



Charter Township of Meridian
Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
Township Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864
Monday, August 5, 2024 – Minutes

Members

Present:

Members Chair Tom Stanko, Don Romain, Bill Cawood, Ron Sdao, and Angela Wright,

Absent:

Staff

Present: Neighborhoods & Economic Development Director Amber Clark, Township Treasurer Phil Deschaine

Others

Present:

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**MOTION BY MEMBER CAMPBELL TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER ROMAIN.
MOTION APPROVED 5-0.**

3. APPROVAL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2024

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

4. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Monthly Financial Report

Director Clark shared the June 2024 Monthly financials. Total operating costs being \$701.39, all of which are the Consumers Energy bills for the Streetlights.

B. August Development Projects

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.



Director Clark gave a general overview of the upcoming development projects in Meridian Township.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF PAYMENTS

A. Consumers Energy Bill July 2024

MOTION BY MEMBER CAMPBELL TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT OF \$97.28 FOR THE JULY 2024 CONSUMER ENERGY BILL. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER ROMAIN. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. DDA Sign – Alternative

Director Clark stated that the final DDA logo as presented in May is not something she believes the DDA will feel confident about placing on a welcome/entry sign. The quality of the graphic provided by the Communications Department was not aligned in enough detail with what Director Clark believed the DDA would prefer. Director Clark shared the final logo with the DDA and presented what it would look like on a sign. Members of the DDA agreed it did not meet the standard of pleasing aesthetic that they wanted to set. Due to the open contact with Johnson Sign Company, there is a timeline that will be impacted by delaying selecting a sign. Director Clark believes the DDA could have a temporary welcome sign put into place and once ready with a new logo, a new insert will be put into place.

Members wanted clarification on the cost to have the sign installed and a new insert replaced once the logo was adopted. The initial sign cost is \$1800, and the vinyl face replacement being \$500-600 more. Member Campbell asked could we simply wait for a logo we agreed to and one we all liked. Then only make one payment? Director Clark responded that the open contract was a concern as it is ending soon and members of the public are eager to have a sign installed. Member Campbell stated that waiting until the logo was finished would just save us the money and people have waited for a while without the sign. Member Sdao said he was happy we were discussing the logo again as he did not prefer the one that was presented. He stated he was “the new guy” and didn’t want to ruffle feathers. DDA members agreed they would like a new logo. Member Sdao agreed to work with Allegra Printing in Alaeidon Township south of Meridian Township. Allegra is local and economical and will create an updated logo. Members of the DDA agreed that Members Sdao should reach out to see if Allegra would create a new logo for the DDA.

MOTION BY MEMBER SDAO TO APPROVE AN ALTERNATIVE DDA WELCOME SIGN WITHOUT THE UPDATED DDA LOGO, ENGAGE WITH ALLEGRA PRINTING TO CREATE A DRAFT LOGO FOR THE DDA, AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SUBMIT THE TEMPORARY WELCOME TO DDA SIGN AS PRESENTED TO JOHNSON SIGN CO. SUPPORT BY MEMBER WRIGHT. MOTION APPROVED 4-1.

B. Village of Okemos Project Update

Director Clark relayed that the Township has received a formal letter from the Village of Okemos development team that the project as presented is on hold indefinitely. The site is currently listed for sale without a list price. Director Clark detailed that the site, to the best of the ability of EGLE has been cleared of any contamination that could be cleared. There is still a large high volume of contamination that will never be clean at the site. Due to this fact, the site will not be able to be used as a park or any recreational facility as the contamination vapors could leak through. The hole at the site will remain unless the development team would like that filled in. With the site being privately held, it is up to the developers to determine the

sites future. The DDA has the ability to help influence that future by assisting with the ancillary elements that impact the site, like public infrastructure. In years past, Ingham County turned the two lane Okemos road with on street parking to a four lane Okemos thoroughfare. That has had a direct impact on the downtown area and businesses. With no left turn lane and the mass of traffic it is near impossible for a retail store, shop, housing development to survive. In addition the County was requiring the developer to make the updates to Okemos road. This is an element that banks will not finance as it is a public element and the developer can't charge for it. The best option for any future development is the installation of left turn lanes, options for on street parking, updated water, sewer and drain infrastructure. Then a project can finance the remaining portions. The site will remain as it is until a new development is proposed.

For members of the public that would like to know about the site, the webpage is active with a FAQ for the site. It can be found under 'development projects' on the Township's website.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Downtown Development Authority 2024-2025 Proposed Budget

The 2025 proposed budget was presented to the DDA.

MOTION BY MEMBER MEMBER CAMPBELL AND SUPPORTED BY MEMBER SDAO TO ADOPT THE 2025 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BUDGET AS PRESENTED. DIRECT STAFF TO PRESENT THE ADOPTED BUDGET TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD. MOTION APPROVED 5-0

B. RRC Site Selection Locations

Director Clark presented to the DDA a proposal to include additional sites on the Zoom prospector site with MEDC. As a certified RRC community we are eligible to list our priority development locations on the statewide website to promote and advertise the possibilities. Director Clark mentioned it is the attraction of the site at Haslett and Marsh that brought along those developers.

Members asked if there is a limit or a cost to place the sites on the MEDC website. Director Clark explained no there is no limit and we have no sites actively listed now.

MOTION BY MEMBER ROMAIN TO APPROVE THE INCLUSION FO 4663 ARDMORE AND 4708 OKEMOS ON THE MEDC WEBSITE TO ATTRACT POTENTIAL DEVELOPERS. SUPPORTED BY MEMBER CAMPBELL. MOTION APPROVED 5-0.

9. OPEN DISCUSSION/BOARD COMMENTS

Member Angela Wright reminded Director Clark that the DDA's authorized signers need to be updated. Director Clark thanked Member Wright and agreed to have the updated resolution at the next meeting. Member Wright also invited DDA members to attend the Independent Bank special event at the Lugnuts Stadium.

10. PUBLIC REMARKS

None.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

a. September 9, 2024, 7:30am-Township Municipal Building, Town Hall Room, 5151 Marsh Road.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37am without objection.