

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2023, 3:00 p.m. | Community Room, Kalamazoo City Hall

PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson, Curt Aardema, Jeff Breneman, Carl Brown, Grant Fletcher, Matt Hollander, Susan Lindemann, Clarence Lloyd

ABSENT: Stephanie Hinman

STAFF: Christina Anderson, Dennis Randolph, Paul Thuringer, Jaime Marsman

A. CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTOR LINDEMANN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:02 P.M

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson
Curt Aardema
Jeff Breneman
Carl Brown
Grant Fletcher
Matt Hollander
Susan Lindemann
Clarence Lloyd

ABSENT: Stephanie Hinman

EXCUSED: Stephanie Hinman

THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, ATTENDANCE INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES ARE RECORDED.

Director Lindemann read the Purpose Statement.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

DIRECTOR FLETCHER MOVED TO ADOPT THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2023 AGENDA. DIRECTOR BROWN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 21, 2023 MINUTES. DIRECTOR HOLLANDER SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

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D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Financial Report

Mr. Thuringer asked if there were any questions regarding the Financial Report.

DIRECTOR FLETCHER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED. DIRECTOR AARDEMA SECONDED.

Mayor Anderson requested a report indicating where actual spending is versus the budget, noting that this would be useful in evaluating the budget. Director Brown affirmed that additional details would be helpful to know. Mr. Thuringer stated that he would pass this request along to Mr. Vicenzi.

NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. Recommendation of DDA Board Member Nomination to Mayor/City Commission of Kwame Gyimah (Action: Motion to Recommend the DDA Board Appointment of Kwame Gyimah to the Mayor/City Commission)

Director Lindemann stated that this is a recommendation for the DDA Board to the City Commission to appoint Kwame Gyimah. She noted that Director Brown has extended his time on the board until a replacement could be found who was also a resident of the downtown area. She noted that this would be membership to both the DDA and DEGA Boards. She noted that Mr. Gyimah is a well-qualified candidate who is passionate about downtown and excited about the work. He is an attorney, living and working downtown. Director Lindemann stated that they had a great conversation with him and the Executive committee. Director Fletcher affirmed that he is a high-quality candidate with a lot of experience living in other cities. He will bring great energy and both personal and professional experience. Director Brown stated that he fits many of the intentions of the downtown area.

Director Aardema stated that he has also interacted with Mr. Gyimah and is excited about his addition to the board.

DIRECTOR HOLLANDER MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE DDA BOARD APPOINTMENT OF KWAME GYIMA TO THE MAYOR/CITY COMMISSION. DIRECTOR BROWN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Events & Marketing Committee Update

Director Brown stated that he has had wonderful support for the sponsorship application from Mr. Burdue of CPED. Applications will be open and available as of next Monday. There is a three-week process for the Committee to identify which events they will choose to support. They are excited for this opportunity. Skeletour will continue and will begin on October 6. The downtown shops will put

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on a first Friday event and there will also be an In the Zoo event in October. Director Brown shared additional details of events that will be happening in the next couple of months.

Director Aardema asked about Vintage in the Zoo and who they work with? Director Brown stated that they were an incubated event that is now independent and they work directly with the City.

It was clarified that insurance requirements are a part of the City's purchasing requirements. There may be some additional requirements for events that need to fall into place before the funding is issued to them. The intention of the Committee is to make this attractive to both new and experienced event coordinators. Director Brown stated that he is excited to see the application process being put into place.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Heather Holmer, Owner of Rocket Fizz and Uncle Buddy's. Ms. Holmer expressed her concerns regarding her application to the DDA/DEGA Board. She shared her goals for downtown and withdrew her application to the DDA Board. She expressed her concern regarding the division between shop owners and the DDA Boards.

Jessica Thompson, Owner of BeeJoyful Shop. Ms. Thompson shared her concern regarding the equality of voices on the DDA Board. She noted that there should also be a voice for small business, restaurant and retail owners. She proposed adding two seats to the Board, perhaps each for a year term to incorporate additional voices. She also shared concerns regarding parking and the need for additional communication going into the holidays.

G. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

1. Director Brown thanked both Ms. Thompson and Ms. Holmer for their participation in the Marketing and Events Committee and for bringing their concerns to the attention of the Board. Director Brown noted that it is a state requirement to have a downtown resident on the Board.

H. ADJOURNMENT

DIRECTOR LINDEMANN ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 3:30 P.M.