



Charter Township of Meridian
Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
Central Fire Station, 5000 Okemos Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Monday, August 7, 2023 – Minutes

Members

Present: Peter Campbell, Bill Cawood, Tom Stanko, Renee Korrey and Angela Wright

Members

Absent: Supervisor Jackson, Don Romain and Jim Spanos

Staff

Present: Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director Amber Clark, Township Manager Walsh, Finance Director Dante Ianni and Executive Assistant Michelle Prinz

Others

Present: Planning Commissioner Mark Blumer

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Stanko called the meeting to order and read the mission statement at 7:30am.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**MOTION BY MEMBER KORREY TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAWOOD.
MOTION APPROVED 5-0.**

3. APPROVAL MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2023

**MOTION BY MEMBER CAWOOD TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAMPBELL.
MOTION APPROVED 5-0.**

4. PUBLIC REMARKS

Introduction of new Finance Director Dante Ianni.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Monthly Financial Report

Director Clark reviewed the financials which included a fund balance of \$139,427.56. The financials were placed on file.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENTS

A. Consumers Energy Bill August 2023

MOTION BY MEMBER CAWOOD TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT OF THE AUGUST 2023 CONSUMERS ENERGY BILL OF \$28.81. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER KORREY. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Establishment of Façade Improvement Program and Application

Director Clark reviewed the program guidelines, description and application. Discussion was had about the fact that this program would not be for general maintenance projects, but rather improvement projects. The applicant would pay for the costs of the project and submit for reimbursement. The applicant would need to stay in place for ten years and the maximum ask amount would be \$20,000. Discussion was had to add two items to the application: Is the property for sale? Also, add owner approval/signature.

MOTION BY MEMBER KORREY TO ADOPT THE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT AND GRANT PROGRAM INCLUDING THE APPLICATION, AS AMENDED, FOR NEW OR EXISTING COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES IN THE DDA DISTRICT TO SUBMIT FOR FORMAL REVIEW. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAMPBELL. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

B. DDA Savings and Additional Earnings Report

Member Wright discussed various flexible ways to earn interest on the DDA money through Independent Bank. The 7-31 day CD earns the most interest at 4.6% and a money market account could earn 1.3%. Through discussion, the DDA decided it was most beneficial to keep most of the DDA funds (\$130,000) in a 7-31 day CD. The remainder would remain in the existing account to pay the Consumers Energy monthly bill and any other immediate needs for the DDA.

MOTION BY MEMBER KORREY TO MOVE \$130,000 TO A 7-31 DAY CD WITH INDEPENDENT BANK. AUTHORIZE STAFF TO WORK WITH INDEPENDENT BANK, OUR BANK OF RECORD, TO FINALIZE ALL NECESSARY PAPERWORK. RENEW EVERY MONTH UNTIL OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE DDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAMPBELL. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

C. 2024 DDA Budget

Director Clark shared the draft 2024 DDA Budget. The revenue and expenses were discussed. A suggestion was made to add an expense line of \$20,000 for the Façade Improvement Program.

MOTION BY MEMBER CAMPBELL TO ADOPT THE AMENDED BUDGET FOR 2024. INCLUDE THE ANNUAL BUDGET ON THE DOWNTOWN AUTHORITY WEBSITE AND SUBMIT TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAWOOD. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. New DDA Sign and DDA Logo

Director Clark shared the poor condition of the existing DDA sign. There was discussion about the new Township signs and if the DDA is interested in purchasing an updated new sign and possible design of a new DDA logo. The sign costs are \$1,800 and up. There was consensus to work on a sign location because it cannot go back in the same location as the previous sign. Also, consensus on working with the Communications Department on a new logo design. Director Clark will bring back location, sizes and logo examples to the next meeting. It was suggested that the current sign be kept at the Historical Village.

9. REPORTS

A. Township Board

None.

B. Township Manager

Manager Walsh reported on the following:

- Welcome New Finance Director Dante Ianni
- 2024 Budget is due to the Board on 8/25. Budget hearing will be on 9/5.
- New entry signs are up
- Road projects are going well. Chip and Fog roads have been fixed.
- Police Chief Plaga will be retiring on 8/25
- Working on recruitment for the next Chief of Police
- Director Maiser will be retiring and has agreed to stay on and assist through June 2024
- Municipal Building renovation is delayed due to out of stock fabric for the 2nd floor cubicles
- Ribbon cutting and re-dedication to the Municipal Building will happen on 8/30 and employees who work on the 1st floor will move in that day
- Board will be hosting six listening sessions in neighborhoods this fall
- Received a \$5 million grant from the State for a Senior/Community Center
- Trader Joe's in moving along

C. Planning Commission

Commissioner Blumer reported the Planning Commission is working on the Master Plan Update. They will be meeting with the Township Supervisor and Staff to review proposed updates.

D. Chair Report

Chair Stanko welcomed Dante and said thanks to Amber.

E. Staff Report

Director Clark reported on the following:

- A second Match on Main grant application is coming
- Meeting with EGLE next week to discuss the Village of Okemos funding
- Submitted RAP grant for the Village of Okemos-announcements will come at the end of August

10. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

Discussion was had around beatifying Downtown Okemos. Can the hole be filled in and the property graded and seeded? This item will be added to each agenda in the coming months.

Member Wright reported she will have a dozen volunteers to do a project in the Township on Monday, October 10, 2023.

11. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

12. NEXT MEETING DATE

a. September 11, 2023, 7:30am-Central Fire Station, Community Room, 5000 Okemos Road

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 am without objection.