



DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD

February 16, 2016

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Main Lobby, Petoskey, Michigan, on Tuesday, February 16, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., and the following were

Present: Lawrence Rochon, Chairperson
Robin Bennett
Doug Buck
James M. Reid, Jr.
S. Reginald Smith, Vice Chairperson

Absent: David Carlson, William J. Fraser, Mayor, Jason Keiswetter and Jennifer Shorter

Also in attendance was the Downtown Director Becky Goodman and City Manager Robert Straebel.

The Downtown Director asked to amend the agenda and add an item under new business concerning consideration of a support letter regarding TIF's.

Approve Consent Agenda Items Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the January 19, 2016 regular session and February 10, 2016 special meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since January 19, 2016; and acceptance of the January expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director.

The Downtown Director reviewed that the carry over figures were included at the top of the financial reports and that the monthly meter income figure was low due to the fact that the coin sorter at Fifth Third Bank was broken and coins had not yet been counted.

Upon motion made and seconded, the January 19, 2016 regular session and February 10, 2016 special meeting minutes were approved; acknowledgement of bills since January 19, that totaled \$39,701.80; and expense and income reports for January were approved. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Approve Committee Appointments The Downtown Director reported that the Parking Executive Committee shall include the Chair, Vice Chair and one other Board member at large. As Reg Smith is the new Vice Chair, there is an opening on the Committee for a Board member at large. Chairperson Rochon presented the appointment of Jim Reid to fill the open seat.

Chairperson Rochon nominated Jim Reid to fill Jennifer Shorter's position on the Parking Committee. Upon motion made and supported, the appointment of Jim Reid, be appointed to the Parking Committee. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Review Public Art Plan

The Downtown Director introduced the Public Art Plan discussion by offering three reasons why a Plan is needed 1) Public art in general is good for downtown; it is place making at its best and most definable; 2) It is helpful to be able to assist artists in knowing what art projects downtown is seeking and that would be acceptable; and 3) It will help establish a strategy for creating art in the downtown which gets us out of the position of sitting and waiting for projects to come forward.

The Downtown Director further commented that what Crooked Tree Arts Center created is basically a plan to create a Commission that includes staff, Commission, Committee, and Board representation, as well as representation from the local art community. The Commission would have the autonomy to develop its own by-laws. The DMB would have autonomy – with input – to manage the projects that are installed in the downtown district. The district that it is its charge to manage. The Downtown Director reiterated that the Commission should always be clear that this is a downtown plan and does not include any areas outside of the district; that the plan gives the Commission opportunity to be pro-active by including a list of potential, preferred locations and suggested concepts; that it gives the Commission a chance to be reactive by including review criteria for proposed projects; that it provides funding suggestions; and that it offers a framework for the art review process.

The Downtown Director noted that Board member Mr. Carlson had worked with staff on refining the plan from its original version, but was unable to attend the meeting and his comments were included in the agenda packet for Board review.

Board members discussed the plan and commented that it gives the Board a good foothold on where the needs are; suggested make-up of the Commission might be too heavily populated with DMB; suggested combining the Design Committee, DMB Board member and DMB staff person into one position on the Commission; suggested that the DMB add another artist or gallery owner; increase the size of the Commission to 13 members; that there were too many DMB members and possibly too many people from Planning Commission; expressed concerns about the Garden Club and CTAC being on the Commission; did not want to list positions for local architect or artist, but just list the positions as open; recommended that the language in the Action Steps section be softened; that the section of funding strategies be left out of the final version of the plan and include as an appendix; that staff does need to vote but should attend the meetings; heard comments that there is no need for more than 11 on the Commission; suggested changing some wording to be clear that the plan would only affect projects in the Downtown; and expressed strong concern that the DMB should not be the final approval of projects, that this approval should go to City Council based on the fact that there is no precedence for the DMB to approve public art.

Board members and staff further discussed whether the DMB or City Council should have final approval of the art projects and Commission appointments; and heard concerns that Council may not approve the plan unless they had the final authority. The Downtown Director reviewed that because the art was in the downtown district and it was the DMB's authority to manage the downtown, it seemed to follow that the DMB should manage the program once it was approved by City Council.

Chairperson Rochon asked for public comments and heard concerns that the Commission should be made up of more artists and citizens and fewer public officials and regulators; that all public art proposals in downtown should go to the Commission first and have the power to initially approve or reject; that there must be a preference for art by local artists; that appeals to DMB should be by right and leave by City Council; that additions should be made to the non-discrimination policy and that the Commission will act consistently with the rights of citizens to freedom of expression and religious freedom guaranteed by the Michigan United States Constitutions; and that it must be clear that the Commission is a public body and must follow the Open Meetings Act.

The Downtown Director responded that she had researched the non-discrimination policy and found the one included to be a good starting point and that advice would be sought by the City Attorney before the plan was approved.

This matter will be further discussed at the March meeting.

Approve Letter of Support for TIF

The Downtown Director reviewed that a move in Lansing by a Committee chaired by Representative Chatfield would dilute and potentially eliminate tax increment financing tools and districts. The Downtown Director distributed a customized template letter that will be sent to Representative Chatfield that urged him to reconsider his actions. The letter contained a reference to the previous use of Waterfront TIF in Petoskey, it was suggested that the City Manager also review and sign.

Upon motion made and seconded, a letter of support for tax increment financing was approved to mail to Representative Chatfield. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Hear Committee Reports

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Events Committee and that the Winter Carnival events including ice sculptures, carnival party, wine and dine and ghost walk were all a success.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Marketing Committee and that the new website was live and that the Committee agreed to work on a sponsorship plan.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of Parking and that the new employee training was underway; that Barry Cole's retirement party is 5:00 P.M., Thursday, February 25 at Mitchell Street Pub; that new tiered permit rates seem to be accepted, but require a lot of education from staff; and that the new graduated fine schedule caught many people by surprise, but have made deals with people in the interest of education and support.

The Downtown Director also reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission and Planning Commission held a joint meeting to review the amended Downtown Greenway Corridor Plans; that they had some issues with the parking lot and the trolley; and that the joint meeting did not provide support for the current revised plan. City Council reviewed the amended plans last night and did not support the parking lot at full size. The Parks and Recreation Commission and Planning Commission will both reconsider and review the plans at upcoming meetings. The Downtown Director also reviewed that she was putting together a scope of work for the trolley consultant with the help of Director of Parks and Recreation and would have figures by the next meeting; and that the Design Committee would be meeting this week to review guidelines for sidewalk furnishings in advance of the summer season.

Hear City Staff Report

The City Manager reported on miscellaneous city projects including, but not limited to the amended Downtown Greenway Corridor Plan, Bay Harbor Brownfield TIF and the firefighting equipment mill levy.

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 P.M.