

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2023, 3:00 p.m. | Community Room, Kalamazoo City Hall

PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson, Curt Aardema, Carl Brown, Grant Fletcher, Stephanie Hinman, Matt Hollander, Clarence Lloyd

ABSENT: Jeff Breneman, Susan Lindemann

STAFF: Paul Thuringer, Jaime Marsman

A. CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson
Curt Aardema
Carl Brown
Grant Fletcher
Stephanie Hinman
Matt Hollander
Clarence Lloyd

ABSENT: Jeff Breneman
Susan Lindemann

EXCUSED: Jeff Breneman
Susan Lindemann

THE OCTOBER 16, 2023, ATTENDANCE INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES ARE RECORDED.

Director Fletcher read the Purpose Statement.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

Director Fletcher noted that there are two changes to the agenda with two items added under Section D as follows:

- 1. Recognition of Carl Brown's Service to the DDA/DEGA Board**
- 2. Appointment of Jeff Breneman to the Executive Committee Secretary position, pending Kwame Gyimah's appointment to the DDA/DEGA Board**

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**DIRECTOR HOLLANDER MOVED TO ADOPT THE OCTOBER 16, 2023 AGENDA AS AMENDED.
DIRECTOR BROWN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.**

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**DIRECTOR HINMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2023 MINUTES. DIRECTOR
AARDEMA SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.**

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Recognition of Carl Brown's Service to the DDA/DEGA Board

Director Brown stated that he is excited that Mr. Gyimah will be joining the DDA/DEGA Board. Director Brown has been on the DDA/DEGA Board for 10 years. He reflected on changes that have occurred and stated that he is excited to see that the board has a clear purpose and direction. Director Brown will retain his position on the Events & Marketing Committee. Director Fletcher thanked Director Brown for his service and for all that he has done for Downtown.

Mayor Anderson gave Director Brown a small token of appreciation. He stated that Director Brown is a great example of caring for the community and thanked him for his service. The Board thanked Director Brown.

2. Appointment of Jeff Breneman to the Executive Committee Secretary position, pending Kwame Gyimah's appointment to the DDA/DEGA Board

Director Fletcher stated that pending approval of Mr. Gyimah's appointment approval at this evening's City Commission, this will be Director Brown's last meeting. The Executive Committee would like to appoint Director Breneman to serve as secretary for that group in the absence of Director Brown. It was noted that Director Breneman is prepared and willing to serve in this capacity.

DIRECTOR AARDEMA MOTIONED TO APPOINT JEFF BRENEMAN TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SECRETARY POSITION, PENDING KWAME GYIMAH'S APPOINTMENT TO THE DDA/DEGA BOARD. DIRECTOR BROWN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Financial Report

Mr. Thuringer shared the Financial Report, and he noted that there are no major changes.

Director Aardema questioned the length of the Big Belly contract. Mr. Thuringer stated that it is a 5-year contract that began two years ago. Contract details were discussed. Mr. Thuringer noted that some Big Belly containers will be relocated Downtown from the Festival Site to better serve the community.

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DIRECTOR HINMAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED. DIRECTOR BROWN SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Events & Marketing Committee Update

Director Brown stated that the Events & Marketing Committee recommended, at the committee level, that they move forward with a short-term holiday grant program and work with City staff to build an online application. That application is pending launch on the city website. City staff is verifying the budget and availability. Additional recommendations will be available at the next meeting. It was noted that cost savings were created by maintaining the white lights downtown rather than switching to colored holiday lights.

Director Brown discussed the process for applying for grant dollars. He noted that the processes currently being created are designed to be easily reproducible.

5. Recruitment and Retention Committee Report

Director Aardema stated that the first meeting of this Committee was held last week with Director Lloyd and Kwame Gyimah. There was also input from Chris Lampen-Crowell from Gazelle Sports. They discussed the objective of the committee and the history of retail recruiting and retention in Kalamazoo. Sources of input and information were discussed. An inventory of downtown retail spaces is being developed. Another meeting is scheduled for early next month.

Mayor Anderson asked how membership in the Committee is determined. Director Aardema stated that he worked with Chair Lindemann regarding Committee members. He noted that the design is to focus on retail and that there is intention for broad conversations with the community.

Director Brown asked if this was recruitment for retail only or developers as well. Director Aardema stated that the focus of the committee is first-floor space. Discussions are currently centered on inventory on hand now or to come online soon rather than recruitment of developers.

6. Update on Budget and Development Plans

Mr. Thuringer stated that they have been working closely with the Executive Committee on the 2024 Budget. Attorney Jessica Wood will be at the Board meeting next month regarding the changes to the Development Plan.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

None.

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F. STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Thuringer suggested that the DDA & DEGA Board meetings could be moved to the City's offices of Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED) located at 245 N Rose Street. He stated that this would assist with the noise issue that is currently being experienced by attendees. It was discussed that CPED has a doorbell system for entry, but City Staff would be on hand to admit the public to the meeting. The board agreed to move the meeting location to CPED. Reminders will be sent to Board members, and the public will be alerted as to the location change.

There was discussion about the process for addressing public comments and how those items are incorporated into agenda items. Director Brown noted that, historically, it has been the work of staff to respond to comments. The number of Board seats was also discussed. Director Fletcher noted that the number of seats on both the DDA & DEGA Boards were reconciled so that the seats were even on each board and stayed in line with the statute requirements.

Director Hollander requested that the Purpose Statement be added to the City's DDA/DEGA Board page, if possible.

There was a discussion regarding the Kalamazoo Downtown Partnership website. As it existed to serve the purpose of downtown, the DDA/DEGA has the rights and responsibilities to manage it. This will be discussed further at a later time.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. None.

H. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

1. Director Hollander stated that the State's new Housing TIF Plan will fundamentally change the types of projects we see moving forward and affect the Board's relationship with the BRA. He noted that the Board should be proactive regarding this.
2. Director Fletcher responded to Director Hollander's comment and stated that initial conversations have been had with the leadership group with the BRA about how to proceed.

I. ADJOURNMENT

DIRECTOR FLETCHER ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 3:41 P.M.