

**VAN BUREN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, June 23, 2020 – 5:30 pm**

This meeting was held in a webinar/video conference format using Zoom.

Chairman Atchinson called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Chairman Atchinson, Vice-Chair Bird, Secretary Brown, Director Baskin (logged on at 5:33 p.m.), Director Chudzinski, Director Delibera, Director Laginess, Director Rochowiak and Supervisor McNamara. Members absent/excused: Director Chappell and Director Foster. Others in attendance: DDA Executive Director Ireland, Recording Secretary Lothringer, David Nummer and Carmelle Tremblay of Wade Trim and an audience of one (1).

Approval of Agenda: Bird moved, Chudzinski seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

Minutes: Rochowiak moved, Laginess seconded to approve the DDA Minutes of Tuesday, May 26, 2020 as presented. Carried.

Reports: Executive Director Ireland provided an update of how the past month has played out as both staff members have returned to being in the office full-time vs. working an alternating daily schedule. She explained that DDA's allocated time to collect mail and take care of other relevant matters is 4 p.m. in order to minimize any exposure of risk.

She updated the board on the status of building projects involving outside contractors. The things being worked on include the code entry system, additional cameras, janitorial service, and a few remaining "punch list" items from the construction of the building that were scheduled to be taken care of before COVID-19 caused delays.

Executive Director Ireland provided an update to the board on continued work-flow during the COVID-19 pandemic. She stated that staff has been able to continue DDA operations remotely and they are alternating in-office days to allow opportunity for access to the printer and collection of mail.

Lastly, her report included an update on activity at Aerotropolis and several zoom meetings she has taken part in over the last 4 weeks.

DDA Assistant Executive Director Lothringer stated that she is being mindful to keep all social media posts relevant to the current situation in our community. Several posts with small business grant funding opportunities have been share as well as the June BOM - Beirut LaPita.

The art sculptures were installed in early June and the decision has been made to create an online brochure/map and hold off on a print version for the time being.

Lothringer is working with Dan Power, Planning and Economic Director for the Township, in the development of an application packet for VBT and DDA businesses to be able to apply for a fee-free permit allowing them to have outdoor dining and retail during the restrictions.

Deputy Director Lothringer updated the board on projects she is working on at this time. July Spotlight will be Harris Park, fine tuning the scripts for the D-business pod casts, creating a variety of “playlists” for the electronic sign and working on the DDA’s 4-pages for the Q3 issue of the Van Buren Today magazine.

Director Laginess asked about the items that Cyndi Harris had brought in before the pandemic. Lothringer explained that she has placed some on display already and will be getting to the rest of the items in the boxes. Additionally, she let the board know that Suzanne Harris was scheduled to stop by later this week to drop off some photos for the DDA to look through and copy what we would like to use for the display.

Wade Trim representative, Carmelle Tromblay, provided an update on the drone flight of Belleville Road to evaluate the sidewalks. It appears that 5-10% of that sidewalk needs to be replaced. They are in the process of evaluating the remaining sidewalks in the DDA and will bring their observations back at a future meeting.

New Business: Laginess moved, Bird seconded to approve the partnership with the Michigan Downtown Association (MDA) and Issue Media Group (IMG) for a VBT DDA Special Report at a cost of \$3,000 with the MDA contributing \$500 and the balance to be expensed from line item 247-000-900-000 – Printing and Publishing. Carried.

Laginess moved, Bird seconded to accept the Downtown Development Authority 2019 Year End Audit as prepared by Plante and Moran. Carried.

The DDA board had a discussion on the topic of repairs to Belleville Road. Executive Director Ireland relayed the information she obtained through her discussion with the DDA’s Financial Advisor. Carmelle Tremblay and Dave Nummer, from Wade Trim, both spoke to various options for repairs and discussed the pros and cons of each option. Chairman Atchinson suggested that we go to the county to see if they would be open to considering a partnership for repairing Belleville Road. Supervisor McNamara and the Executive Director will reach out to see if they can set up a video meeting with the appropriate parties at Wayne County.

Communications: None

Non-Agenda Items: Because of the video conference format, Deputy Lothringer asked members of the public in attendance individually if they wished to speak. One audience member, Rosemary Otzman, asked about the sections of Belleville Road that are crumbling to which Wade Trim was able to provide answers.

Adjournment: Rochowiak moved, Bird seconded to adjourn at 6:41 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Lothringer
Recording Secretary