

He stated there have been a number of Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies in Portland over the past several years for businesses opening in Portland. It is his understanding that both the buildings that had businesses leave have new occupants. He said there will not be any vacancy issues in the downtown because of the efforts of everyone sitting around this table.

Boardmember Kolarik stated he has concerns both as a Boardmember and as a Manager. He stated in the past Central Soya has worked with the City to create a Rivertrail behind their building and provided additional parking for Portland Cafe in their parking lot. He stated his concern is there is a lot of negative stuff going on and he feels it is going to hurt the downtown. He stated the City purchased land in Danby Township and he has no concerns about that. He said the City Council needs to address things with Danby Township and the Church of the Nazarene. He said, "I don't know the ins or outs, but I don't see why the City can't give water and sewer to the Church". He said, "Why do you want to do that, because it is the right thing to do"! He said he doesn't care about 425s, but whatever it takes to get it done, he would encourage the Mayor and City Council to get that done. He said, "Don't be blaming the City or Township just sit down and get it done". He stated the minister of the church is doing a wonderful thing and we need to get him water and sewer. He said, "We don't need to point fingers just get it done".

City Manager Dempsey stated he has not started to point fingers yet. He stated that the City has been very restrained regarding the stories that are out there. He said, "Some of the negative comments are coming from the citizen that is in the township that does not agree with our decision". He said, "Everyone is entitled to their opinions". He said, "I for one encourage the City and Township to work something out". He stated that he had a meeting with Dick Pohl yesterday and he will be talking with the Township Board to see if they are interested in working with the City to enter into an agreement to serve the property with water and sewer. He stated we want to work out a long term solution to these problems.

Boardmember Kolarik stated he doesn't want to point a finger either, but for the City doing land grabbing is not a good relationship for the City or Township. He said, "You have created this negative atmosphere by what you have done". He also stated it is legal and right, but it is land grabbing. He stated now the township is going through a detachment and that is a lot of money and expense. He said, "People just need to sit down to figure out how to solve these problems". He stated the only winners here are the lawyers. He stated there are a lot of negative vibes around and as a downtown person it is not good for the downtown. He said, "It needs to be addressed, and it needs to be addressed quickly". He stated it would be nice if the Mayor, the Danby Township Supervisor, and the Minister were on the front page of the paper shaking hands and he had water and sewer. He said, "That would help our community more than anything else we can do". He said, "Just throw out all the legal stuff and get it done because it is the right thing to do".

Motion by Antaya, supported by Kolarik, to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 P.M.
All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Pontz, Secretary

Boardmember Kolarik asked Ms. Christensen if the money the property owners have agreed to pay has gone up. Ms. Christensen replied “No” we have signed agreements for the amounts the property owners need to pay, and the amount has not gone up.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated in last month’s check to the Portland Playhouse for façade improvements there was a transposition in the amount of their check. She stated the check was written for \$948.85 and should have been written for \$984.84. She is asking the Board to approve the corrected amount.

Motion by Dumas, supported by Kavanagh, that the reimbursement to the Portland Civic Players be \$984.85.

All in favor. Adopted

Ms. Christensen stated that Tom Thelen of the Review and Observer was kind enough to give her, her own column. She stated she initiated the column and it will appear bi-monthly in the R & O. She stated she wants to educate the citizens of Portland on the D.D.A., Main Street, and other happenings around Portland.

Ms. Christensen stated there was a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on February 2nd for Ionia County Mental Health. She stated the office is located at 204 W. Bridge Street across from Powers Park. She also stated it is their 3rd or 4th branch office. Chairman Dumas stated that many of the people that need the services do not have transportation to Ionia.

Boardmember Antaya arrived at 3:45 P.M.

Ms. Christensen stated the Main Street Organization and Finance will be working on some fund raising ideas. She stated they are working on something that will be held in conjunction with the Main Street Birthday Celebrations.

Ms. Christensen stated that the Design Committee has been working on the Riverside Facades and the Design Guidelines.

Economic Revitalizations Committee is continuing to develop a Small Business Incentives Program.

Promotion and Marketing Committee is working on a great project modeled after the Buy into Boyne Project. She stated it was suggested by Kelly Larsen the current Main Street Architect who was the Boyne City Main Street Manager. The project will be for people to shop and possibly win thousands of dollars. Participating merchants will contribute to a jack pot of cash. She stated the community will be encouraged to buy in the D.D.A. District and to save the receipts and turn them in for a chance to win. She stated you must be present to win. They hope to get it started around the holidays. The program is in its initial planning stages.

City Manager Dempsey stated there was a front page article in the R & O this week stating that there are two vacant buildings in the downtown. They are the former Planned Scapes and Casa Bella locations. He also stated there was a Letter to the Editor suggesting the City not continue with their revitalization efforts. He stated it is misleading when people see articles like that.

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

Held on Thursday, February 15, 2007
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Antaya, Barnes, Dempsey, Dumas, Kavanagh, Kolarik, Urie

Members Absent: Briggs, Clement, Hoppes, Pontz,

Guests: None

Chairman Dumas called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M.

All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Urie, supported by Kolarik, to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of Correction to Portland Playhouse Invoice, under Old Business.

All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Dempsey, supported by Kavanagh, to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2007 meeting.

All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Urie, supported by Barnes, to approve the amended Treasurer's Report by changing check number 657 to Civic Players, and check number 658 to DDA Principal & Interest Account.

All in favor. Adopted

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated the Design Guidelines have been revisited and there are corrections for Board review. She stated that Kelly Larsen the Main Street Architect from SHPO has also been given a copy of the proposed changes. Ms. Christensen read the six changes to the guidelines including the new name Portland Main Street Design Objectives Guidelines and Standards. Other items clarified are Grant Agreement Guidelines, D.D.A. Standard and Property Owner Guidelines, Lighting Guidelines for Signs, Lighting Standards, and Rear Entrances.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Dempsey, to approve the Design Guidelines as submitted.

All in favor. Adopted

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated there have been several meetings with business and property owners regarding the Riverside Façade Project and gave the following information: At the first meeting with the business and property owners Paul Galdes and Aaron Caitlin from Fleis and VandenBrink Engineering were available to answer questions along with Kelly Larsen from SHPO to discuss Historic Preservation. The meeting went very well. She stated the second meeting was held on February 13 and Aaron Caitlin was there with sketches of the back of the buildings. These are preliminary drawing and he still needs to meet with the property owners for minor details. The next meeting with Mr. Caitlin and the property owners will be held on February 27th. After we have the final plans, we need to move on to an Environmental Review.