

City of Ionia Downtown Development Authority
July 17, 2019 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: The Ionia Downtown Development Authority meeting was called to order at 8:10am by Treasurer Tim Hemenway.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Project Rising Tide Fellow Robin Suomi presented the City of Ionia Economic Development Strategy Report. Data reports, regional goals and an economic development strategy was included in the full report conducted by Place + Main Advisors in association with Beckett & Raeder. The complete City of Ionia Economic Development Strategy report is attached to the July meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL: Roll call revealed the following DDA Board of Directors present: Dave Cook, Margot Cook, Tim Hemenway, and Paul Lentz. Guests included Ionia City Clerk Ally Cook, John Krueger, and PRT Fellow Robin Suomi.

CONSENT AGENDA: It was moved by Member Dave Cook, seconded by Member Lentz to approve the following:
Minutes from the May 15, 2019 meeting.

Accounts payables for the DDA:

April 26, 2019 – May 25, 2019 in the amount of \$2,734.27.

May 26, 2019 – June 25, 2019 in the amount of \$3,970.72.

Accounts payables for the Theatre:

April 26, 2019 – May 25, 2019 in the amount of \$18,597.99.

May 26, 2019 – June 25, 2019 in the amount of \$15,416.76.

MOTION CARRIED.

DDA DIRECTOR UPDATE: DDA Director's report for the months of May, June, July 2019 attached.

THEATRE REPORT: In the absence of Theatre Manager Gary Ferguson, DDA Director reported that several free movie events have been held with several more on the calendar. Overall movie attendance has increased this summer due to blockbuster hits.

BOARD DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS:

1. Theatre air conditioner replacement: It was moved by Member Dave Cook; seconded by Member Margot Cook to move forward with the quote / contract from Home Experts Heating, Cooling and Plumbing for the air conditioner replacement.

Motion carried. Member Paul Lentz withheld his vote until he has reviewed the quote.

2. Farmers' Market policy updates: Tabled until the DDA Board of Directors has the opportunity to review the policy package.

3. 2020 / 2012 Ionia Fireworks Display contract: Melrose Pyrotechnics has provided the opportunity for the Ionia DDA to lock into a 2 year agreement that would keep the costs of the display at \$12,000 for each of the years. The contract would also secure the date of the event at July 3rd. In 2021, July 3rd will fall on a Saturday. The DDA Board of Directors has requested a change for 2021 to host the fireworks on Friday, July 2nd. This action item will be tabled until the August Board meeting pending day / date options.

OTHER:

1. Downtown visitor benches / seating: Several downtown businesses have requested permission to provide outdoor seating for visitors during the day. Each would supply their own seating options and place them inside the building at the close of day. The benches would be placed close to the building so not to impede any walking traffic.
2. Mural update: Artist Larry Lathrop is willing to write a contractual agreement that would release the DDA from fulfilling the financial commitment in the event that sufficient funds were not raised within a specified time frame. Mr. Lathrop is relocating but has agreed to return to the area in the summer of 2020 to paint the mural if a working agreement can be reached.
4. Small business workshops will be hosted by the DDA in partnership with the Michigan Small Business Technology Center during the upcoming months. The DDA has worked with the Center in the past to provide trainings for those interested in starting a small business or sharpen skills in marketing, finance, etc. with a current business. Classes / workshops are offered at no charge to attendees.
5. Revitalize LLC / Bruce Johnston will be hosting a brief overview of façade and rental grant opportunities to interested parties on August 7th. Several properties will be toured as per building owner's requests.
6. West / Mid-Michigan DDA Directors will be meeting quarterly to network and attend workshops relating to current issues. The Ionia DDA will be the lead on creating a countywide networking program for neighboring community DDA and Chamber Directors. The group will work to coordinate promotion and marketing cost sharing, cross promote special events that would lend to a countywide experience, etc.

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10am with a motion by Member Dave Cook, seconded by Member Lentz.
MOTION CARRIED.