



**DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT BOARD**

December 19, 2017

A regular meeting of the City of Petoskey Downtown Management Board was held in the City Hall Community Room, Petoskey, Michigan, on Tuesday, December 19, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., and the following were

Present: S. Reginald Smith, Vice Chairperson  
Robin Bennett  
Doug Buck  
Edward Karmann  
Noah Marshall-Rashid  
John Murphy, Mayor  
Ben Slocum  
Jessica Stubbs

Absent: Daniel Harris

Also in attendance were the Downtown Director Becky Goodman and City Manager Rob Straebel.

Vice Chairperson Smith recognized longtime Board member Larry Rochon for serving 20+ years on the DMB and thanked him for his dedication, commitment and leadership.

Mr. Rochon accepted a framed picture of downtown; reviewed that he submitted an application to serve another term, but did not get appointed and thinks that appointments should be made prior to term expiration; welcomed new member Ben Slocum; thanked the Board and community for the privilege to serve on the Board; commented that downtown Petoskey is one of the best in the State; distributed a list of accomplishments and projects the DMB has completed over the last 15 years; and commended downtown staff on their efforts over the years.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard from previous Mayors and their association with the DMB since its inception; that the DMB has executed beautiful projects in downtown; that a legacy has been left for current members; heard from those that thanked Mr. Rochon for his many years of service; that Petoskey is an envy of the State; that downtown defines Petoskey; and it is positive to see a new generation and appointments to the Board.

Approve Consent Agenda Items Downtown Management Board members discussed the first item of routine business, the November 21, 2017 regular session meeting minutes; acknowledgement of bills since November 21, 2017; and acceptance of the November expense and income reports as prepared by the Downtown Director.

Board members inquired on revenues and expenses received to-date compared to budgeted amounts; and the Downtown Director responded that money is still coming in from various events and is a timing issue.

Upon motion made by Mr. Buck and seconded by Mr. Karmann, the November 21, 2017 regular session meeting minutes were approved; acknowledgement of bills since November 21, 2017 that totaled \$53,347.41; and expense and income reports for November were approved. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

### Discuss Electric Charging Stations

The Downtown Director reviewed that at the October meeting, the Board heard a presentation from Jim Vogt, ChargePoint representative, regarding the future of electric cars and the desirability of having a charging station in downtown Petoskey. The Downtown Director researched other communities and the fees for using the charger; that research shows average fees for parking are between 15 and 20 cents per kwh plus the cost of the parking space; that other communities have had no issues with pricing, experience, service or quality with ChargePoint products; and that she was asking the Board to discuss the decision of whether or not to purchase the charging station up to \$15,000 for installation and equipment which was included in the 2018 Budget.

Vice Chairperson Smith reviewed that he received a call from Dave Kring who offered to donate a charger to the DMB that works with Tesla and Chevy vehicles; that the only cost would be electricity from the City; and that the Board would need to decide if the space would be for electric cars only.

Board members discussed charging stations; how many hours are used to charge in other communities including Marquette, Traverse City and Charlevoix; if stations are an added benefit to private companies in the area such as Boyne Highlands, Bay View Inn and Bay Harbor; discussed where the station would be located; reviewed trade-offs of having a unit in downtown and bringing a different market to the community; heard from those that think demand will be low, but that downtown will progressively be ready for long-term need; that people will travel to a charger; that big box stores are installing chargers and that it may be a trend; that one station may not make a difference; discussed the possibility of installing more than one station; what the timeline is to implement; that further research could be done on cost effectiveness and combine potential buying power with other entities; inquired on who the station would be marketed towards; that it is likely that national hotel brands may install stations due to incentives or brand standards; that the ChargePoint app can tell customers availability; that it may be beneficial to purchase several cheaper units rather than just one; and heard from those in favor of accepting the donation from Dave Kring and purchasing one station up to \$15,000.

The Downtown Director reviewed that ChargePoint representatives can check electricity, locations and make a recommendation for the ideal space in downtown.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard a comment that people will have to travel long distances to get here; that parking funds will pay for the station and should be spent on parking issues; inquiries on why big box stores haven't installed in the area yet; that the Plug Share app is used more than the ChargePoint app; that the Board should table issue and reconsider next year; that Petoskey doesn't have to be an early adopter; and that costs may come down in the future.

Board members further discussed the need to find out cost of installation from City and electric costs for each unit; that exploration could be done on potential business sponsors; that the Parking Committee do additional research; that a masterplan should be developed for this project; and that the college, hospital and casino could be potential locations and staff should find out their intent.

This matter was tabled and the Board will further discuss in the coming months.

Deny Special Assessment Removal  
Request from Christian Science Church

The Downtown Director reviewed that the boundaries of the special assessment district were changed in 2015 and were expanded to include the block of Waukazoo. The Downtown Director further reviewed that the character of the block is commercial even though most of the buildings have been converted from residential; that all businesses on the block were notified and agreeable to being included in the district at that time; that the Christian Science Church asked to be included in the district as well; and that the district was created legally with all required public hearings and postings.

The Downtown Director further reviewed that the Church was now objecting to paying the special assessment on the basis that they believe it is a tax and that they do not require the services offered in the assessment district; that staff acquired a legal opinion and that a special assessment is not a tax; that research found that in some special assessment districts around the State, some churches are assessed, others are not or are assessed at lower rates; that the church's total annual assessment is \$495.36; and reviewed potential resolutions to accommodate the church's request such as reestablishing new district boundaries, or to create a new assessment category/rate that was specific to churches.

Christian Science Church representatives gave a brief presentation on the church's history and their services; that they receive the same quality of services prior to being included in the district with no heightened benefits; that sidewalk plowing is poor; that the church is not included in marketing materials on the downtown website; and that the church wasn't necessarily looking to be excluded from the district, but consider a lower assessment rate.

Board members discussed that if rates were changed if it would apply to all non-commercial businesses and non-profits; that both of the church's locations over the years have been downtown which is a perceived value to the church; heard from those opposed to changing the district; and inquired if there were any other special assessments in the City. The City Manager responded that there were no additional assessments.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard from those that believe snow removal is a problem, but not a district problem; and that plowing is good in the morning, but up to merchants to do the remainder of the time.

Church representatives further commented that the assessment process is not clear for the property owners being assessed.

Upon motion made by Mr. Marshall-Rashid and seconded by Ms. Stubbs, to keep the assessment in place at the current rate for Christian Science Church, 420 Waukazoo Avenue. Said motion was unanimously approved as submitted.

Discuss Seasonal Use of  
Redevelopment Liquor Licenses

The Downtown Director reviewed that the DMB approved the recommendation of creating a Redevelopment Project Area District and the granting of Redevelopment Liquor Licenses to the City Council in 2013. The licenses were fairly new at the time and developed by the MEDC as a tool for downtown revitalization. As discussed at the November meeting, the Downtown Director reviewed that recently there is some concern that one of the licenses granted by the City has been put into escrow for the last two winters, and that those involved in the original action to grant these license know that this was not the understanding of their use. The Downtown Director further reviewed that the issue is with escrowing licenses knowing the area has fluctuating seasons; and that the LCC has final approval and can overrule the City's local ordinance and regulations.

Board members discussed that escrowing licenses doesn't always pertain to struggling businesses; that all businesses granted these licenses should be treated the same; that more research should be done since it is a new Board; that the intent should be that businesses are open 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, 365 days per year; that redevelopment liquor licenses are half the price than regular liquor licenses; heard from those in favor of amending ordinance and require businesses to be open year-round and wait to see what LCC determines; that the Board reevaluate and grow the program; heard inquiries on how much leverage the City has in regulating these types of licenses; and who would enforce if begin fining businesses who are violating the ordinance.

Vice Chairperson Smith asked for public comments and heard from a past Board member that was serving when ordinance was recommended and that the intent was for businesses to be open year-round; that the Board needs to determine and prioritize requirements; that local controls should be enforced; and that additional licenses should be granted to help the downtown.

The City Manager reviewed that there has been no official opinion letter from the City Attorney, but that he indicated that the LCC has ultimate say no matter what type of regulations the City implements.

Board members concurred to review the redevelopment liquor license ordinance as a whole and potentially make a recommendation to City council for amendments in the near future.

#### Hear Committee Reports

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Parking Committee and that the County Lot management project will not happen due to the County passing their own ordinance and will enforce themselves; that the overdue fines presentation to City Council went well and will be on the January DMB agenda; that there have been strong opinions about permit parking in the Saville Lot from both sides of the issue; that free parking coupons are in the paper; and that 25 businesses participated in the holiday meter sponsorship program.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Events Committee and reviewed that the holiday parade had a bit of growth from last year and thanked Stafford's for their sponsorship and the MC's; that Holiday Open House was well attended; commended the Promotions Coordinator for her efforts in organizing the events; reviewed Winter Carnival sponsorships and budget amounts; and that a task force to plan Petoskey Rocks! will be meeting soon to discuss approach to have street musicians and food trucks on corners.

The Downtown Director reported on behalf of the Marketing Committee and that there are over 9,000 likes on Facebook; that the holiday catalog was completed and distributed on time; that Shop Small bags were a success; that Threads and Grandpa Shorter's tied for Best of Show; and that Downtown Dollars are selling well.

In beautification, the Downtown Director reported that the recent snow storm created some issues but crews were out to clean up.

The Downtown Director further reported that the Strategic Plan should be on the January agenda.

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#### Hear City Staff Report

Christmas and New Year's Day holidays.

The City Manager reviewed various projects and that City Hall will be closed on December 22, December 25 and January 1 in observance of the

There being no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 P.M.