

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

Held on Thursday, January 17, 2019
In Council Chambers at City Hall

Members Present: VanSlambrouck, Barnes, Briggs, Pung, Madarang, Gorman, Grimminck, Antaya

Members Absent: None

Staff: DDA/Main Street Director ConnerWellman, VISTA Volunteer Hengesbach, City Clerk Miller

Guests: None

Chair Grimminck called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Briggs, supported by Pung, to approve the agenda as presented.
All in favor. Adopted.

Motion by Madarang, supported by VanSlambrouck, to approve the minutes of November 15, 2018 minutes as presented
All in favor. Adopted.

Mayor Barnes noted that both December and January Treasurer's Reports need to be approved as there was no meeting in December. He further stated that he has reviewed both reports and recommends their approval.

Motion by Briggs, supported by Madarang, to approve the Treasurer's Report for both December and January as presented.
All in favor. Adopted.

Member Antaya arrived at 3:33 P.M.

Under Team Reports, Mayor Barnes reported that the Organization & Finance Team continues to work on the sesquicentennial celebration. He also noted that the Volunteer Recognition event will be moved to April this year.

Chair Grimminck reported that the Business Enhancement Team has nothing new to report.

Nothing new to report for the Promotions & Marketing Team.

Under the Design Team Report, Member Briggs noted that they are still working with Mo's Needle & Thread on a new sign.

Under Old Business, Director ConnerWellman stated that she has spoken with both the business and property owners regarding the repainting of the cornices on the building as part of the Façade Improvement Application that was received for the Escape Rooms at 100 E. Bridge St./205 Kent St. The business owners do not feel like it is their responsibility to repaint the

cornices. The property owners agreed to get quotes for the work. The proposed colors as part of the Façade Improvement Application match the current color of the cornices. The \$425.00 has been approved by the Design Committee.

As part of the Board Review of Self-Assessment she is looking for thoughts and recommendations for area of focus.

The National Main Street Conference will be held this year in Seattle, WA on March 25-27, 2019. City Council Member Amanda Johnston and VISTA Volunteer Dana Hengesbach are planning to attend.

Under New Business, Director ConnerWellman presented Team Work Plans and Budget Worksheets. The budgets are needed at the next board meeting.

Director ConnerWellman presented the Michigan Main Street Program Renewal Agreement. This is a 2-year agreement that requires a recommendation to the City Council for approval.

There was discussion of whether Portland should remain a Main Street community. It was stated that the discussion around this agreement should take place a few months prior to the decision being made in order to have proper consideration for the next renewal.

Motion by Pung, supported by VanSlambrouck to recommend the Michigan Main Street Program Renewal Agreement to the City Council for approval.
All in favor. Adopted.

Director ConnerWellman stated that Mo's Needle and Thread, at 123 Kent St., recently submitted a Sign Incentive Application to replace the wall sign on the Maple St. side of their business and the door signs on both the Kent St. and Maple St. entrances. As the door signs did not meet the criteria for a Sign Grant they have changed their request for only the wall sign on the Maple St. side. They are requesting reimbursement of \$325.00 rather than \$500.00.

There was discussion.

Director ConnerWellman provided information on the lighting of the buildings on the west side of the 100 block of Kent St. prior to the holidays. The DDA has no cost invested at this time. The lighting was installed with 70 volunteer hours and over \$4,000 in private investment. There has been consideration given to keeping the lighting year-round but it has already led to increased utility bills for the property owners. She further stated that she is considering ways the DDA may be able to provide assistance. One of the considerations is to use digital timers to synchronize the lighting of the buildings. She stated that she is looking for feedback from the Board as to whether to proceed with gathering estimates for further consideration.

There was discussion.

The Board concurred that Director ConnerWellman should move forward with gathering more information and costs to add timers to the lighting.

Under the Director Report, VISTA Volunteer Hengesbach provided a report on her activities including the Business Success Workshops, the Block Captain Program, and the development of the workshop schedule.

DDA/Main Street Director ConnerWellman stated that a Business Owner Workshop about Business Protection will be held on February 14, 2019. She has been working with various property owners and businesses on possible new funding opportunities from Michigan Main Street. Sales from the Portland Prime Community Gift Certificate Program have been robust. There was a 35% increase in participation and sponsorship of HolidayFest, held Saturday, December 8, 2018. The Michigan Main Street Annual Reporting is now complete.

Under Board Member Comments, City Manager Gorman provided an update on City business. A feasibility study for a new Police Station at either the Grand River Ave. and Divine Hwy. on the property recently donated to the City by ADM Alliance Nutrition or on the parking lot at Grand River Ave. and Maple St. The study shows that the building a new police department on the parking lot at Grand River Ave. and Maple St. is more feasible. A cost estimate and potential funding still need to be determined.

City Manager Gorman also stated that the results of the Broadband Feasibility Study show that bringing broadband internet service to the City of Portland is very feasible. A survey will be conducted soon that will determine the “take rate” or interest in service from the residents. This investment would provide the potential for strong economic development and would lay the foundation for Portland to be a “smart City”.

City Manager Gorman also noted that, contingent on the City Council’s approval at its January 21, 2019 meeting, the Small Urban Project funds will be moved from Grand River Ave. to the Kent Street Improvement Project for 2022. The DDA will need to move forward with amending the TIF Plan.

Member VanSlambrouck provided information on the Portland Backpacks for Bellies program. Approximately \$8,000.00 has been raised to date for the program.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Margery Briggs, Secretary