

Downtown Muskegon Business Improvement District

Meeting Minutes

July 25, 2016

380 W. Western Ave., Suite 202 Muskegon, MI at 4 PM

- 1) Call to Order: 4:00 PM
- 2) Attendance:

Doug Pollock (Chair), Justin Clark (VC), Bob Tarrant, Gary Post, John Riegler and Mike Hennessy and Frank Peterson

Excused Absent(s): Connie Taylor and Bruce Lindstrom

Guests: Dave Alexander, Downtown Muskegon Now director; Cindy Larsen, Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce; Ed Garner, Muskegon Area First; Cathy Brubaker-Clarke, city of Muskegon; Jon Rooks, Parkland Development and Dennis Lohman, Northwester Industrial sales.
- 3) Consent Agenda
 - a) Approval of Agenda, minutes from May 22, 2016, and acceptance of the financial statements as of June 30, 2016.

Motion: Frank Peterson
Support: Gary Post
Vote: All voted in favor
- 4) Public Comment (on an agenda item) – None. The board chose to leave the floor open for the whole meeting allowing attendees to participate as they like.
- 5) Unfinished Business
 - a) BID update from Dave Alexander, Downtown Muskegon Now. Alexander discussed the landscaping being done by H&H, planters being filled and maintained by Ole Henry Gardens, signs being installed for downtown maps at Johnson Circle, The Depot and Muskegon Farmers Market. BID also launched First Fridays with family dance party in May, highly successful street performers in June and children’s zone at the Lakeshore Art Festival in July.
 - b) Alexander showed a Rebel Road video from Eagle Eye Photography of a “drone” video of the downtown motorcycle event. BID paid \$500 for the video that was donated to the event.
 - c) The board reviewed a timeline for the renewal of the BID special assessment district with city commission public hearings Sept. 27 and Oct. 25 for final approval by the city commission by Oct. 31.
- 6) New Business

- a) BID extension proposal: Alexander, City Manager Frank Peterson and Mayor Steve Gawron presented an aggressive BID extension for five years with a 25 percent increase in assessment fees, an expansion of the district to the north and east of Shoreline Drive and placement of the assessment on the 2017 winter tax bills.

The BID board reviewed the details of the proposal. Gary Post spoke for many of the board members to say that the BID has only been operating for six months and now would not be the time for such an expansion and increase in assessments. Justin Clark also spoke against the assessment increase. Frank Peterson said that there is a need for more funds to upgrade and maintain the streetscape along West Western as the decorative concrete is becoming worn. The city's Downtown Development Authority is paying off bonds supported by city general fund dollars and is unable to assist with such improvements.

Cindy Larsen said that an equitable way to find more funding for a downtown organization and activities is needed. She suggested that in the future paid parking might provide the desired revenues.

Jon Rooks suggested an 8.2 percent annual increase in assessments or five years go gain the same amount revenues over that time. He also objected to the specifics of the district's geographic expansion. He also suggested that downtown sidewalk maintenance and rehabilitation could be paid for by property owners through a special assessment.

Gary Post wanted the BID to be the vehicle to get the downtown site condominium association out of the common area expenses it now handles such as electrical and insurance costs for the Olthoff Stage and Alcoa Square areas along Third Street.

Bob Tarrant said he supports the BID but can't support the expansion and increase in assessments. If extended, board members were more comfortable with three years rather than five.

The board had a robust discussion but little consensus formed. Doug Pollock suggested that the board members take time to consider the options and reconvene a special meeting Monday Aug. 1, 4 p.m. in the training room of the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, 380 W. Western Ave. Suite 202. The board agreed to adjourn to the special meeting date and time. It would be a one item agenda for a recommendation to the Muskegon City Commission on the renewal of the downtown Muskegon Business Improvement District.

- 7) Adjournment
5:40 PM
No Objection

Minutes produced and submitted by Dave Alexander, executive director of Downtown Muskegon Now.

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