

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

Held on Thursday, September 15, 2016
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: Dumas, VanSlambrouck, Blastic, Grimminck, Antaya, Briggs, Urie, Tyler, Clement

Absent: Barnes, Gorman

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

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 P.M.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Clement, to excuse the absence of Mayor Barnes and City Manager Gorman due to their attendance at the MML Conference at Mackinac Island.

Motion by Urie, supported by Briggs, to approve the Agenda as presented.
All in favor. Adopted.

Motion by Antaya, supported by Blastic, to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2016 meeting as presented.
All in favor. Adopted.

Director Perry presented the Treasurer's Report and noted that check number 1599 in the amount of \$221,923.53 is the last payment on City Hall.

Member VanSlambrouck inquired when discussions will take place regarding what DDA funds will now be used for.

Director Perry stated she plans to discuss that later in the meeting. She has been reaching out to DDA members one or two at a time in order to explain research she has been doing and thoughts she has on what the future direction of the DDA should be.

Director Perry noted there was a \$27,000 discrepancy in last year's budget and the DDA is expecting those funds back from Ionia County.

Member Blastic inquired what the "bottom line" of the Beerfest was.

Director Perry reported on the ticket sales and costs of the event and thanked the sponsors for their contribution in making the event a success. She further stated she is looking at changes for next year.

Chair Dumas congratulated everyone on making the final payment on City Hall.

Director Perry suggested a photo should be taken and maybe an article should be published in the paper.

Member VanSlambrouck suggested getting community involvement/input on future DDA plans.

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

Under Old Business, Director Perry reminded the members that the Main Street – Year End National Accreditation visit will be on Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 8:00 A.M.

Under New Business, Director Perry reported the Design Committee is opening both the Façade and Sign Grant rounds this month with application due in October. They have also been discussing the creation of an awning grant as part of the Façade Grant Program. She has also been discussing options with Portland Federal Credit Union to assist property owners with loans on grants through the DDA.

Chair Dumas explained that under new regulations from the Federal government the exemption level on overtime worked has changed and now needs to be addressed in the DDA Director's contract. The United States Department of Labor, Fair Labor Standards Act has updated the salary threshold under which workers are entitled to overtime. The final rule raises the salary threshold from \$23,660.00 to \$47,476.00 effective December 1, 2016. This requires the reclassification of the DDA Director position from salary exempt to either salary non-exempt or hourly. Either classification will require the tracking of over time. There have been discussions with City offices on how to handle this new issue and the need to develop a new contract. Chair Dumas stated that in looking at the DDA Director Job description (provided in the packet) it has been determined that a committee should be formed to develop a new contract that will meet Director Perry's needs, meet the laws, and will work for the City. Chair Dumas asked for volunteers to serve on the committee.

Members Urie, VanSlambrouck, and Clement volunteered to serve on the committee and determined they would meet on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 1:00 P.M. in the conference room at City Hall.

Member VanSlambrouck asked how Director Perry would qualify for over-time for over 40 hours, especially during a festival.

Director Perry stated that she would be able to use comp time for working extra hours during a festival or event. She further stated that time worked needs to be reported to her employer, the DDA Board, so there is a record of the hours she is paid for. She also stated there are no specific requirements for how the time should be recorded, only that there is needs to be some kind of retention. She stated the current understanding is that she is paid for 40 hours per week unless there is time worked extra and then she receives comp time for the hours worked over 40.

Member VanSlambrouck asked how other employees of the City of Portland record their time.

City Clerk Miller noted that all City of Portland employees record their actual time worked whether or not they are salary employees.

Member VanSlambrouck asked if Director Perry currently reports her actual hours worked.

Director Perry stated that she does not report her actual hours worked at this time. She recommended that the DDA Board keep the record of her hours worked. She stated that at this time the City of Portland staff is hired to do payroll at this time. She further stated that with the crazy schedule she works it is very difficult to track what she is doing for what group and that it would be difficult to sort out for tracking purposes.

Member Blastic asked if her hours worked could be reported in the minutes of the DDA meeting each month.

Director Perry stated they could be, a record just needs to be recorded someplace. She further stated she would like to just report she has worked 40 hours each week unless she has worked extra and has earned comp time.

Member Briggs stated there should be some way to track when comp time is used.

Director Perry stated it would be difficult to report what she is doing for each group in the community that she does work for as the tasks overlap. Director Perry used the example of doing work on a poster for a downtown business after hours.

Under the Director's Report, Director Perry noted her feeling that the downtown is dying and that the DDA Plan talks repeatedly about the DDA buying/purchasing a building. She stated her belief that the DDA should concentrate on doing something to that extent and should not concentrate on projects like painting bridges. She further stated that the downtown is losing investors because the surrounding buildings are not being taken care of.

Member Clement stated that the many empty buildings are hurting the existing businesses.

Director Perry stated she had the Leik brothers look at the Opera House building in order to get their opinion on whether this would potentially be a good project. Director Perry further stated she has now been bringing her thoughts to the DDA members individually as a thought in moving forward with future DDA funds.

Director Perry further provided grant and funding possibilities.

Director Perry stated that the Quilt Shop at 123 Kent St. has changed hands. The new owner will be changing the name of the business. They are also considering submitting a Sign Grant application.

A new business is opening at 160 Kent St. called Two Rivers Treasures. They will offer a variety of products, but they specialize in reclaimed and repurposed furniture.

Director Perry also reported that she attended the Annual State Main Street Director's Retreat at the Double J Resort. Leadership styles were evaluated and they learned how to interact with individuals and boards.

Director Perry also reported that she has been discussing Christmas decorations with the Lake Odessa Village President. They will be sharing information on the bids they received for live swagging so the DDA can determine if this is something they would be interested in placing on the black fencing along Maple St.

Member VanSlambrouck suggested adding Christmas decorations out W. Grand River Ave. towards West Side Party Store.

There was discussion about this idea but it was determined that this area is not in the DDA and would have to be paid by City funds.

Director Perry stated that she has received a quote in the amount of \$1,414.00 from Verdin for the clock in the downtown for maintenance and to replace the four faces.

Motion by Dumas, supported by VanSlambrouck, to accept the quote from Verdin to perform maintenance and to replace the four faces on the clock in the downtown not to exceed \$1,414.00. All in favor. Adopted.

Under Committee Reports, Member Urie reported the Promotions & Marking Committee is considering a murder mystery activity in the Downtown this spring.

Under the Design Committee Report, Member Briggs reported the Façade and Sign Grants are open through mid-October and they are working on educating downtown business owners on the importance of maintaining their buildings. There has been discussion of moving the Newman Fountain back to the downtown, where it was historically located, from Alton Park. The committee has also been looking at signage for the downtown and a historic marker.

Member Tyler, Economic Revitalization Committee Chair, reported they are finishing up the content on the Portland Visitors Guide, hopefully it will be printed soon. The quarterly "Business after Hours" event will be hosted by Chamber of Commerce in October. Consideration is being given on how to increase the number of participants in the event.

Mayor Barnes was absent from the meeting so did not provide an update on the Organization and Finance Committee.

Under Board Member Comments, Director Perry noted that the Gallery Brewery will host lunch & learn events once a month.

The Chamber of Commerce will host a seminar on leadership at the Portland Federal Credit Union on September 27, 2016. They will also host their annual outdoor movie night this weekend at Powers Park.

Member Briggs presented a newly published book that is a compilation of stories by Clarence Budington Kelland.

Motion by Urie, supported by Briggs, to adjourn the meeting at 4:28 P.M.
All in favor. Adopted

Respectfully submitted,

Kory Blastic, Secretary