

Charter Township of Filer DDA Rescheduled Regular Meeting Proposed Minutes

June 9, 2020
4:30pm

Filer Township Hall
2505 Filer City Road, Manistee, MI 49660
231-723-3138

Chair 2022	Vice-Chair 2022	Treasurer 2022	Member 2020	Supervisor 11/20/20	2019	Member 2020	Member 2021	Member 2021	Director
Robert Yates <i>Business</i>	Tom Chycinski <i>Resident in district</i>	Kathy Gutowski <i>Citizen at Large</i>	Mathew Johnson <i>Business</i>	Terry Walker <i>Supervisor</i>	Vacant <i>Business</i>	Robert Henry <i>Business</i>	Al Frye <i>Citizen At Large</i>	Todd Newenhouse <i>Business</i>	Tamara Buswinka

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Yates at 4:30p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Newenhouse, Walker, Johnson, Gutowski, Yates, Frye

Members Excused Absence: Chycinski

Members Unexcused Absence: Henry

Others Present: Tamara Buswinka, DDA Director

Consideration of the Minutes

NOTE: Due to Covid-19 Governor Gretchen Whitmer Executive Orders, the April and May 2020 DDA meetings were cancelled.

Gutowski moved, supported by Frye, to approve the March 3, 2020 minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Gutowski reviewed the Treasurer Reports for the months of March, April, and May, including the bills to be paid, with the Board.

Frye moved, supported by Johnson, to accept the Treasurer's reports for the months of March, April, and May and pay the bills as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report

Yates discussed the Sign Project with the Board. Buswinka stated that the last direction received she was to secure landscaping and electrical quotes. Buswinka stated that she and Patty Preuss had been working to secure the quotes as requested but then Covid-19 hit and all contractors stopped operations. Since the Stay at Orders have lifted, Buswinka has worked at making contact with contractors. The Board discussed the project merits, including the cost of the project, in light of the economic fall out of Covid-19. It was generally agreed that the Board wished to re-evaluate its finances and priorities so that limited resources are put to use in strategic ways that will make the most amount of impact. Therefore, the Sign Project needs to be re-evaluated.

The Board directed Buswinka as per the following motion:

Frye moved, supported by Johnson, to have Buswinka meet with Amor Signs to discuss the project details and to re-evaluated the design and scope of the project in order to scale back the cost by considering two suggestions: that the sign materials and design are altered or that the project be reduced to one sign rather than two signs. Amor is directed to include an option for solar powered lighting and the Board agreed that the entire project shall not exceed \$40,000.00. Motion passed unanimously.

Yates discussed re-engaging activities to reduce the DDA debt exposure for the sewer project. The Board directed Buswinka to prepare a Fact Sheet that addresses the current amount of debt, DDA yearly debt payment obligations, interest rate, long term benefits of paying off a sizable portion of the debt, and how to best communicate to the Township Board and community for historical record the actions the Board takes to reduce the Township exposure to long term debt.

Supervisor's Report

Walker discussed the Township Owned Property Project. Walker gave a historical recap of the Townships' ownership and obligations of the property, specifically the requirement to provide a First Right to Refusal to Dr. Balaban (the former owner of the property). Walker also spoke about Richard Wilson's (Township Attorney) recommendations for how to legally proceed with a sale of the property, specifically, the principle of public trust and the need to follow a process that allows for full transparency and equal opportunity. Wilson discussed with Walker tasks that need to occur: release of the prepared RFP in order to articulate the Townships' goals for the property and provide the basis for the First Right of Refusal, the need for the Township to develop an ordinance that governs the sale of Township owned property in order to ensure that an orderly and legitimate process is followed, and the need to take action to discuss the First Right of Refusal obligation with Dr. Balaban.

Walker also informed the Board that he, Yates, Chycinski, and Buswinka had a phone conference call with Marc Miller, Chamber Economic Development Director, early May to discuss the property and to become informed about a developer (Mitch Bogner from Ludington) who may be interested in purchasing and developing the property for housing. Buwinka stated, and Walker and Yates supported, the understanding that this was a pre-meeting to discuss the property with Miller as a way to begin a conversation about its development. Walker stated in light of Wilson's recommendations he has communicated to Miller that the Township needs to do their due diligence and therefore will be

working quickly on those items. Buswinka stated that she had recently spoken to Miller and found out that he had recommended that Bogner prepare architectural drawings to present to the Township. Buswinka stated that she reminded Miller that based on the meeting in early May, the Township had the understanding and expectation that Miller would arrange a meeting between the Township and the Bogner's to discuss the property and the Township's goals for its development. That meeting was never arranged.

The Board in general discussed the cost of preparing architectural plans, with Yates recalling that there was direction given to ask the Bogners to bring to them their ideas and examples of the type of development they were interested in seeing occur on the property, but preparing architectural plans was not necessary at this point in the exploration of their interest in the property. The Board agreed they did not want any developer to spend unnecessary costs on plans unless they had at least had an opportunity to discuss the property with them first. Walker informed the DDA that, in consultation with Chycinski, he instructed Wilson to communicate with the Bogner's directly so that the Township could begin a direct conversation with them, and not through a third party, with the goal of preventing mis-information and to manage expectations.

Director's Report

Buswinka discussed with the Board the need to decide on a project or two that they would like to undertake this fiscal year. Frye discussed the idea of undertaking a business innovation competition. The Board was in agreement that a competition would be beneficial to the growth of the corridor and helpful to entrepreneurs but would like to see a more formal proposal. Frye agreed to chair a committee to explore the idea and provide finances, tasks, and timelines for its execution.

Buswinka stated she will contact Tom Stege to strategize the completion of the State reporting requirement for DDA's.

Board Member Comments

Newenhouse suggested that one way the DDA could be helpful to businesses in the district during this time of COVID-19 is for the DDA to develop a sewer project forgiveness program for 6 months or more. The Board in general was in support of this idea. Buswinka was directed to do an analysis of how much it would be to initiate a sewer project forgiveness program for 6 months to a year.

Yates, speaking on behalf of Chycinski, would like the July agenda to include a discussion about DDA participation in the Township water billing project changes that would require a \$1200.00 investment. Walker was asked by Yates to inquire with Wilson if the DDA has the authority to contribute to the program. The water billing project is meant to change the current billing from quarterly to monthly for businesses in the district.

Adjournment

Frye moved, supported by Gutowski, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Board meeting is Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 4:30 pm.

DDA Director Report

June 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Wrote, edited, and formatted the March DDA meeting minutes.
- Prepared agenda and other materials for the June DDA meeting.
- Monitored and stayed in communication with Township staff and DDA Chair about latest Governor Executive Orders and their implications for DDA work and meeting schedules. As you know we tried multiple times during the past two months to have meetings but the multiple Executive Orders issued precluded the Board from meeting as the Board did not have emergency issues that needed to be dealt with.

RETAIL STUDY IMPLEMENTATION-BUSINESS GROWTH

- I reached out and surveyed the businesses within the district (those that I had email addresses for) to ask two questions: how are they fairing during the Stay at Home Orders and if there was anything that the DDA could do to assist them.

OTHER MATTERS OF THE DDA

- Development of the Township Owned Property:
 - Met (via phone conference) with Marc Miller, Chamber Economic Development Director, and others to discuss his ideas for the development of the Township owned property; Gave consideration to Miller's ideas.
 - Wrote the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the conceptual planning and development of the property.
 - Corresponded with Richard Wilson, Terry Walker, and Bob Yates multiple times regarding the property to discuss strategy and opportunities, to evaluate the state of the pandemic to determine timing to issue the RFP, and to discuss the content of the RFP. The RFP is being reviewed by Richard Wilson because the decision was made that a legal review of the RFP was prudent and wise in order to

ensure that the information submitted by applicants matched future legal agreements that will need to be made (such as a development agreement that discusses finances, timing for the project completion, and possible incentivization for attracting a developer).

Submitted by:
Tamara Buswinka, DDA Director

DATE: May 27, 2020

Filer Township DDA Treasurer's Report

A. Account Balances			
1. Checking Account	\$657,630.14		
Interest			
Tax Disbursement			
Disbursements	\$6,250.00		
		\$651,380.14	
2. Certificates of Deposit			
a. Chemical Bank	\$204,919.65		
b. Shelby State Bank	\$256,202.21		
Total DDA Funds		\$1,112,502.00	
B. Invoices Submitted for payment:			
Mika Meyers	\$3,855.50		
		\$1,108,646.50	

*previous year for
 provided for
 needed for
 paid for
 advertising &
 populating plan*

