

**Village of Bellaire
Downtown Development Authority
Minutes
Wednesday, August 25, 2021**

I. Call to Order:

Vice Chairperson Tracy Lareau called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

II. Attendance:

Members Present: Dan Bennett, Dave Gajda, Mark Irwin, Don Seman, Tracy Lareau, Taylor Sutherland, Doreen McGuire

Members Absent: Don Hoyt, Cindi Place

Public Present: Shelly Dayton

III. Consent Agenda:

Motion by D. Bennett to approve the consent agenda. Second by M. Irwin. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Motion by D. Seman to approve the financial report. Second T. Sutherland. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Motion by D. Gajda to approve the minutes of July 28, 2021. Second T. Sutherland. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Public Comment on Agenda Items:

None

V. Unfinished Business:

Buy Local Update - Shelly Dayton

Held their monthly meeting. Will be holding a photo contest as the Buy Local Group begins working on their 2022 map. Also working on their budget. More details to follow. Discussed the upcoming events: October-Art Stroll; November-Holiday Open House; April-Flip Flop and Flamingos. Rubber Duckie weekend was good for the merchants. Shelly shared that she met a DDA member from Petoskey and thought it might be interesting for the various DDA Boards to have a panel discussion to share ideas. Zoom meeting still going well for their group.

Village Update

D. Bennett shared that Antrim County will be providing broadband to the entire county. D. Bennett is working with the company and assisting with the survey. Also placement of the WiFi tower(s) is being reviewed. Work is continuing on the ballpark at Craven Park. Membrane has been purchased to cover the tennis courts which will be the ice rink this winter. Construction will begin shortly on the new downtown restrooms. DPW will maintain the restrooms. Commented on how well the cemetery is being maintained.

Unified Action Plan Update

Public WiFi continues to be useful and important to the downtown area. Was suggested that downtown businesses place a pause on their guest usage during the summer months due to the high volume of users. Important to stay engaged regarding WiFi. Focus needs to be on the downtown business owners.

A member of the business community expressed that in the summer months with the high volume of usage there are many interruptions.

Way Finding Signage

D. McGuire shared samples of the sign material along with quotes from Pro Image and Bailey Designs and Consulting. Discussion followed. D. McGuire will work with a member(s) from the Buy Local Group to review the parking

map making suggestions to update the map. The plan is to use this map on the new restroom facility as informational signage to promote and acquaint visitors to the downtown businesses. Motion by D. Seman to have D. McGuire continue working on the way finding signage. Second D. Bennett. Motion approved.

VI. New Business:

2021 Plans

A financial forecast was presented by D. Gajda based on budgets and prioritized projects.

Question was raised if this should be 2022 plans and beyond. It was agreed that we will be working on 2022 and beyond. WiFi continues to be the focal point of the discussions. Suggested that we invite B. Kaiser from the DPW to a future meeting to discuss and share his expertise regarding the downtown WiFi.

Discussion followed regarding the Rotary Grant and the funds that are still available. What can we do that would make the biggest impact? We have reviewed the original proposal and email thread and D. Bennett will seek a legal opinion on how the funds may be utilized. Once we have that opinion we will discuss options and opportunities at the next board meeting before circling back to the Rotary and State Craft for their input.

Also discussed was the creation of an impact report for the business owners, townships, community and stakeholders. This would be a summary of outcomes from funding that has been received over the past five years. Possibly engage State Craft to facilitate this conversation.

VII. Miscellaneous Business:

A question was raised regarding the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the DDA meetings. This practice has been in place but new board members did not recall the reciting since their appointments in February. It was suggested by Vice Chair T. Lareau that this item gets moved to Unfinished Business for formal conversation at next month's meeting.

Vice Chair T. Lareau - Recap of the above discussion items be moved to Unfinished Business at the next DDA Board meeting.

VIII. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:

The Buy Local group spoke about flowers that add to the beautification of the downtown. S. Dalton also spoke about parking maps, advertising, and signage all to create an interest in the downtown. Asked when they should submit their request for flowers in regards to the DDA 2022 budget. Submission to D. Gajda late September to allow for board discussion.

IX. Adjourned:

Motion by M. Irwin. Second by D. Bennett to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned by Vice Chair T. Lareau at 10:15 am.

Meeting minutes compiled by Doreen McGuire