

**CITY OF CHARLEVOIX**  
**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) MINUTES**  
**Monday, October 28, 2013 — 5:30 p. m.**  
210 State Street, City Hall, Second Floor Conference Room, Charlevoix, MI

**A. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p. m. by Chair Hugh Mason.

**B. Invocation or Pledge of Allegiance**

**C. Roll Call of Members Present**

Chair: Hugh Mason

Members Present: Kirby Dipert, Dan Barron, Fred DiMartino, John Yaroch, Jeannine Walls

Members Absent: Todd Wyett, Mayor Norman L. Carlson, Jr., Luther Kurtz

City Staff: Bethany Pearson, Community Economic Development Director

**D. Inquiry Regarding Possible Conflicts of Interest**

None.

**E. Approval of Minutes**

September 23, 2013 Minutes

Member Wallace indicated a correction was needed on page 2 of the minutes on the vote for the Main Street Program. She stated that she voted "Yea" not "Nay" on the Main Street Program motion.

Member Barron stated a correction was needed on page 1, the first Whereas of Main Street Resolution, to reflect "community's identity" not "community's identify"; and on page 3, second paragraph under Personal Property Tax Reform, second to last sentence should read: "Then the" instead of "the the". Community Economic Development Director (CEDD) Pearson referenced the same paragraph, first sentence, and stated that she did not speak to Senator Brandenburg, but she was informed by another representative that the DDA bill was a bill that the Senator was looking to pass.

Motion by Member Barron, second by Member Dipert to approve the September 23, 2013 minutes as corrected. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**F. Old Business**

Holiday Tree Lights

Director Pearson reported that the lighting company had started installation of the Christmas lights and that the project should be completed by Wednesday. On October 7, City Council awarded the bid for tree lighting, including the City's "holiday tree" to Holiday Tree Lighting. The additional proposal to light the large spruce "holiday" tree had a cost of \$4,000. The lights are expected to stay up for three years. In the past, the Electric Department had put the lights up and removed them each year. The Department had planned to replace the lights this year at a cost of \$2,500. Those funds have been transferred over to the DDA, and the project with additional proposal was still \$2,300 under the original estimate. Director Pearson noted that Todd Wyett's \$5,000 contribution and the City's \$5,000 contribution were both received and transferred into the DDA's account.

**G. New Business**

1. Website and Database Upgrade

Director Pearson reported that the DDA website is significantly out-of-date and that editing the site is extremely difficult due to outdated technology. She stated that the site was originally designed by JBR Graphics, who has since been purchased by Pro Web Marketing. Pro Web Marketing has offered half off website re-design to all of JBR Graphics' former clients. The cost to re-design the website and provide a new database is \$4,500. Another option would be to join with the Charlevoix Area Chamber of Commerce website. The Chamber had undergone a total redesign last year and they have a fairly thorough database. Director Pearson stated that the Chamber site receives nearly one million hits a year, that there would be little, if any, cost to join with the Chamber's site, and that she can update the site rather than using another webmaster. Discussion followed regarding specifics of a re-design project and what would be included in a database, and the possibility of joining with the Chamber's website.

Member Barron stated that if they went with the Chamber site, he would want to be ensured that the DDA had shared proprietary rights to the database.

Board members were in favor of pursuing a partnership with the Chamber for a shared website and database.

2. Christmas Decorations

Director Pearson stated that, after the last DDA Board meeting when it was mentioned that the Chamber would not be putting up wreaths and garland in downtown for the holidays any more, she was approached by a couple of downtown business owners about the DDA taking on this initiative. Business owners would raise \$1,000, with the DDA and Chamber each contributing \$250. Member Dipert stated that the business owners had raised \$1,000. Director Pearson reported that the Chamber Board has agreed to contribute \$250 toward the Christmas decorations.

Motion by Member Yaroch, second by Member Wallace to approve the expenditure of \$250 and orchestration of downtown Christmas decorations. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Director Pearson stated that, per City policy, she is obtaining three verbal quotes from vendors for the wreaths and garland and would report back to the DDA Board when the quotes were received.

3. Institute for Organizational Management

Director Pearson stated that she has completed two years of a four-year training program hosted by the US Chamber of Commerce and she would like to complete the remaining two years of training. She reported that, as a condition of employment, the City's Hiring Committee agreed to support her goal to continue with training at the Institute for Organizational Management. She stated that her terms of employment with the City state that the City is allowing flexibility for her to attend the conference and to continue to coach volleyball. She has applied for a \$500 scholarship through the US Chamber of Commerce that would cover a portion of the tuition if it is approved. She signed up for the Institute before accepting the DDA position and she asked the DDA Board to consider funding this expense over the next two years (\$1,295 for tuition, \$509.90 for the flight, and approximately \$700-\$1,000 for hotel and meal expense). Her total cost if she receives the \$500 scholarship plus 50% of her tuition costs paid by the City is \$1,657.40.

Motion by Member Dipert, second by Member Yaroch to approve expenses related to the CEDD attending the Institute for Organizational Management in January 2014, as outlined during this meeting. Member Yaroch believes that the City should contribute a portion toward the training expenses as well. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. Charlevoix Bridge Drop

Director Pearson reported that she was asked to be a part of the planning committee for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charlevoix Bridge Drop. The Bridge Drop is a New Year's Eve Event that aims to make downtown Charlevoix the New Year's Eve destination for our area. Plans include live music, food/drink specials at the area restaurants, a large countdown clock, store promotions, and world class fireworks from the Venetian Festival firework specialists. Member Barron explained the details of the proposed fireworks display down the channel and other aspects of the Bridge Drop. The cost of the fireworks display is \$10,000 and Member Barron felt that some "seed money" would be needed from the DDA for this event.

Jodi Bingham spoke in favor of the Bridge Drop as a great benefit for the Charlevoix businesses and visitors to the area.

Director Pearson noted that there are still a number of channels of approval that this event needs to go through including: Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, and City Council. She is looking for the DDA to provide support for the continuation of this project in the form of a motion. Member Barron believes that they need to know whether or not the DDA would be putting money into this project. Member Yaroch stated that the event needs a focal point like Traverse City, with a stage and band/music downtown. Member Barron expects that the fireworks on the channel will be the focal point. Discussion continued regarding possible funding for the event and the status of the DDA's current and future budgets.

Motion by Member Yaroch, second by Member DiMartino to contribute \$5,000 of seed money toward the cost of fireworks for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charlevoix Bridge Drop. Director Pearson asked if the DDA wanted to take the lead on this event; the Board generally agreed that this should not be a "DDA" event. Member Barron stated that he intends to vote on this motion, and that there is no conflict because he is a volunteer for this event with no monetary gain. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**H. Audience – Non-Agenda Input**

None.

**I. Community Economic Development Director's Report**

Director Pearson reviewed the items contained within the Executive Director's Report and Community Partner/City Updates, and responded to DDA members' questions.

**J. Miscellaneous Business of the Board**

None.

**K. Future Agenda Items**

Member Barron would like to discuss solicitation of small group meetings and potential initiatives.

Member Yaroch stated that Director Pearson has done a great job in the short time that she has been in her position.

**L. Adjournment**

Motion by Member Yaroch, seconded by Member Wallace, to adjourn. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p. m.

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Stephanie Brown/fgm

Deputy City Clerk

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Hugh Mason

Chair