in 2018. In 2017 we have \$150,000 for the Water Street project they're beginning on and not sure how far they'll go with that. Anything unused will move over to 2018. Center Street Improvements were estimated to be about \$125,000 and for consideration the development of the Frontier Communications parking lot about \$50,000, which leaves approximately \$125,000 unassigned monies for projects. The fund balance at the bottom is very healthy there yet, but would like to see it able to grow back up.

Davidson, noting that development of more parking is a DDA priority, explained that the city is in the process of trying to lease the Frontier parking lot. If successful in working out an arrangement, Abonmarche has developed a preliminary design showing a net gain of 23 parking spaces, landscaping and several reserved spaces for Frontier employees. Discussion ensued regarding this being former "Ma Bell" property.

Davidson pointed out a spreadsheet of possible future projects she has developed which would be brought to the board before any decisions were made.

Marcoux asked about the cost for the ice rink and wondered if that is a good investment. Marcoux also asked whether it is worth it, with all the break-downs and maintenance issues. Davidson responded that in hindsight the city wishes we would not have put the pedestrian walkway through there. And the grid system is old; every year it leaks plus it cost nearly \$8,000 for the chiller repair this year. Davidson said the estimate in the project list includes removing the pedestrian walkway; placing new grids into the concrete and a savings on labor.

Marcoux noted that for the record, James Leppa and his group need to be commended for what they did for lighting in the city. What they did was outstanding.

Motion by Marcoux, second by Braun, City Council commend Leppa for what he and his group did. Burr said he thinks City Council could do a proclamation that he could hang on the wall. By consensus, the motion carried as a recommendation.

8. General Comments

None at this time.

9. Adjourn

Motion by Marcoux, second by Frederick to adjourn at 12:53 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom
Recording Secretary