

Sparta Downtown Development Authority
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2016
160 E. DIVISION STREET, SPARTA, MI 49345

Meeting called to order at 7:49 am by Cheslek.

Members present: Freeland, Cheslek, Lamb, Benham, Jacobsen, Dougan

Also Present: Morse, Baker, Brown, Suchy Absent: Nickels, Potes

Motion by Dougan, second by Lamb to approve the Minutes of the December 13, 2016 with corrections. All Approved.

Motion by Lamb, second by Freeland to approve the finance report. All approved.

Public Comment - None

Unfinished Business

- A. Recap from joint DDA/Chamber committee meeting for DDA director contract review and negotiation. The intent is to create a more focused job description and priority list combined for the DDA/Chamber Director position, or to reevaluate the staffing levels. The Chamber recognizes the need to reevaluate priorities for staff and that there is purposeful and positive overlap between the DDA and Chamber. The Chamber will meet to reassess their core priorities and revisit the DDA/Chamber committee with a plan.
- The DDA discussed several priority options when reevaluating what the DDA time should be spent on. Items to consider included:
- Façade/Business Recruitment (take care of depressed sites, coordinate efforts “after” the façade”)
 - Redevelopment Opportunities (physical developments)
 - State Programs (become a conduit)
 - Business Recruitment / Retention (coordinated effort with Village/Chamber)
 - o Promotions, Home Startups, council/capital / business plans, training/hand holding, marketing plans, Resource conduit
 - Projects (Railroad Depot, Opera House, Civic Center parking lot)
 - Programming/events (facilitation (redefine), criteria, seed program of “what” we provide
 - Marketing (Press releases, Sparta TODAY news/events, Ribbon Cutting (new business packages)
- B. Update on the February Event in Sparta. Positive business feedback thus far, lots of interest to participate. Several home business entrepreneurs are participating in the Feb. 11 Vendor Blender and the Feb. 25 Mix N Mingle.
- C. Discussion on the game plan to put the property up for the market including signage or RFP to developers. Motion by Lamb, second by Benham to accept the Village Reimbursement Agreement for 223 E. Division.
- D. Discussion on 194 E. Division Property Purchase. Consensus to move forward with the \$65,000 asking price with a plan moving forward for use of the property once purchased. One note is there was not interest in tearing the building down.

New Business

- A. Discussion on a part time creative consultant for programming/event planning for the DDA. Consensus that future projects need to have the entire package presented and defined in detailed way with a formal request to the DDA. Motion to extend current contract for current programming to Rebecca Wildeboer through April 30 not to exceed \$250 per week by Dougan, second by Lamb. All approved.

Executive Session - None.

Business Director Report –

The 2016 annual report was available in hard copy for each board member to review. The monthly report was also available.

Public Comment/ Announcements

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by executive privilege at 8:42 am.
Respectfully Submitted by Elizabeth Morse