

**VAN BUREN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Tuesday, April 27, 2021 – 5:30 pm**

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

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

Roll Call: Members Present by Video or Telephone: Chairman Atchinson, Vice-Chair Bird, Director Baskin, (5:41p.m.), Director Chappell (5:37 p.m.), Director Delibera, Director Laginess, Director Rochowiak and Supervisor McNamara. Members Absent and Excused: Director Chudzinski, Director Foster and Secretary Brown. Also in attendance: DDA Executive Director Ireland, Rec. Secretary Lothringer, VBT Public Services Director Best, Planning & Economic Development Director Powers, BACA representative Ken Voigt and an audience of one (1).

Approval of Agenda: Rochowiak moved, Delibera seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

Minutes: Rochowiak moved, Laginess seconded to approve the DDA Minutes of Tuesday, March 23, 2021 as corrected to indicated that Chair Atchinson opened the meeting and not Vice Chair Bird as written. Carried.

New Business:

1. Consider request to partner with Van Buren Township on a part of the new community center. Laginess moved, Baskin seconded to approve an amount up to, but not to exceed, \$1.137 million dollars from Capital Outlay line item 247-000-970-000 to be expensed in the 2022 budget year as a partnership with Van Buren Township on the inclusion of a black box type theater to be a part of the community center project and make the approval of those funds contingent on DDA staff being included in the decision process. Roll call vote taken: Yeas: Chair Atchinson, Vice Chair Bird, Director Baskin, Director Chappell, Director Delibera, Director Laginess, Supervisor McNamara and Director Rochowiak. Nays: None. Absent/Excused: Secretary Brown, Director Chudzinski and Director Foster. Motion Carried.
2. Presentation given by Ken Voigt of the Belleville Area Council for the Arts (BACA) on the Belleville Lake Bass project. BACA's intent with this project is to infuse local art in to the area. They have purchased fiberglass fish that will be painted by local artists. BACA is asking the DDA and the township to provide 5 locations for placement with no costs associated. Several questions were asked by the DDA Board and Mr. Voigt addressed each of them. The DDA board is in favor of selecting locations and has instructed Deputy Director Lothringer to provide that information to Mr. Voigt.

Reports:

1. Executive Director Ireland informed the board of the status of the sidewalk project that had taken place at the time of writing the report. Additionally, she filled them in on the happenings over the past two days with the project. She notified the board that any of the businesses within the DDA that filed for tax appeals in 2020 will automatically be carried over to include 2021. She will continue to monitor developments within the Tax Tribunal carefully.

The three landscape companies have all started their spring clean-up in their respective areas of the DDA. Pioneer will be taking on the task of cleaning and resealing the stamped concrete at Harris Park. They were the best price of the three quotes she obtained. Holiday lights or 2021 have been finalized with the vendor.

She shared details of the video meeting hosted by the Michigan Downtown Association with Senator Gary Peters. Ideas were shared with regard to the association and how COVID has impacted some downtown businesses.

Director Ireland has been in contact with Wayne County DPS and provided several items they requested with regard to potential road improvement projects on Belleville Road. She is awaiting a follow-up email.

Lastly, she updated the board on the Aerotropolis meetings she has been involved in as well as the continued virtual meetings held in conjunction with the township.

2. DDA Assistant Executive Director Lothringer recapped the most recent email and social media outreach efforts, mentioning that the Monthly Spotlight has been used to feature businesses or events within the DDA boundaries since 2015.

Lothringer advised the board that the Q2 edition of the Van Buren Today magazine will feature an opportunity to educate the community on the Sculpture Showcase. Additionally, there will be a 2-page piece on supporting the local businesses, big or small, they all employ our neighbors and strengthen our local economy.

Deputy Director Lothringer also updated the board on the print and digital projects she is currently working on.

She provided an update on working with Wade Trim on the sidewalk project. She cross referenced the replacement locations to the business locations.

Lastly, she informed them of the meetings she has been attending and that she has completed one more course towards her Michigan Professional Downtown Management certification.

Non-Agenda Items: Supervisor McNamara took a moment to thank the DDA for their generosity and choosing to be a part of the Community Center project. He additionally thanked Executive Director Ireland and Assistant Executive Director Lothringer for the great job they do for the DDA and the Van Buren community.

Adjournment: Motion by Laginess, support by Vice Chair Bird. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Lothringer

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Recording Secretary