

Sparta Downtown Development Authority  
MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 12, 2019  
160 E. DIVISION STREET, SPARTA, MI 49345

Meeting called to order at 7:46 am by Cheslek.

Members present: Cheslek, Freeland, Jacobsen, Potter, Baker, Potes, Lamb, Bush

Members Absent: Dougan, Shangle

Also Present: Elizabeth Morse, Dana Quick, Chamber president; Maryann Wright, Events President; Julius Suchy, Village Manager; Dale Bergman, Township Supervisor, Dave Cumings, Village Councilperson

Motion by Potes, second by Baker to approve the minutes of October 8, 2019. All Approved.

Motion by Potes, second by Lamb to approve the October 16 special meeting minutes. All Approved.

Motion by Freeland, second by Baker to approve the finance report. All Approved.

**Public Comment – None**

**Unfinished Business**

Discussion of the Town Square update.

- 1) Consensus to open the project up for partnership with a private developer. DDA will host a Q/A session open to any interested developer, meet on site, and allow for proposals from developers for the DDA to consider.
- 2) Styling of Town Square: discussion about cottage, shipping container, chalet, etc. of options for the “look” of the town square, Consensus to allow for developer to provide recommendation and to consider an eclectic blend that works well together aesthetically, and that it does not all need to be one cookie cutter design/type of incubator space.
- 3) Consensus the DDA would like the DDA Director and Village Manager to manage the project with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party developer if one is chosen by the DDA; financial investments from the DDA will be approved by the DDA
- 4) The DDA discussed the long term possibilities of utilizing the 228 E. Division vacant lot in the future with rear board walk connectivity to these projects.

**New Business**

- A. Review of the proposed 2020 DDA budget. Motion by Freeland, second by Baker to recommend the budget to the Village Council. Motion approved 8-0.
- B. Discussion of the West Michigan Arts Council in Sparta and subleasing the DDA office space to the entity on a month by month basis, with a 30 day exit clause for any reason whatsoever, at a rate of \$225 per month. The WMAC is intending to be staffed 16 hours per week in the office. Consensus to proceed with approving the lease as it fits into the goals of the DDA to bring the group to Sparta.
- C. Discussion of the Events board of directors projections for 2020 including the Town & Country Day 2020 and 2021+ plan, as the current carnival cannot commit to our regular 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of July dates. Due to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday, the committee is unable to commit to the fair being held beginning the 8<sup>th</sup> of July with conflicts for vacations and other vendors moving the weekend. The committee is evaluating other carnival options as contracts in other communities opens up for 2021 that could include moving the Town & Country Days event

**Goals 2019**

- 1) Finish 194 E. Division (siding, landscaping, water problem/ sewer problem, roof, store front windows)
- 2) DTMJ Property: provide all manner of assistance for development on vacant parcel
- 3) Alt Oil Property: redevelop vacant parcel
- 4) Assist 201 E. Division on redevelopment opportunities / retail infill
- 5) Property Maintenance /Capital Improvement Plan: parking lot repaving, large Christmas Tree, crosswalk repair, trim downtown tree schedule, sidewalks, street lights, bricks in right of way downtown, etc.
- 6) Pocket Parklet Improvements
- 7) Elm Street Parking: address the gravel parking area

to any other weekend in the summer if a carnival could commit to Sparta. Additionally, the fair committee is evaluating moving some of the larger “country” events to the country where there is more room to add other events, such as we had in the past at the airport (lawn mower races and mud runs as examples). Locations are current under investigation as is the zoning special permit approval for this type of activity at Sparta Township. As of today, the current footprint of Sparta Town & Country days is intended to be the exact same (however, without the carnival) for 2020, but with other activities to fill in the carnival gaps. The Events are intending to increase small activities at the Town Square (similar to Bash at the Nash concepts) to keep regular, ongoing foot traffic coming into the area throughout the entire season. Replacement funding plan for Potter in the Park was discussed at length by the Events board, and the plan was presented to DDA to continue to reimburse for staff time of the events coordinator to the DDA; these projections included additional marketing/ad revenue opportunities for a new Fall guide, space activation sponsorships for events in the Parklet throughout the season, and social media sponsorships.

**Executive Session** None.

**Business Director Report**

Due to new requirements by Michigan legislature Act 57 of 2018, it is required that in addition to the public meetings that each tax capture entity must be invited to, DDA’s must post on their website every RFP and awarded contract. The flower purchase exceeded the annual spending amount that requires a bidding process. The RFP is listed on the website and will be on the DDA agenda for all bids to be awarded by the DDA board in December for 2020.

**Public Comment**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by executive privilege at 8:45 am. Respectfully Submitted by Elizabeth Morse

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