

City of Charlevoix
Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 28, 2024 - 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Owens at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Chair: Maureen Owens

Members Present: Sam Bingham, Kirby Dipert, Mayor Lyle Gennett, Anne Oosthuizen, Danielle Scheller

Members Absent: Liam Dreyer, Paul Silva, Ron Way

Staff Present: Mark L. Heydlauff, City Manager/DDA Director

4. Inquiry Regarding Conflicts of Interest

5. Consent Agenda

A. Executive Meeting Minutes 06/19/2024 & Regular Meeting Minutes 08/14/2024

Motion by Member Dipert, seconded by Mayor Gennett to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

6. Reports

A. Director's Report

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff reported the Gift Local raffle tickets have been approved and should be printed by Village Graphics later in the week. Member Dipert questioned if the Chamber checks would be limited only to the downtown merchants and City Manager Heydlauff stated that he could let Chamber President Sarah Van Horn speak about that issue. Ms. Van Horn stated that she had reviewed previous year's purchases and about 70% were downtown purchases, and she stated that there wouldn't be a way to restrict the dollars to certain locations.

Chair Owens stated with the Board's approval she wanted to deviate slightly from the agenda to allow Member Oosthuizen to give a report on the Downtown Business Owners meeting. Member Oosthuizen stated that previously the merchants would meet once a month in the mornings. Member Oosthuizen stated she met with Eric, the owner of The Lake House and the City Manager, and they discussed the future without a full-time DDA Director. Member Oosthuizen stated that she had emailed the merchants with reminders of upcoming events, and the intention was to gather information regarding what the merchants were feeling and to offer assistance as needed. City Manager Heydlauff stated he sees his role in the DDA as

support, including guidance regarding the statutory requirements of being a DDA which he felt confident in, and he was not an expert in promotions for the downtown merchants.

7. Old Business

A. Alley Improvement Grant- 211 Bridge Street

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff stated that in March 2022 the DDA had approved an Alley Improvement Grant for 211 Bridge Street, and the owners have materially completed the work and were due for reimbursement in the amount of \$5,000 from the grant.

Motion by Member Bingham, seconded by Mayor Gennett to authorize the payment of the Downtown Alley Improvement Grant to 211 Bridge Street Associates LLC in the amount of \$5,000.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

8. New Business

A. Downtown Bathrooms

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff stated there have been some merchants at the north end of downtown who had expressed an interest in having additional bathrooms added. Mr Heydlauff stated during a conference he attended, he spoke to a firm that sells pre-built bathroom buildings that might be effective for such a space. Mr. Heydlauff explained the various options available from this company and provided a link to the company's website to the Board members. Board members concurred to having the City Manager gather more information regarding costs, placement, location, seasonal application vs. year-round, and number of parking spaces needed for such a unit.

B. DDA Agreement with the Charlevoix Public Library

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff stated in 2004 the DDA made an agreement to contribute \$30,000 a year for 20 years to the development of the Charlevoix Public Library. In 2010, the DDA ceased making payments for a period of years and then resumed payments at a lower level in 2014. The DDA still owes \$155,000 to the Library. Mr. Heydlauff proposed that the DDA pay \$80,000 in FY 2025 (current year) and the final \$75,000 in FY 2026 to complete the obligation.

Motion by Member Dipert, seconded by Mayor Gennett to direct the Acting Director and City Treasurer to affect the payment of \$80,000 to the Charlevoix Public Library in FY 2025 and budget for the payment of \$75,000 in FY 2026 to complete the obligation to the Library in 2025.

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

C. Partnership Agreement with the Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff stated the Board directed him to work with the Chamber to draft a proposal for staffing the day-to-day inquiries from the public, businesses and business support.

Chamber President Sarah Van Horn stated they have all seen the benefits to Charlevoix of

having a full-time DDA Director, but she did not think that the contract should be seen as replacing a Director and should not have the expectation of filling a full scope of services. Ms. Van Horn stated there were a lot of examples around the State that consisted of Chambers running their DDA's through contract or partnership agreements and the one that they drafted came from an example from Manistee. Ms. Van Horn stated that the Chamber's mentality going into such an agreement is to make sure that they have a cohesive and collaborative vision for Charlevoix, recognize the downtown as the hub of the community, strategically invest the DDA in the Chamber's resources to accomplish these goals and recognize the value of the Chamber's time and services.

City Manager Heydlauff stated that this agreement supersedes and replaces the previous agreement that the Chamber had with the DDA.

Member Dipert questioned if President Van Horn planned to assign one member of her staff primarily to be the point person on this or is she going to disperse the responsibilities as needed. Ms. Van Horn stated that she saw this as the DDA is contracting the Chamber as an organization, so the contract and services need to be clear in that regard that it's not a direct person. Ms. Van Horn will be the point person, but then she would assign the most appropriate Chamber staff person for the task.

Discussion continued regarding events such as First Fridays and Ladies Night and the Board agreed to add Ladies Night to the list of Downtown Promotions events in the contract.

Motion by Member Oosthuizen, seconded by Member Scheller to approve the Service Agreement between the Charlevoix Downtown Development Authority and the Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce with the addition of Ladies Night to the events portion and to authorize the Chair to sign the agreement.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

D. Concerts in the Park

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff stated he wanted to understand what the DDA's scope of responsibility was for the Concerts in the Park and the Board's expectations to keep the program similar to what it has been, expand or contract the program. Chair Owens stated it always bothered her how often the band shell was not used and that anything that could be done to increase the viability of that building is a good thing. City Manager Heydlauff stated there was no shortage of groups that want to perform in Charlevoix and the Board should look at a programmatic policy to expand that. Discussion followed regarding maximizing the use of the band shell.

City Manager Heydlauff stated if there were musical groups that want exposure and want to come to Charlevoix's great destination and clientele, they could schedule them on a different night than the Concerts in the Park, and charge them for a sound system tech if needed. A free place to play gives the group exposure and increases the number of people and activities within the downtown. Mr. Heydlauff stated he would bring back a proposal to the Board for consideration.

Amanda Wilkin stated that structuring that season is one of the DDA's goals as well as the Visitors Bureau, to make sure that Charlevoix is not a Memorial Day through Labor Day

destination and stretching events through September might be worth talking about. Discussion followed regarding changing the timeframe for Concerts in the Park.

E. Marketing Opportunities and Requests

Mark Heydlauff, City Manager

City Manager Heydlauff stated that he was looking for direction to see whether the Board considered marketing programs for businesses in the district to be a priority. Mr. Heydlauff stated that he has had several people aggressively contact him to offer marketing services and questioned if the Board was interested in standalone marketing agreements as a whole or rather pushed more on event promotions. Chair Owens stated that especially with the new partnership, she would agree that there was plenty of marketing currently happening, and they could spend the next year watching how this plays out to see if the Board feels that there is something more to be done.

Amanda Wilkin stated that she believed they had quite a bit of regional marketing over the last six years or so and last year it didn't happen because people did not want to participate in the co-op. Ms. Wilkin stated that the DDA needed to lean into their Chamber collaboration agreement to make sure that the regional marketing was happening.

City Manager Heydlauff stated he had not placed an item on the agenda to decide when the Board wants to meet again. The Board concurred to schedule the next meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2025.

9. Public Comment

10. Request for Future Agenda Items

11. Board Comments

Chair Owens stated that this was Member Dipert's last meeting per his decision after 18 years of service, and she sincerely thanked him for everything he has done. Member Dipert stated that his resignation stated that he would stay on until the end of the year or until he was replaced.

12. Adjourn

Chair Owens adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Sarah Dvoracek/fgm Clerk

Maureen Owens Chair