

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

Held on Thursday, November 29, 2007
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Antaya, Barnes, Briggs, Clement, Dempsey, Dumas, Trappen

Members Absent: Kavanagh, Urie

Guests: None

Chairman Dumas called the meeting to order at 3:35 P.M.

Chairman Dumas congratulated City Clerk Bonnie Miller on her upcoming retirement.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Clement, to approve the agenda as presented
All in favor. Adopted

Motion by Dempsey, supported by Briggs, to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2007 meeting
after corrections.
All in favor. Adopted

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

D.D.A. Director Christensen updated Boardmembers on the Riverside Façade Improvement project. She stated the project is moving ahead nicely. The windows have been replaced, and the inside trim work for the windows should begin this week along with the installation of the gutters. She stated she has had an opportunity to talk to some of the business owners and they are very pleased with the new windows. She noted that the painting will be postponed until spring. The scaffolding will be taken down, the dumpster removed, and the contractor will be moving out of the old Art of Giving building within the next couple of weeks.

City Manager Dempsey stated there have been some issues with the way the contractors have staged the construction. The inside windows have not been trimmed yet and some of the business owners questioned when they would be completed. There has been some delay in installing the gutters, because of wind damage to the Portland Area Service Center. Their insurance company is working out some payment options with a contractor. Rivertown Contracting is allowing the contractor to use their scaffolding. The painting will be done in the spring along with the installation of the awnings.

D.D.A. Director Christensen stated that Holidayfest was a great success again this year. The Promotions and Marketing Committee have been talking to merchants and there has been from 1 ½ % to 5% increase in sales this year. The Promotion and Marketing Committee will be putting together a report of the positives and negatives of the event.

The Michigan Main Street Quarterly Forum was held on November 14th and 15th in Old Town Lansing.

Laura Krizov from MSHDA informed the Main Street Communities that the accreditation status for each community will be discussed in a conference call. The interviews will be done by MSHDA with Main Street Board Chair Van Slambrouck, and the Main Street Manager. A date has yet to be decided for Portland's conference call. The report will indicate how we stand with MSHDA and what we need to do to achieve our master community status. D.D.A. Director Christensen stated there was a presentation by Howell's Main Street Manager and Board Chair regarding their Business Assistance Team Program and they have supplied some detailed information to pass on to the Main Street Board. She also stated that Kathy La Plante from the National Main Street Program provided a list of suggestions for promoting a positive Main Street Community.

D.D.A. Director Christensen read her letter of resignation stating that her contract will expire on December 31, 2007, and she has decided not to renew it. She provided a list of projects started and completed during her tenure in Portland, and provided some suggestions for the new Main Street Manager. She also thanked City Manager Tom Dempsey for his help and positive words of encouragement.

Chairman Dumas thanked Ms. Christensen for her year of service with the D.D.A. and Main Street stating he appreciated all the hard work and effort she has put into her work. He stated she has gotten some experience from this that she should be able to use in her future endeavors. Chairman Dumas stated he will be happy to be contacted for a reference, and wished her well. He also thanked her for fulfilling her contract, leaving in a professional manner, and giving the Board time to find her replacement.

Chairman Dumas began discussion by asking the Board if they wanted to replace the D.D.A. Director/Main Street Manager. He said, "My recommendation is that we do." He asked the Board for their opinion, and if they want to advertise the same pay scale of \$25,000 to \$30,000.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Clement, to hire a new Main Street Manager/D.D.A. Director as a consultant with a price range of \$25,000 to \$30,000.

All in favor. Adopted

Boardmembers reviewed the job posting from last year's search for a Main Street Manager, and discussed where they wanted to advertise for the position. Chairman Dumas provided cost information and papers where they could advertise.

Vice-Chair Antaya asked if anyone knew of any local people that may be interested in serving as D.D.A. Director/ Main Street Manager. There was no response.

Chairman Dumas stated they had about eight applications from last year's search, but did not know how the applicants became aware of the position.

City Manager Dempsey stated the position can be placed on the City's website, and the local access channel at no cost to the D.D.A.

Mayor Barnes stated the Main Street Newsletter "On the Street" for December would also be a good source to advertise the position.

Vice-Chair Antaya asked for our accreditation purposes for Main Street, “How soon do we need to hire a new Main Street Manager”.

Chairman Dumas replied he had talked to Joe Borgstrom and he indicated that Portland could still get its accreditation and would be comfortable with hiring a new Manager by the end of January. Boardmembers also reviewed the time line for hiring the new Manager.

Vice-Chair Antaya suggested advertising the first two weeks in the local R & O and the free websites. He added if sufficient applications are not received in that time frame to advertise in the Lansing State Journal.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Dempsey, to advertise the Main Street Manager/ D.D.A Director position for two weeks in the R & O, the Michigan Municipal League and National Main Street websites, and newsletters. At the end of the two weeks, if there are not enough qualified applicants, to advertise in the Lansing State Journal for four days.

All in favor. Adopted

Boardmember Briggs asked if there were any applicants from last year’s search that we could interview for the position.

City Manager Dempsey replied if there were people we interviewed last year that are still interested in the position, they could re-apply.

Chairman Dumas has asked that the City Manager and Mayor Barnes review the application with him on January 7th and make a recommendation for the interviews. The interviews will be done by Chairman Dumas, City Manager Dempsey, Mayor Barnes, Main Street Committee Members Joel VanSlambrouck and Julie Clement, and a representative from Main Street Michigan.

Boardmember Briggs stated that December 1st will be a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Cool Cities Customs at the Kramer Building. The famous boxer Tommy Hearn will attend the festivities.

The Civic Players will be presenting Home Town Christmas for the next two weekends, which was written by local talent. The Portland Orchestra will be performing on both Sundays.

Breakfast with Santa will be held on December 8th at the Portland Area Service Group from 8:00 to 9:30 A.M.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Antaya, to adjourn the meeting at 4:05 P.M.

All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

Yvonne M. Miller, City Clerk