

Village of Bellaire

Downtown Development Authority

Louise Wenzel, Chairperson
Don Hoyt, Vice-Chairperson
Doug Dawson, Secretary
Christy Wilson, Treasurer

Downtown Development Authority Minutes

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

1. **Call to Order:** Chairperson, Louise Wenzel called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. **Attendance:**

Members Present: Christy Wilson; Louise Wenzel; Mark Irwin; Joe Short; Rolland Fink; Doug Dawson; Don Hoyt; Dan Bennett
Members Absent: Don Seman
Guest Present: Shelly Dayton, other unknown callers

3. **Approval of Consent Agenda:** The consent agenda was approved as presented.

Motion by Short seconded by Fink to approve the agenda, motion carried a unanimous voice vote.

4. **Public Comment on Agenda:** No public comment

5. **Unfinished Business:**

- **Unified Action Plan Steering Committee Update** – Wenzel informed the Board of the actions taken at the first meeting of the Steering Committee – officers were elected (Irwin, Chair; McPherson, Vice Chair; Essad, Secretary) Wenzel noted Elise Crafts outlined the responsibilities of the Committee and summarized results of a “Where Are We Now” survey the committee took regarding existing conditions. It was noted there will also be community involvement to gather shared priorities for the Unified Action Plan. Wenzel noted that the Steering Committee is not a decision making committee as all approvals for moving forward on projects will be brought back to each respective Board for approval. A series of surveys will be conducted with the Community to ensure all parties provide input for the Unified Action Plan. Short commented on the importance of the committee as we will all be working together to achieve economic development for our community.
- **SBC Contribution Dollars** – Members re-addressed the analysis of the contribution dollars to be returned to SBC. Members were provided with a DRAFT breakdown of potential contribution dollars to be returned to SBC. The components of the cash and funds that are restricted were discussed. Irwin raised a question regarding the TIF dollar

analysis. It was agreed this item would be tabled until next meeting to address Irwin's comment.

- **Social Distancing Initiative** – Wenzel re-addressed the discussion regarding the tables, chairs etc. to be returned to SBC. Wenzel noted the members agreed at the last meeting to donate the assets back to SBC. Short indicated such donation back to SBC could still be open for discussion, but since there was no plan to store or maintain the assets and since SBC contribution dollars were used to purchase the tables, it was agreed to donate to SBC. Short indicated if the DDA would like to present a proposed Social Distancing plan for consideration that SBC would be willing to engage in discussion. Wenzel posed the question as to the end date for the outdoor spaces/porta potties and dumpster. Wenzel noted the Village Council agreed to return the public restrooms hours back to a closing time of 4:00pm after October 31, 2020. Members discussed how beneficial the outdoor spaces were for business revenue throughout the summer and expressed a need to continue with this initiative next year. Members noted there has been significant positive feedback from individuals using the spaces. Short noted this project was a great example of the positive energy and commerce that was put forth by the DDA. He indicated his plan is to develop the commercial property that was used as one of the open spaces, however until such development occurs, will continue to work with the DDA and adjacent businesses to see how this space may benefit the community as a whole. After discussion, it was agreed the end date would be October 31, 2020. The vendor of the porta potties will be notified of the end date and the dumpster will revert back to a smaller dumpster for the Pharmacy. Short questioned whether there was a maintenance plan for maintaining the Tiffany Commerce Area. Wilson commented that Erin from Short's has bussers clean the space, Christy has been maintaining space, Louise and John Wenzel and Ryan Wilson have been fixing umbrellas and tables and placed the sandbags. Hoyt noted going forward if this initiative continues, we would should develop a more formalized plan. Bennett suggested we conduct a meeting regarding the Social Distancing Initiative to outline all the things that worked and what areas need improvement. Wenzel posed a question to Hoyt regarding the timing of the removal of the DIA artwork. Hoyt will contact the DIA to determine if the art work may remain until October 31, 2020 to coincide with the end of the Open Spaces.

Wenzel updated the members of the Village decision to revert back to closing the public restrooms at 4:00 p.m. after October 31, 2020 due to the expense of equipping the doors with an auto lock system. Wenzel asked Bennett if this meant the rest rooms would also be closed on weekends. Bennett noted he would look into this. Short raised a question on how often the restrooms were used. Bennett noted they are used quite often. Wilson questioned whether the Village had looked into a locking system that could be operated via an ap. Bennet indicating he would follow up. Irwin also commented that there were several options for such electronic locking systems utilizing an ap.

- **Buy Local Update** – Wilson noted the group is moving forward on fall activities and will conduct a Witches and Warlocks event the week before Halloween. The group plans to move forward with activities to bring people to our downtown. Short

commented on the Harvest Festival regarding the lack of COVID mask wearing. It was noted only about 10% of vendors were wearing masks and 20% of visitors were wearing masks. Short further commented that what was more concerning was the Chamber Executive Director was not wearing a mask which raises the concern of inconsistent messages when leadership is not leading by example. It was noted this was not helpful that a community leader was not wearing a mask and sent a message we are not consistent with a COVID standard. Bennett complimented Short on the efforts put forth from his business to adhere to strict COVID protocols. Short noted he does not want Short's to be the standard, but rather the Village as a whole should be the consistent standard.

6. New Business:

- **Budget Preparation** - Wenzel noted we need to begin thinking about the 2021 budget and reminded Christy to have the Buy Local group to begin thinking about a budget.

7. Miscellaneous Business:

- Hoyt raised a concern on the future of the DDA. He noted it appears the DDA is entering a different phase and was concerned with where we are headed. He suggested the DDA conduct a Strategic Planning meeting to discuss our future. He noted the DDA has gained momentum over the summer with some projects that highlighted the efforts of the DDA and did not want to lose sight of this momentum. Discussion focused on how the Unified Action Plan was paramount to continuing this momentum by bringing together the DDA, Village and all other community groups to accomplish goals that have long sat on a shelf. It was noted that without the business interest in a special assessment which would provide funds to the DDA, that working together with the Village etc will allow for us to obtain grant dollars to accomplish goals. Wenzel noted the Buy Local group, which is a subcommittee of the DDA, has been very instrumental in accomplishing "low hanging fruit" projects that benefit the downtown area. The Unified Action Plan will be focusing on larger community projects. Concern was noted that we have focused on large projects in the past and have not capitalized on smaller projects that highlight what the DDA does for the community. Short noted that we need to keep in mind that anything the DDA wishes to accomplish must be approved by the Village. The Unified Action Plan will provide a more efficient process in getting things done and not waste cash. Irwin commented that the Unified Action Plan will be one plan that benefits a large number of people and will open doors for people to become engaged with "boots on the ground" assistance and possible financial influx. Irwin noted this plan allows us to harness the power of many. Hoyt further noted the DDA needs to better communicate our accomplishments by providing information to the public as to how the DDA has been useful which may help encourage funding from businesses. The objective of the DDA at his point in time is to continue pursuing small projects and collaborate with the community on larger projects. Short nominated Hoyt as the editor of the DDA newsletter and small projects coordinator. Wilson agreed that marketing was an area

that needs work. She stated she would be willing to handle marketing for the DDA if someone else would take over the Treasurer position. The conversation moved to a discussion of Board membership and whether or not there were any open seats. It was noted all seats are filled and the By-Laws would need to be amended to increase the Board size. This discussion was tabled for the next meeting to include Board size and officer positions.

8. Public Comment on Non Agenda Items: No public comment

9. Adjourned: Meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Meeting minutes compiled by Louise Wenzel