

**Minutes of the Downtown Development Authority
City of Portland**

Held on Thursday, August 18, 2005
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Antaya, Barnes, Clement, Dempsey, Urie, Williams

Members Absent: Dumas, Hoppes, Kavanagh, Kolarik, Schrauben, Ward

Guests: Kathy Parsons

At 3:39P.M. there was not a quorum so Vice-Chair Antaya asked Economic Development Director Flanders to update the Board on what has been happening in Portland.

Director Flanders stated that he is currently working with five retail prospects and there are four new or remodeled businesses that are going to be having grand openings close to Riverfest. He said the businesses are The Art of Giving, Agape Arts and Crafts, Cool City Car Wash, and the Portland Printing Company, which is a spin off of Great Lakes Publishing. He stated he will be working energetically to help market the sale of Steve & Beth Hayward's building downtown. He also stated he is working with a gentleman from Grand Rapids that is interested in purchasing an acre to an acre and a half near the downtown area.

Director Flanders stated the Design Committee is preparing a program for September 13th for the third year Façade Program. He stated they would be starting a Publicity and Promotional Program very shortly. He stated with having the Historic Designation of the downtown we are anxious to carry out the historic theme of the buildings.

Boardmember Clement arrived at 3:43 making a quorum, so Vice-Chair Antaya called the meeting to order.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Williams, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of Request from Margery Briggs to discuss the main stage for Riverfest, under Presentations.
All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Barnes, supported by Clement, to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2005 meeting after corrections.
All in favor. Adopted

Director Flanders highlighted the invoices for the month of July and recommended that Boardmembers terminate the services of MRE for the maintenance of the D.D. A. web site, and authorize Julie Clement to maintain the web site for free, saving the D.D.A. about \$30.00 per month.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Dempsey, to approve the Treasurer's Report.
All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Barnes, supported by Clement, to switch the website maintenance to the free services of Ms. Clement, and the maintenance services associated with individuals that Mr. Flanders mentioned for \$20.00 per month.

All in favor. Adopted

Director Flanders stated that Margery Briggs is requesting funding for the main stage for Riverfest. Ms. Briggs was not available at this time to discuss the main stage funding request. Vice-Chair Antaya informed the Board that the Portland Federal Credit Union and Tom's Food donated a portion of the funding for the main stage. Mayor Barnes suggested if it was not a large amount, maybe Ms. Briggs could pay the amount out of pocket, and the D.D.A. could reimburse her. City Manager Dempsey asked if the Promotional and Marketing Committee getting some recognition for sponsorship of the main stage.

Motion by Dempsey, supported by Barnes, to give the D.D.A. Director authority to approve up to \$300.00 to help sponsor the main stage for Riverfest.

All in favor. Adopted

Boardmember Clement left at 3:54 P.M.

Director Flanders stated the Michigan Downtown and Finance Association would be holding their annual meeting on September 23rd & 24th in East Lansing. He stated there are looking for someone interested in running for the Director position. Anyone interested in running for the position is asked to contact Mr. Flanders.

Director Flanders stated there is a training session scheduled for September 7th for the Main Street Program Managers, and on September 8th for Website Operations for merchants selling products through the website. Both training sessions will be held in Niles, Michigan.

Director Flanders stated that Becky Ward would be taking a leave of absence from all her committee's until her husband is well and back on his feet. He stated that Rob Sherman would take over as Acting-Chair while Becky is gone.

Director Flanders stated they are working on the Façade Program and will be holding a Comprehensive Promotional Program for the property owners. He said they would select three properties that are interested in having the facades fixed up. He said the D.D.A. has appropriated up to \$5,000 for each of the facades selected. He said the new guidelines have been established for the program. He said Portland is fortunate to be designated a National Historic District and the facades are to reflect the historic significance of the buildings. He stated there is a mandatory scheduled for September 13th at 6:00 P.M. at City Hall for any all property owners in the downtown area that are interested in improving their facades. He stated that there would be six facades finished by the close of this building year.

Mayor Barnes stated he met with Mr. Garcia from L.C.C. to discuss a location for the Small Business and Technology Development Center. He stated because we are a Main Street Community we will be able to have a Business Resource Center in Portland. He stated he has contacted the Director of the Library and informed her of what was available: including four computers, software, and about \$12,000 in resource manuals. He said anyone interested in starting a business would be able to follow step-by-step templates. Ms. Mosser will be meeting with the Library Board to make a decision on whether the Resource Center could be located in the Library. He said a decision would be made by September 30th.

City Manager Dempsey stated City Officials had a very good meeting with representatives of D.E.Q., the Governors office, and M.E.D.C. regarding the Boardwalk Project. He said they went over all the State Statutes and Laws pertaining to the project. He stated they were able to come up with a compromise design. He stated the compromised design has been approved by City Council and the Engineers are working on a design. He stated that there is a permit meeting set up for next week for D.E.Q. to review the plans, and that two easements from property owners need to be signed. City Manager Dempsey stated that the State has not permitted boardwalks to be any wider than 10-feet. However, since some of the building will house fire escapes and need room for doors to open, the size of the boardwalk may vary from 10-feet to a maximum of 24-feet.

Director Flanders stated that the Streetscape Guidelines have been approved by City Council, and has been sent to the regional office in Lansing.

Vice-Chair Antaya stated the 20th edition of "On the Street" was mailed in August.

Director Flanders stated that we are moving ahead with the Promotion and Marketing Committee. Boardmember Urie stated the Committee as reviewed the plans and have reevaluated everything because they did not accomplish as much as they wanted in year two. She stated they are putting their committee together with a large of enough number of people to accomplish all the good ideas that they have.

Director Flanders stated that Thursday's On The Grand will be ending this year at the end of August in conjunction with Riverfest.

Vice-Chair Antaya reiterated that the Riverfest Extravaganza will be held August 25th through August 28th.

Margery Briggs stated Riverfest would be starting on the 25th with a Wild Wild West Roundup. She highlighted the events of Riverfest and stated that the main stage will begin on Friday, August 26th about 3:00 P.M. Ms. Briggs stated they are looking for donations to fund renting a sound system and someone to run it, electrical cords, folding chairs and other costs associated with the main stage. Vice-Chair Antaya informed Ms. Briggs that the D.D.A. has given Director Flanders the authority to approve up to \$300.00 for main stage needs.

City Manager Dempsey stated he has met with Amy Williams and Marlene Patrick from Amy's Place and Lonese Conroe from the Portland Area Service Group to discuss the downtown parking issues. He stated they are continuing to have good conversations and will be making a recommendation to City Council at their September 6th meeting on what should happen in the downtown area.

The meeting ended at 4:26 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Ward, Secretary