

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2024, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson, Curt Aardema, Stephanie Hinman, Susan Lindemann, Jessica Thompson, Jeff Breneman, Clarence Lloyd

ABSENT: Kwame Gyimah, Matt Hollander

STAFF: Erin Hahn, Meghan Behymer

OTHER: Steve Glista, DEGA legal counsel

A. CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTOR LINDEMANN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 3:04 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson
Curt Aardema
Stephanie Hinman
Susan Lindemann
Jessica Thompson
Jeff Breneman
Clarence Lloyd

ABSENT: Kwame Gyimah

EXCUSED: Matt Hollander

THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2024, ATTENDANCE INCLUDING EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES ARE RECORDED.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

DIRECTOR AARDEMA MOVED TO ADOPT THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2024 AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MAYOR ANDERSON SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DIRECTOR AARDEMA MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 19, 2024 MINUTES. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2024, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

D. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of the Financial Report - Meghan Behymer

City of Kalamazoo Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer presented the July 2024 Financial Report. Ms. Behymer noted that the ambassador services included the \$3,249 per month increase, per the term amendment made in April 2024.

Ms. Behymer also noted that the three event sponsorships should be represented under the line item labeled "Community Promotion," rather than "Professional and Contractual Services," and will work with Steve Vicenzi to correct this for next month's financial report.

Director Lindemann noted that Ms. Behymer will maintain a reference sheet listing the expiration dates of professional and contractual services agreements, providing the board with an "at-a-glance" summary for future planning.

MAYOR ANDERSON MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE JULY 2024 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED. DIRECTOR AARDEMA SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Presentation of the 2025 DEGA Draft Budget – Meghan Behymer

City of Kalamazoo Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer presented the 2025 DEGA Draft Budget, noting that the only change since the August 19, 2024 DEGA meeting was a projected increase in the Big Belly waste pickup fee from \$4,326 to \$5,440, to reflect the 2024 spending trends.

Director Aardema asked why the SkeleTour sponsorship decreased from \$15,000 to \$5,000. Director Lloyd responded that the Events & Marketing Committee limits the amount that can be awarded to any event to \$5,000 to have more funding available to support more events.

DIRECTOR HINMAN MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE 2025 DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC GROWTH AUTHORITY DRAFT BUDGET AS PRESENTED. DIRECTOR AARDEMA SECONDED. NO OBJECTIONS. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Committee Reports

I. Ambassador Program Committee

The Ambassador Program Committee had its first meeting on September 5. The first meeting was to discuss the current geography and services of the ambassadors, and the 2025 budget number, which represents an increase in hours. The committee's next goal is to gather feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders in the downtown area.

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2024, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

Ms. Behymer and Director Thompson plan to meet to discuss the business community's feedback on the ambassador program to help inform an RFP that will go out toward the end of 2024.

Director Lloyd asked if there were other stakeholders who would be participating in giving feedback about the ambassador program. Ms. Behymer answered that there needs to be, and some of the involved parties would be downtown residents, property owners, people who work downtown, and business owners.

Director Aardema stated that the committee's goal is to get feedback from everyone who is impacted by the program and that the overarching priorities for the program are safety, cleanliness, and maintenance of the infrastructure.

Ms. Behymer stated that the committee will also be exploring different services that the downtown community needs and how the ambassador program can provide them. Director Lloyd stated that it is important that multiple stakeholders feel that they are a part of the process.

Director Breneman stated that it is also a good opportunity to remind people of what Block by Block has accomplished during the last contract period, as much of their work goes unnoticed, such as graffiti removal and weed abatement.

II. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee did not have any updates to share.

III. Business Recruitment and Retention Committee

The Business Recruitment and Retention Committee met and discussed setting goals for the remainder of 2024 and beginning of 2025. One of the main goals is to create and distribute an information sheet that represents the Downtown area as a thriving environment with lots of investments taking place. The committee also seeks to establish a welcoming committee to give curated tours of Downtown Kalamazoo to parties interested in moving to the area.

IV. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee did not have any updates to share.

4. Events and Marketing Committee – Sponsorship Program Presentation

City of Kalamazoo Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer shared the Events and Marketing Committee's Sponsorship Program presentation, noting that the statistics

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2024, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

throughout the report are representative of events that have already occurred this year, and that an end-of-year report will follow with updated statistics.

Director Aardema suggested that Restaurant Week visitor statistics be compared to a “normal” week to further demonstrate the impact of the event.

Director Breneman noted that visitor numbers are up for all events in 2024.

Ms. Behymer noted that the Beats on Bates data is specific to Bates Alley.

Director Aardema stated that it would be helpful to see what the sales impact on local businesses is during events at different locations, such as Bronson Park, Arcadia Festival Site, Bates Alley, and the Kalamazoo Mall.

5. Ambassador Report

City of Kalamazoo Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer presented the Ambassador Report. There was discussion on who else should be made aware of the statistics in the report. One potential group that was noted was Public Safety.

6. Downtown Report

City of Kalamazoo Downtown Coordinator Meghan Behymer provided the Downtown Report, highlighting several key updates: the Michigan Avenue Planning and Design community engagement process is underway; installation dates for the Kalamazoo Mall kiosks have been set; the first quarterly downtown business survey from WMU's Economic Vitality study has been distributed; Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 planning has commenced; and data for the August Downtown Dollars program was shared.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. Resolution to Approve 2025 Events and Marketing Sponsorship Policy

The resolution states that the Events and Marketing Committee’s Sponsorship Policy shall be amended in 2025 to reflect the requirement for applicants to submit their sponsorship forms at least 60 days prior to the event, and sponsorship recipients must provide a detailed post-event report within 30 days after the event.

DIRECTOR AARDEMA MOTIONED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 EVENTS AND MARKETING SPONSORSHIP POLICY. DIRECTOR BRENEMAN SECONDED THE MOTION. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND THERE WERE NO OBJECTIONS. THE MOTION CARRIED.

Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2024, 3 p.m. | Community Planning & Economic Development, 245 N Rose Street

2. Resolution to Establish Business Recruitment and Retention Committee

The resolution states that the DEGA desires to formally establish the Business Recruitment and Retention Committee to review and recommend matters related to supporting the attraction, growth, and retention of businesses within the downtown district.

DIRECTOR BRENEMAN MOTIONED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE BUSINESS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE. DIRECTOR LLOYD SECONDED THE MOTION. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND THERE WERE NO OBJECTIONS. THE MOTION CARRIED.

3. Resolution to Support Changes to Downtown Kalamazoo Social District Hours of Operation

The resolution states that the DEGA now wishes to consent to the proposed changes to the Social District operating hours to bring more people downtown, enhance downtown nightlife, and streamline operations for business owners. The proposal will go to the Kalamazoo City Commission in October for commissioner approval.

DIRECTOR AARDEMA MOTIONED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT CHANGES TO THE DOWNTOWN KALAMAZOO SOCIAL DISTRICT HOURS OF OPERATION. DIRECTOR HINMAN SECONDED THE MOTION. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND THERE WERE NO OBJECTIONS. THE MOTION CARRIED.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kim Guess expressed her gratitude to the DEGA board for their support of the Beats on Bates programming. Ms. Guess also stated that she also organized Workout Wednesday and the Caribbean Fest in 2024.

G. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

There were no director comments made.

H. STAFF COMMENTS

There were no staff comments.

I. ADJOURNMENT

DIRECTOR LINDEMANN ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 4:46 P.M.