

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
ZOOM MEETING
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021**

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL.

The Meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Chair Reagan.

Present: Board members Brian Doyle, Rita Reister, Rick Seese, Eric Wakeman, Mike Sprenger and Chair Jim Reagan.

Absent: Board members Mike DeVore and Julie DeVoe.

Also Present: City Manager Michael Burns, Clerk Susan Ullery, DPW Director Dan Czarnecki, City Treasurer Sue Olin, L&P Manager Charlie West, Police Chief Chris Hurst and Lowell Chamber of Commerce Director Liz Baker.

2. EXCUSE OF ABSENCES.

IT WAS MOVED BY REISTER and seconded by SPRENGER to excuse the absences of board members Mike DeVore and Julie DeVoe.

YES: 6. NO: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

IT WAS MOVED BY WAKEMAN and seconded by DOYLE to approve the agenda as written.

YES: 6. NO: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.

IT WAS MOVED BY SPRENGER and seconded WAKEMAN by to approve the minutes of November 5, 2020 as written.

YES: 6. NO: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT.

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
January 6, 2021**

Beginning Balance: \$427,461.68

Revenue:
TIFA Revenue \$545,300.00

Interest

Total Revenues	\$972,761.68
Expenditures:	
Capital Outlay	\$72,235.19
Salaries	\$10,984.92
Maintenance Supplies	\$16,865.49
Utilities	\$8,299.18
Misc and Community Promotions	\$8,027.00
Accrued Wages	\$4,626.50
Administration	\$23,427.82
Accrued Payables	\$2,901.55
Transfer to Equipment	
Transfer to General Fund	
Debt Service to light and power	\$34,263.28
<i>Total Expenditures:</i>	\$181,630.93
Ending Balance	\$791,130.75

IT WAS MOVED BY DOYLE and seconded by REISTER to accept the Treasurer's Report as submitted.

YES: 6.

NO: 0.

ABSENT: 2.

MOTION CARRIED.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

There were no public comments.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

a.) Amity.

City Manager Michael Burns stated the last time we met, there was some paperwork that needed to be approved by the County for the CBDG Grant and that is now complete. We are looking at beginning the Amity project after July 1, 2021. Plans are being finalized and should be complete by the end of the month so we can send out the RFP.

8. **NEW BUSINESS.**

a.) Street Furniture.

City Manager Mike Burns read his memo stating at the last meeting there was concern with the garbage cans, light poles and benches needing repair or repaint and after discussing this with the DPW Director, they agreed it is time to replace them. He explained the benches are old and tired and have been there between 15-20 years, the light poles need a professional service to complete the entire

job and would like to see the DDA consider putting the street furniture in the upcoming budget for the next fiscal year. This would be an eligible project by statute as this is a public improvement project.

Seese suggested getting this into this year's budget with the Social District coming to the City of Lowell. Burns said he will look into estimates and come back at the next meeting with more information.

b. Brick Project.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo stating the Showboat is forging ahead and is nearing construction completion. There has been a fundraising effort to raise a gap of approximately \$870,000 and they are approximately only \$160,000 away from their goal. To date, no City of Lowell tax dollars have been utilized towards this project. The brick campaign project has raised approximately \$80,000 for the Showboat. DDA is being asked to consider implementing the task of paying for the bricks and laying them out by the showboat so the brick proceeds can all go towards the showboat. If the DDA considers this, it could be put into next fiscal year's budget and would also be considered an eligible expense as a public improvement in the downtown district.

Liz Baker with the Chamber of Commerce thought of the DDA as doing this as part of improving the Riverwalk Plaza when laying down the bricks as the Riverwalk is starting to look pretty wore out, so kind of getting two things done at once.

Todd Schaal with Riverview Flats also stated the trees on the Riverwalk are really overgrown and almost seem like a dark canopy and you can't walk through without hitting the branches.

Reagan asked Burns and Czarnecki to come back next meeting with a more definitive dollar figure for the brick purchase and laying project and to incorporate the tree trimming and Riverwalk repair/maintenance into that price.

c. Valley Vista.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo requesting Downtown District Authority to consider paving an additional street in either 2022 or 2023 based on the revenue we have on hand. A highly traveled street within the district that needs maintenance, Valley Vista Drive, from Bowes Road to Debra Drive in the scope of the district. This street is an eligible project by statute as this is a public improvement project within the district. We have yet to complete an engineer's estimate on this, but from similar length projects recently completed, we estimate approximately \$250,000 to complete. We would use our ACT 51 dollars for the portion that is not in the DDA district.

d. Social District.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo explaining that due to Covid 19 the Michigan Liquor Control Commission has developed a special license creating the Social District. This allows participating establishments within a designated district to sell their liquor products and the purchaser can leave the premises into a designated area. There are a number of regulations that must be followed. City Council has already created the initial resolution and district map. One of the additional requirements is all interested entities must be approved by the City Council and we are in the process of doing this. We hope to have everything ready for this to begin in early February.

The DDA is able to assist in funding cost for the zone. We have set up the district so all the licensed establishments in the Downtown could participate. They would be required to get an additional liquor license allowing this. The components the City will need to address are security, trash pickup, signage delineating the district and warming areas.

Board member Doyle and Wakeman think it is a great idea as well as Seese, but Seese has a few concerns including the propane heaters, thinks open burning would be better. Burns explained the Fire Chief doesn't want open burning but if we did pay to hire the firefighters, it could be done.

Todd Schaal asked if they compared the cost of hiring the fire fighters to man open fires verses the cost of propane heaters. Schaal thinks open fires would be better.

Liz Baker suggested gas fireplaces.

Burns will investigate further on the cost for the open burning.

IT WAS MOVED BY DOYLE and seconded by SPRENGER to approve that the Downtown Development Authority assisting in funding for the zone of the Social District in the amount of \$26,000.

YES: Board member Riester, Board member Doyle, Board member Sprenger, Board member Seese, Board member Wakeman, and Chair Reagan.

NO: None. ABSENT: Board members DeVore and DeVoe. MOTION CARRIED.

9. **REPORTS AND MEMBER COMMENTS.**

City Manager Michael Burns stated the Don DeJong had retired from the City a year and a half ago and he did a lot of work in the Downtown District. The issue with the open contact in the DPW has been settled finally and we have hired one full time position, Jeff Phillips. We still need to hire someone to fill the sexton/downtown position and hopefully we can get that done soon.

Todd Schaal explained his input on painting the light poles and trash cans down main street and the cost he had into that which was very minimal. Suggested composite for new benches but until then power washing them would make them look good.

Reagan stated if you had a chance to read the Ledger last week, they had a synopsis of the DDA's conception since 1992 and it was pretty accurate except it had James Doyle as one of the board members. Also he thought the Christmas decorations came down to quickly, so maybe in the future leave them up longer. Also, ask the City Manager if as we are repairing some of the streets in the City, is there any consideration for underground utilities???

Burns stated anytime a street project is done, we always reach out to the utility companies.

Liz Baker stated the Christmas Decorations are contracted out and thought they were taken down after New Year, but she will double check on that.

IT WAS MOVED BY WAKEMAN and seconded by REISTER to adjourn at 12:50.

Date:

APPROVED:

James E. Reagan, Chair

Susan Ullery, Lowell City Clerk