

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

Held on Thursday, September 17, 2015

In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Dumas, Antaya, Barnes, Blastic, Briggs, Gorman, VanSlambrouck and Grimminck

Absent: Clement, Urie

Staff: DDA/Main Street Director Perry, City Clerk Miller

Guests: Chris Tyler; Joe Borgstrom of the Michigan State Housing and Development Authority; and Laura Krizov of the Michigan Main Street Center

The meeting was called to order at 3:32 P.M.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Antaya, to approve the Agenda as presented.
All in favor. Adopted.

Motion by Barnes, supported by Briggs, to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2015 meeting as presented.
All in favor. Adopted.

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

Mr. Borgstrom addressed the Board and noted that he wanted to "check in" and see how everything is going through the current transition process. The City of Portland has an 11-year relationship with the Main Street program.

Mayor Barned stated that he is excited to have Director Perry on board full-time. He stated his interest in how other Main Street cities are doing and how they can all learn from each other to revitalize programs.

Mr. Borgstrom stated that there are 39 Main Street communities around the State of Michigan. Boyne City and Portland are the only remaining cities from the original appointments. He further gave an update on the other communities and what is happening.

There was discussion.

City Manager Gorman stated that he is evaluating Portland's Main Street program to ensure there are results. He further stated his support for the DDA and what it is trying to accomplish but would like to make it better and more efficient.

There was discussion about balancing the “party planning” and “economic development” aspects of the program. Mr. Borgstrom noted that this same discussion is taking place at the national level with the goal of focusing more on economic development.

There was discussion of holding a Main Street Exchange; similar to the City’s Mayor Exchange. Mayor Barnes suggested combining them.

Under New Business, Chair Dumas suggested moving Shelley Perry from interim to full-time status. He further stated that she is doing a good job and doesn’t feel the need to go through the interview process. He suggested she would be an at-will employee and would not be an employee of the City but would be eligible to participate with the City of Portland’s benefits. He further suggested that she start at the salary of \$40,000 per year that Patrick Reagan had when he left the position. The official start date would be October 1, 2015.

Motion by Dumas, supported by Antaya to move Shelley Perry from interim to full-time status based on the proposed employment agreement effective October 1, 2015.
All in favor. Adopted.

City Manager Gorman stated that he is please to finality to the position. He further welcomed Mrs. Perry and that she is doing a great job.

Under the Director’s Report, Director Perry stated that the roof is complete at Fabiano’s River House Grill for which they were awarded a façade grant. The DDA is currently just waiting on the invoices to make payment.

There are some interested parties in the current grant round that is open until September 25, 2015.

There will be a Downtown History Walk with the Portland Area Historical Society on Sunday, October 25, 2015 to be held in conjunction with Halloween.

Director Perry further noted that she attended the Quarterly Training in Hart, MI on Tuesday and Wednesday. There were some very good workshops held on design.

Under Committee Reports, Director Perry reported that the Promotions & Marketing Committee held the Portland Pay Day prize drawing on Thursday, August 27, 2015 at the Thursdays on the Grand event.

She also reported that the Wine the Walk event held on Saturday, August 15, 2015 went very well although it was on the hottest day of the summer. This year’s event lost approximately \$600 rather than breaking even as it has in the past. There has been consideration given to moving the event to the fall.

Holidayfest will be held Saturday, December 5, 2015 this year and will feature many changes. The theme is “Old Time Christmas”. There will still be a light parade.

There was discussion of the event.

Committee Chair Margery Briggs reported that the Design Committee has opened the Sign Grant opportunity. Applications are due by September 25, 2015. The committee is considering revising the work plans based on the training that was attended in Hart. The committee is continuing to evaluate how to improve the cost and maintenance of the hanging baskets in the downtown.

Committee Chair Chris Tyler reported on the activities of the Economic Revitalization Committee. Emily Pantera from the Michigan Main Street Center will address the group on September 21, 2015 to determine if there is any help from a historical aspect for downtown businesses. The Business After Hours event, held in conjunction with the Portland Area Chamber of Commerce, will be held at the Wagon Wheel on October 1, 2015.

Committee Chair Barnes reported that the Organization and Finance Committee published the September 2015 On the Street Newsletter. Mayor Barnes also noted that the date of the Volunteer Recognition Event date is being determined and invitations will be sent. A 5k run will be held with Willemin Chiropractic on October 10, 2015 in conjunction with the Healthy Portland event being held at City Hall. The Facebook page is now at almost 2,006 likes and is growing consistently.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Blastic, to adjourn the meeting at 4:24 P.M.
All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

Kory Blastic, Secretary