

**MEETING MINUTES
BERKLEY DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 8:15 AM
Berkley Public Safety, 2nd Floor, Conference Room**



- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 8:17 AM with Chair Andy Gilbert presiding.
- II. ROLL CALL:**
- A. Attendance Taken and Quorum Determined**
- Present:* Matthew Baumgarten
Donna Dirkse
Desiree Dutcher
Katie Forte
Scott Francis
Andy Gilbert
Chris Gross
Uli Laczkovich
Ashley Poirier
Brian Zifkin
- Absent:* Tim Barnes – *excused*
Matteo Passalacqua – *excused*
Justin Findling – *excused*
Talia Wittenberg – *excused*
- Also present:* Steve Baker, City Council Liaison
Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director
Lisa Kempner, Planning Commission Liaison
Mike McGuinness, DDA Executive Director
Tim Murad, Chamber of Commerce Liaison
Adam Wozniak, Berkley DPW
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
On motion by Gross and second by Dirkse, the agenda was unanimously approved by the Board.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- A. Regular Meeting of July 12, 2023**
On motion by Zifkin and second by Gross, the minutes of the regular meeting of July 12, 2023 were unanimously approved by the Board.
- V. TREASURER'S REPORT:**
- A. Financial Reports for July and August, 2023**
Gross reported that for this period, revenues were \$75,000 and there were some expenses she was unsure about allocating, but believed they were budget adjustments. She noted that the Streetscape Improvement budget line item had been increased from \$60,000 to \$160,000 but didn't remember why that was done. McGuinness noted that was for the anticipated cost of the crosswalk enhancements. Gross noted the budget for flower baskets was increased from \$28,000 to \$78,000. Internal services increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for direct City departments increased utilization. Finally, the Health Care expenditure increased to \$25,000 to cover McGuinness' changed enrollment status.

Gross reported revenues were budgeted at \$463,000 and expenditures at \$657,000, the difference to be covered by the large fund balance. The period included a credit for \$33,000, probably caused by payments to Franks being returned to the City. Their payment address had changed, but payments were sent to their old address and returned to the City, according to McGuinness. Gross then reported revenues available at \$72,000.00.

She was not able to report the actual ending fund balance, and Baumgarten noted reconciliation will be made when the audit is complete.

Dirkse moved to receive and approve the Financial Reports for July and August 2023, Dutcher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

VI. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Acceptance of Berkley Parking Study and Strategic Plan

Kapelanski summarized the recommendations of the completed Parking Study, with the goals and challenges identified. Some of the stated goals are neighborhood livability, development of downtown and commercial areas, plan for use and management of downtown parking, and recommendations for updating zoning ordinances.

Among parking challenges is the fact that many “public” parking spots are privately owned by the adjacent businesses and limited to parking by their customers.

Eighty to 90% occupancy for downtown parking is one of the goals. The parking study’s recommendations include continuing to prohibit overnight on-street parking, but overnight parking in municipal lots is under consideration, keeping free public parking, reducing the number of parking spaces required for businesses based on usable floor area of the business and its proximity to municipal lots, and establishing a permanent parking group to monitor future needs/problems. The study also recommends, among other things, that public-private partnerships and shared parking arrangements be created. Zoning ordinance changes to address the recommendations are ongoing.

The cost of the parking study was split 50/50 between the City and DDA.

Laczkovich moved to accept the recommendations presented in the Parking Study and Strategic Plan, Dutcher seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

B. Bombshell Treat Bar Mural Program Application (initial reading)

McGuinness presented renderings of the proposed mural, which had also been shared with Board members at the unofficial August Board meeting. The proposed mural would be painted on the north wall of the building at Dorothea and Coolidge, adjacent to what is envisioned in the future as a public space. The mural will read “It’s Sweeter in Berkley,” painted on a black background.

Prior to their official opening currently planned for December 2023, Bombshell expects to hold some pop-ups outside their building. Bombshell is applying for a grant up to \$5,000.00.

Zifkin moved to approve a grant of up to \$5,000.00 for the Bombshell Treat Bar’s mural, Forte seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

C. Law Office of Rachel Pinch Façade Grant Application (initial reading)

McGuinness presented initial sketches of the proposed façade changes to the building at 2790 Coolidge, where attorney Rachel Pinch is planning to make extensive repairs/changes to the building’s interior and exterior. The applicant may be asking for a grant of \$10,000.00. No vote is required at this time until more specific details on renovations are available.

Gross will check on the total amount of façade funds available in the current fiscal year’s budget.

D. Perch Façade Grant Determination Appeal (initial reading)

McGuinness noted that approximately two years ago when Perch was initially making improvements to their building prior to moving in, they met with him about applying for a \$5,000.00 façade grant. Due to their need to move forward before a grant could be presented to and approved by the DDA Board, they felt they couldn't wait on DDA approval and proceeded to make the building improvements. Now they have asked him if the Board could make an after-the-fact determination to approve an amount of \$5,000.00 for their façade improvements, which under the application guidelines would normally be declined.

McGuinness asked for Board consensus on whether or not to adhere to those guidelines that require Board approval before façade improvements are started. Some Board members expressed that they had no problem making exceptions to the guidelines, but doing so even once could set an unwelcome precedent. Others expressed the opinion that no exceptions should be made.

McGuinness then decided that he would talk to the owners and find out if they were anticipating making building improvements in the future that could qualify for a façade grant and advise the Board of the result of those discussions. A vote on their current appeal was tabled.

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. City Update on Additional Approval Required for Murals Within the Downtown

Kapelanski reminded the Board that downtown murals now require additional approval from the Zoning Board, and applications can/should be made concurrently to the ZBA and DDA.

B. Coolidge Complete Streets Implementation Next Steps

McGuinness reported that responses to the most recent RFP which separated out the concrete work and crosswalk work from restriping have been sent to an engineering firm for review. These were @\$80,000.00 lower than the original bid. There should be a bid for the Board to vote on in October. Gilbert questioned who has the authority to reopen the crosswalks now, who can make the decision. It is the consensus that Public Safety has to be on board with reopening them, as-is.

C. Downtown Landscaping and Tree Replacement Developments

McGuinness noted this will be a continuing item on the agenda until further notice.

D. BOOkley Season Roster of Activities

1. Downtown Skeletons Engagement, Decorating, Installations
2. DIY Skeleton Decorating Party at Ullman's Health and Beauty (Oct. 1)
3. Restaurant Weekend with Berkley Chamber (Oct. 6-7)
4. Witches Night Out (Oct. 12)
5. Ghost Chase (Oct. 20)
6. Trick or Treat Stroll (Oct. 28)
7. Monster Mash Block Party (Oct. 28)

McGuinness reported the trolley will run for Witches Night Out. In addition to the above events, there will also be a skeleton "petting zoo." Kempner is chair of the BOO!kley season events. City Hall is the pick-up/drop off location for skeletons, about 80 delivered so far, with a skeleton decorating party planned. A flyer and event map is being created and drone shots taken.

VIII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. City Council – Steve Baker

Baker reported the Council is having ongoing discussions regarding the pet store(s) in Berkley. The "Mayor's Academy" about the City budget is helping educate the public about monetary issues facing the City.

B. Community Development – Kristen Kapelanski

Kapelanski reported there will be a public hearing about the proposed PUD.

C. Planning Commission – Lisa Kempner

Kempner reported there was no meeting of the Commission.

D. Public Works – Ric Chalmers

Wozniak had nothing additional to report.

E. Chamber of Commerce – Tim Murad

Murad reported the next Chamber Chat will be at Galloway & Collens Friday, Sept. 15. A joint network lunch for area Chambers, Berkley, Royal Oak, Clawson, Hazel Park, and Madison Heights, is upcoming the same day at the Royal Oak Brewery. Five Berkley homes will be taking part in the Chamber's Kit Home Tour, and the booklet will identify all kit homes in Berkley. Volunteers are still needed for the 3-hour shifts. Upcoming for the Chamber is Restaurant Weekend, the State of the City, and ads are on sale for their City Guide. The 2024 Berkley Perks discount card is good for 15 months, expiring at the end of December 2024.

IX. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

In the students' absence, Francis reported that the High School Choir has been invited to sing at Carnegie Hall. The turf and track at Hurley Field is being torn out and replaced. The boys' soccer team is #2 in the state. The District was chosen as one of the top 100 in the state.

X. BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Art & Design Committee – Matteo Passalacqua (absent)

- 1. ArtSpace Plaza Dedicated with School District and City**
- 2. Downtown Murals and Public Art Mapping, Marketing**

Forte reported that the committee is creating a map of downtown murals and public art.

B. Business Development Committee

No report.

C. Downtown Events Committee

1. Downtown Berkley Farmers Market Series (Thursdays through October)
2. Berkley Cruisefest (August 18)
3. Irish Fest (September 9)

D. Marketing Strategies Committee – Ashley Poirier

1. B.O.S.S. Social District Launching

The social district will launch September 15 on 12 Mile. Boundaries can be changed, and areas of Coolidge could be included.

E. Organization Committee – Scott Francis

McGuinness reported that a 12 Mile Board seat is vacant. Francis will verify participation for the 2023/24 year by the student board members of the prior year.

F. West 12-Mile Committee – Brian Zifkin

1. Bear Planters Concept

McGuinness reported some of the bears have been ordered to test. Zifkin has talked to an artist about the Armadillo wall mural.

XI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

A. Michigan Municipal League Conference Participation (Oct. 18-20)

B. Michigan Downtown Association Conference Downtown Berkley Tour (Nov. 1) (Birmingham)
The walking tour will start around June and December on Coolidge and finish at Berkley Common on 12 Mile.

C. Michigan Downtown Association Annual Conference (Nov. 2-3)

McGuinness reported that an event commemorating and celebrating the life of former DDA Director Vivian Carmody will take place November 18. Details will be forthcoming.

XII. BOARD OF DIRECTORS' COMMENTS:

The Be Well café would have its opening the week of Sept. 11. The B.O.S.S. boundaries will be well marked throughout the district.

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: The opportunity for public comment was offered. Gilbert asked that anyone with comments or questions e-mail them to the DDA to be answered within five business days.

XIV. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 AM on motion by Zifkin and second by Poirier.