

CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) MINUTES
Tuesday, May 27, 2014 — 5:30 p. m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Second Floor Council Chambers, Charlevoix, MI

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Dan Barron.

B. Invocation or Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call of Members Present

Chair: Dan Barron

Members Present: Kirby Dipert, Luther Kurtz, John Yaroch, Hugh Mason, Fred DiMartino, Jeannine Wallace, Todd Wyett

Members Absent: Mayor Norman L. Carlson, Jr.

City Staff: Bethany Pearson, Community Economic Development Director (CEDD)

D. Inquiry Regarding Possible Conflicts of Interest

None.

E. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Member Mason, second by Member Dipert to approve the April 28, 2014 minutes as presented. Member Wyett abstained. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

F. 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.

Director Pearson reported that preparations for the Craft Beer Festival are going well and that everything is set for the upcoming festival weekend.

Director Pearson reported that Doug and Maria DeVos have agreed to fund the second stage of the Downtown Wi-Fi study, which saves the DDA's portion of the cost (\$1,900). RFP's are being prepared by John Childs and will be put out for bid sometime over the next six weeks.

Director Pearson informed the board that the Charlevoix City Council passed the two RFP's for a Downtown Market Study and a Community Economic Development Study. City Council also unanimously approved the Redevelopment Liquor License for Charlevoix Cinema III.

G. Old Business

None.

H. New Business

1. Charlevoix Public Library Annual Report.

Ms. Val Meyerson, Director of the Charlevoix Public Library, presented the Library's Annual Report. Ms. Meyerson included highlights of the Report:

- In 2013 there were 744,546 visitors at the Library, an average of 2,779 people each week. This is an average of 15.4 visits per capita, which is 60% higher than the national average.
- 114,666 items were borrowed from the Library during 2013, which is 3% higher than the national average.
- In 2013 the Library provided 431 programs for the public with 8,239 people in attendance.
- There are 826 patrons checking out digital books who together borrowed 6,485 electronic items in 2013.

Ms. Meyerson responded to inquiries from the Board members.

2. Recommendation to Encourage Outdoor Seating.

Director Pearson stated that the DDA has previously looked for ways to encourage outdoor dining throughout the DDA District. Recommendations in the *2007 Cool Cities Report* and citizen input from the *Community Economic Development Forums* both favorably cite the need and want for additional outdoor venues to enjoy both food and

beverage. Cities that allow and provide opportunities for outdoor dining tend to draw more people from other communities and therefore increase the vitality of downtown. Although, this has been difficult in the past because of narrow sidewalks and MDOT regulations, a recent proposal by the Bridge Street Tap Room could make outdoor seating adjacent to Bridge Park a possibility.

The Bridge Street Tap Room is seeking approval from the DDA, in the form of a recommendation to the City Council, which would allow them to use a small area adjacent to their building for outdoor dining. The Tap Room would use barrier planters to distinguish a small area for their establishment. Since the entrance to the Tap Room is not located on Bridge Street this could be a great opportunity to provide an amenity in downtown that has long been capitalized by a few select businesses.

According to the City Code, *"it shall be unlawful for any person to consume alcoholic beverages in any part of any park which lies within 1,000' of US Highway 31..."*. Director Pearson stated that in discussions with the City Manager and Planning & Zoning Administrator, staff believes that the paved area adjacent to the building is actually an extension of the sidewalk and therefore not technically a portion of the park. The City Code also states that Council may give the City Manager the ability to authorize any specific function in the park.

The board was favorable towards the idea but stated the need for the DDA to take a more holistic look at outdoor dining in the future to evaluate things such as platform dining, regulating outdoor dining furniture, and outdoor dining fees.

Motion by Member Dipert, second by Member Mason, to set up an outdoor dining sub-committee to address specific issues and bring recommendations back to the board. Members Kurtz and Wyett will represent the DDA and a member from the Chamber and City Council will be asked to participate.

Motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Motion by Member Kurtz, second by Member Wyett, to recommend that City Council pass a Resolution allowing the Bridge Street Tap Room to serve food and beverages outside, adjacent to their building on a trial basis until May 1, 2015. Motion passed by the following yeas and nays vote:

Yeas: Kirby Dipert, Luther Kurtz, John Yaroch, Hugh Mason, Fred DiMartino, Jeannine Wallace, Todd Wyett, Dan Barron

Nays: None

Absent: Mayor Norman L. Carlson, Jr.

3. Holiday Tree Lights.

Director Pearson stated that in 2012, the DDA replaced the "cool blue" lights with "warm yellow" LED'S on 36 downtown trees (28,600 lights) for a total cost of \$26,133 (725.91/tree). In 2013, the DDA added additional lights to the display for a total cost of \$16,925 (\$6,055 in private donations, \$5,000 from the City, \$2,500 from the electric department, and \$3,370 from the DDA).

Because the tree lights were run year-round, the life expectancy of five years has been reduced to two years, making the trees installed in 2012 appear much dimmer than the trees installed in 2013. Director Pearson decided to have the lights shut off at the end of April; however, some downtown merchants have expressed their desire to have the lights remain operational year round.

The DDA currently has \$1,000 budgeted for the maintenance of the lights, but did not budget to replace the lights on the 36 trees that were strung in 2012. The Board should consider whether or not to continue to light the trees on a year round basis, sources of funding for the on-going maintenance of the tree lighting program, and whether or not to replace just a portion of the lights or all of the lights.

Member Wyett expressed his dissatisfaction at the longevity of the lights and stated he doesn't think it's worth continuing the lights, as much as he loves them, at the current cost.

Member Dipert stated that the lights make a good atmosphere in downtown Charlevoix and that he would prefer to see them on in both the holiday season and the summer months, but that the spring and fall they are not necessary.

The idea of passing this project on to another group like Keep Charlevoix Beautiful was discussed. Director Pearson will approach the Keep Charlevoix Beautiful Board about this to see if it is something they may be interested in pursuing in the future.

The Board discussed the current situation and decided not to take any action at this point and to invite Tom Kladzyk from Holiday Tree Lighting to the next meeting to answer questions. The board also decided to have the lights turned back on until a decision is made; the lights will be on from ~~dust~~ dusk until midnight.

I. Audience – Non-Agenda Input

None.

J. Miscellaneous Business of the Board

None.

K. Future Agenda Items

None.

L. Adjournment

Motion by Member Wyett, second by Member Wallace, to adjourn. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Joyce Golding/bp

City Clerk

Dan Barron

Chair