

CITY OF IONIA
Downtown Development Authority
September 19, 2018 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: The Ionia Downtown Development Authority meeting called to order by Board Chairperson Kirgis at 8:00AM.

ROLL CALL: Roll Call revealed the following DDA Board members present: Dave Cook, Margot Cook, Tim Hemenway, Jim Killion, Brett Patterson, and Mike Kirgis. Also in attendance were City Manager Jason Eppler, Finance Director Chris Hyzer, Theatre Manager Gary Ferguson, and DDA Director Linda Curtis. Guests included John Krueger, Heather Sizemore and Paul Kiste / Wolverine Fireworks.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND INFORMATION: Paul Kiste of Wolverine Fireworks provided an overview of changes that could be made for the 2019 display. They included the following:

- Enlarging the launch perimeter to include the paved area north of the grandstands allowing for 5” shells to be fired. We currently use the infield as the launch site restricting the use of shells to 4”.
- Eliminate the use of timer chains and electronics to conduct individual firing of shells. Mr. Kiste will provide hand firing / manually for all shells. By using this method, there may be a cost savings. Shells would also be hand sorted.
- Using a larger assortment of specialty shells. This would also allow for a more sizeable finale. The bulk of the new cost for specialty shells would be used in this portion of the show. Currently, the display includes 2,300 plus shells. This number would be reduced due the cost of the larger shells.
- The time frame of the show would be reduced from 20 – 25 minutes to approximately 15 minutes due to the use of the more expensive shells vs smaller cost firings. To return to a longer display, the budget would also need to be increased to cover additional costs.
- Contractual agreement would be year to year and not a multiyear contract. We currently have a year to year – non multi-year agreement.
- Rather than provide a donation of added shells to the City display, Wolverine would donate shells and staff for the Purple Game while in contract with the City of Ionia.
- Wolverine to provide a \$10,000,000 liability insurance policy.
- Wolverine is a Michigan based company.
- Mr. Kiste suggested the option of using the south side of the river as an alternative launch site for the display. The added cost of launching from this area would greatly increase due to added site prep including the mowing of the area prior to the launch, placement of port-a-johns and also staff to secure the Riverside Drive entrance in addition to the fairground’s bridge entry site. Each site would need to be staffed beginning in late afternoon of the event as many patrons arrive early to secure their viewing areas. Visibility would be limited for those seated on the Pointe and certain areas of the fairgrounds due to the height of the trees.

CONSENT AGENDA: It was moved by Member Dave Cook, seconded by Member Killion to approve the following:
Minutes from the DDA meetings of July 18, 2018 and August 15, 2018.
Accounts Payables for the DDA:
July 26, 2018 – August 25, 2018 in the amount of \$14,074.14.
Accounts Payables for the Theatre:
July 26, 2018 – August 25, 2018 in the amount of \$13,928.91.
MOTION CARRIED.

DDA DIRECTOR UPDATE: DDA Director's report attached to meeting documents.

THEATRE REPORT: Theatre Manager Gary Ferguson provided an overview of the past month's activities and upcoming events. On September 29th, the Community Awareness group will be hosting a downtown cruise night from 6pm to 9pm. The movie "Grease" will be shown at the Theatre as a finale to the cruise. A bid for the cost / installation of a new air conditioning unit was provided. Gary will reach out to several other sources for quotes. The façade repair project is still pending as bids will be also gathered. Movies are currently slow due to low inventory. A Marvel based movie will be released soon.

BOARD DECISIONS AND ACTION ITEMS:

1. Mural Project: It was moved by Member Dave Cook, seconded by Margot Cook to proceed with the Mural project.

MOTION CARRIED. Opposed by Member Killion.

DDA Director will begin the process by applying for approval through the MEDC and Patronicity programs. Once approved by each, the Mural Committee will begin collecting pledges for the project. It was noted by several Board members that they would not personally solicit funds for the project.

Board discussion included placement of the mural to be moved to the 400 block rather than the first block. It was noted that the mural will be the first of several planned for the downtown if approval for additional are agreed upon. Each will tell a story that applies to the history of each specific block. The following information will be included in a grant application narrative which explains the reasoning for placing first mural on the Theatre block.

"One of the main goals of the mural is to tell the story of Ionia through the interpretation of art. The locomotive scene depicts the mode of travel used by thousands of visitors, national leaders, the beginning of the industrial age, and those looking to settle in the community. The painting of the great Hotel Bailey that once sat where the Theatre now stands represents the days of prosperity and a home away from home to those who visited. The gas service station was one of Ionia's first and remained on the site for decades. It represents the leap from the depression era to a time when travel was unlimited as was our imagination. The Ionia Theatre is located on the first block of the downtown. It was chosen as a site for the first mural to begin the story. Each additional mural will continue the story, block by block."

OTHER:

1. Wayfinding Sign Project: Discussion included changes to the wording used on the signs currently scheduled to state "Downtown District". All signs slated for "Downtown District" will now read "Shops & Eateries". Valley City Signs has slated the project to be completed by November 30th – weather permitting.
2. The Planning and Zoning Committee requested feedback from the DDA on the topic of allowing marijuana dispensaries in the downtown district. This item of discussion will be placed on the October Board meeting agenda.
3. A representative for Melrose Pyrotechnics will be attending the October Board meeting to provide an overview of the proposed 2019 fireworks display.

ADJOURN:

It was moved by Member Killion, seconded by Member Dave Cook to adjourn the meeting at 9:18AM.

MOTION CARRIED.

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Respectfully Submitted,
Dave Cook, Secretary
Linda Curtis, DDA Director