

**RECORD OF
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/GRAYLING MAIN STREET
PROCEEDINGS REGULAR MEETING HELD ON THE 19th DAY OF
OCTOBER 2017
1020 CITY BOULEVARD, GRAYLING, MICHIGAN**

I. Meeting called to order by Chairperson McIsaac at 6:02 P.M.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Shawn Abraham, Betty Bennett, Paul Crandall, Stacy McIsaac, Timothy Rombach, Shannon Sorenson, Thomas Steffen,

Members Absent: Doug Baum (present 6:06 PM), 1 Vacancy

Also in Attendance: Rae Gosling, Erica Blair, Erich Podjaske and Kimberly Murphy, Deputy Clerk

III. Public Comment - None

IV. Approval of Agenda

17-046

Moved by Bennett, seconded by Crandall to approve the agenda as amended:
Add E. under Unfinished Business – Main Street, Vista update
Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1, Vacancies: 1, motion carried.

V. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. DDA GMS Meeting Minutes for September 21, 2017

17-047

Moved by Sorenson, seconded by Bennett that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented:
Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1, Vacancies: 1, motion carried.

VI. Treasurer Report

A. Revenue/Expenditure Report thru September 2017

*Baum present at 6:06 PM

Sorenson went over her Treasurer's report with the board, she had a few questions that Rae was able to answer, she would like to get a final Paddle Battle report with the

funding, she would also like a final report from Harvest Fest, still some outstanding invoices, Rae will get that to her. She questioned the sock sales and if we did sell \$1416.00 and Rae stated yes, Rae stated that the first set of socks sales went to Design for the trees. Sorenson also questioned the Huntington Bank Charges in September and those were actually credit card charges listed as various department charges and Rae will ask Lisa and Ginny if these could list exactly what they are for as listed on the receipt. Sorenson asked about the Christmas Light Letter and Rae stated they are working on them and they should be going out soon. The board had no questions for Sorenson.

17-048

Moved by Crandall, seconded by Bennett that the Treasurer's report be approved as presented:

Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0, Vacancies:1, motion carried.

VII. City Manager Report

Baum informed the Board that the Michigan State Police has tentatively approved the Canoe Launch Project, pending a site plan for a security fence, we received a quote for the fencing and gave that to MEDC and they were going to submit that additional quote as part of the grant for funding. So hopefully this will go to engineering in the winter and start the project in the Spring.

City Council approved the purchase of the property on 72 East Huron Street for a purpose of a Community Rec Center Project if a Feasibility Study supports that.

Baum answered some questions regarding the canoe launch and security fencing.

VIII. Main Street Manager Report

A. Manager's Report

BY THE NUMBERS:

Donations collected - \$0

Volunteer Hours - 106

Façade improvement recorded - 0

Building Rehabilitation/improvements interior - 0

Building Sold - 0

Businesses closed - 0

Businesses Opened- 0

Training attended - Cultivating Place

Events hosted - 0

Accreditation Criteria -

- 1) Broad-based community support - I was able to build a little attention with two flash contests on social media. The first was a #DowntownDateNight engagement post. The second was a give-away when the new socks arrived, for a person with receipts from

- downtown Grayling. This does not exactly equate to community support, but it did generate attention. Harvest Fest/Funky Fish Races struggled to get volunteers for the event in October, indicating a deficit in meeting the criteria.
- 2) Developed mission and vision statements – Mission and Vision statements are documented.
 - 3) Comprehensive work plan – Work plans were approved in the May Board Meeting; a compilation of the work plans is available. Many of our work plans are insufficient to meet the National accreditation criteria. They lack sufficient detail, have too many duplicate owners/responsible parties, lack a responsible party entirely in some cases, and are not diversified in their goals and objectives. Work plans for the goals and objectives of the committees, Board, and director do not exist.
 - 4) Historic Preservation ethic –Design committee has recently been engaged in researching Design Standards that will emphasize a historic preservation ethic in rehabilitation and new construction in the downtown area.
 - 5) Active Board and Committees – Board and committees met. We still have low membership on committees, with only EV and Design being strong and active. Board did have one vacancy filled. Two members were absent from the September board meeting. There are opportunities for improvement here, but it is not at its lowest.
 - 6) Adequate operating budget – There is still an ongoing discussion regarding TIF districts, special assessments, and other fundraising opportunities. This criterion is an element of the current VISTAs VAD (VISTA Assignment Description). In our current situation, this criterion will not be considered complete.
 - 7) Paid professional program manager –I am still employed as the program director.
 - 8) Ongoing training – I participated in one training in September, quarterly training in Howell, with an emphasis on Cultivating Place. One Board member attended the first day of training with me, Tom Steffen.
 - 9) Report key statistics – Reported monthly statistics, 8/10/17
 - 10) Member of National Trust Main Street Network – membership renewed 3/20/17

Narrative –

September was a very meeting heavy month, that offered a tremendous amount of information from a wide variety of resources. I attended training in Howell, geared toward place making. The training also offered a fair amount of information regarding funding resources and grants, much of which was shared at the last board meeting. Additionally, I was able to spend some time with Roscommon folks, discussing how they have used TIF funds, as well as ways we can partner and prop each other up.

GMSt had two social media giveaways this month. The first was a Downtown Date Night promotion, on September 8th. This promotion was paid for by friends of Main Street, the Wednesday Gentlemen's Club. What started out as a sort of a joke ask of these gentlemen that play poker together turned into a real thing very quickly. It offered us a great opportunity to "force" engagement on our page and resulted in a boost of likes and follows. The second giveaway was when our new fundraising socks came in. We received a check from Tip'n The Mitten for \$1320 from the first round of tall socks. That money was split to pay for trees and the second round of ankle socks. This set of socks, like merchandising going forward, will be stored in the GMSt office and invoiced out to any retailer interested in carrying the product. I developed an invoice template, invoice tracking system, and inventory tracking system as well, using Microsoft Suite applications. Presently, socks are available at Tip'n The Mitten, AuSable Artisan Village, North Country Corner, and Ron's Fly Shop.

Last month I shared a deal made with the Avalanche for "Business of the Week" advertising. We have not seen the first ads yet, but they should be starting soon.

A large portion of September was also dedicated to closing out the Paddle Battle event, and preparing for Harvest Fest and the Funky Fish Races.

The search for a volunteer to help with social media content is still ongoing, and a priority for me. With the heavy event calendar, ramping up of development meetings and strategies, as well as research for funding and grants, social media has drifted to the back burner. As this was a VISTA project the intent was for a volunteer to be passed the tools created and be the primary person responsible for content generation, that I would be able to just review and post or schedule posts. I have been making an effort to post regularly but this is increasingly more difficult. I need help, from the board, to seek out/recruit a volunteer for this project.

As is visible in my criteria responses above, we have some areas for improvement in our program. If we want to be accreditation eligible in the next 18 months, we need to do a thorough evaluation of our programming, volunteer base, and board. With the MMS refresh final step being postponed, I think it would be valuable to assess the above-mentioned areas before we move forward with the strategy implementation stage of refresh. This would not introduce new programming, but would simply identify gaps that need to be filled, as well as areas that are not beneficial. Knowing those things when we begin the strategy implementation will help us to better plan in accordance with the goals identified in the last step of the refresh process.

Rae asked the board if they had anything on her report she needed to go over, Sorenson asked about the Comprehensive work plan and them being insufficient and has she reached out to the event chairs to discuss this, Gosling stated that we as a board need to take a more critical look of the work plans and also the lack of diversity in our work plans, all or most of our work plans are event driven, we don't have any work plans for training or services for our businesses with the exception of a couple of design work plans.

McIsaac questioned #5 on the 2017 Goals for the GMSt Manager that were submitted which is Create work plan to track collaborative efforts, McIsaac stated it is her assumption that this is happening and that training would also be involved, Rae said that will contribute to this but is not the whole solution and has never come to the board. McIsaac asked if it will in the future, Rae stated yes. These will be main street initiatives for our board to accomplish throughout the year more like guiding lights. Baum asked where would these work plans come from. Part of the goals would be to set these up and decide at that time where the work plan would come from, which committee and Chair would be responsible for that particular work plan.

Rae also went over her invoicing tracking system, which gives the capability of tracking invoices and merchandise. She can quickly create invoices for her downtown invoices for events, sponsorships or merchandise. Sorenson asked if we could add a category. Abraham asked if we could set timers based on invoice date. Rae went over their concerns.

B. Grant Opportunities and Status

Nothing new, no movement or changes, she only gets CDAM updates every other month.

Sorenson is working on an internal request from Huntington for \$5,000-\$6,000 she is working on submitting an application for bike racks.

IX. Unfinished Business - DDA

A. DDA Plan Update

Stacy contacted a few people and found that most have went through the pages and asked if anyone had any specific comments on anything. In her opinion it isn't where we are at now, its stuff that we have already covered. Baum thought it could have been a little more comprehensive, but its covering where we are at. Sorenson felt it didn't go into enough regarding funding avenues. Stacy questioned #10 of the Regional Economic Goals regarding infrastructure and wondered if that meant a TIF, Baum felt infrastructure is water/sewer, streets, natural gas, electricity, internet and lighting. Bennett asked what is Aerospace Cluster, Baum said because the City is under the runway approach of the airport. Sorenson stated she thinks this is just a piece that goes into our plan, Baum agreed it needs to be amended as needed. Bennett questioned one of our strengths as the rail being close; Sorenson stated the rail goes right through the downtown and Baum stated it is actually a strength, it does stop out on 4-mile road and they are building additional spurs coming in and Lake State Railway is working on passenger rail car service.

17-049

Moved by Sorenson, seconded by Steffen to accept the Economic Development Strategy in its fluid format:

Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0, Vacancies:1, motion carried.

B. TIF Committee Update

Sorenson stated they met prior to this meeting and from the last time they met they each had assignments. Crandall spoke with Chris the Assessor from the City to find out the financial perspective from the City, she saw this has a way for the DDA/GMS to become more financially independent, no adverse concern from her point of view. McIsaac feels if the TIF is in place then the City wouldn't have to contribute, then the DDA would contribute more money which would lessen the City's responsibility. Sorenson asked Baum if he remembered when John gave his presentation regarding the TIF to City Council and how would he like for this committee to go about presenting this to the City Council for their review. Baum said he would like to see a presentation by this committee to the City Council with pros and cons, but he stated that after the presentation to the Council there was some concern from the board members regarding taking the revenue away from the schools. He would like this committee to have some dialogue with the Council in getting some feedback before coming up with their final presentation for the TIF proposal. Rae will get with John to see what they will charge us to help create the TIF documents. Baum said they should make this an agenda item for the City Council meeting and for this board to come and talk with the Council and find out how the board feels before coming up with a presentation so they know what needs to be addressed, and how to proceed with the process building the TIF. The Committee will try and get some current TIF plans to look over. Rombach asked Baum if there was someone from the City that the board could talk with regarding a TIF and see what their feelings would be on the

creation of a TIF, Baum said he only remembers the comment of the school losing money as being one of the concerns. The consensus of the board was to go to the next City Council meeting and have a discussion. The TIF committee will meet on Wednesday October 25, 2017 at Hanson House to discuss the TIF and presenting it to the City Council.

Rombach talked about the expansion of the DDA District, he would like a response from the City and this board as well. He went over the map with the board. The more we include residential in the expansion we need an additional residential representative from those residents for every 100 residents. Adding the North and South and East and West which are the connectors to our downtown, also including the Fred Bear Property, and the Northern Market Property all of these areas around these nodes should be included in our DDA. Some of these properties are going to be Brownfield properties which would mean that if there was a TIF then the DDA would give that TIF money up for Brownfield redevelopment. Rombach would like this committee to take a look at this map and come back with comments. Rombach feels we need to come up with a presentation regarding this expansion. Baum asked the question of what does this group do for the DDA, we need to come up with a plan. Abraham asked Why do we want a TIF? Rombach and Crandall stated we need money because right now we depend on the City's contribution, the benefits of a TIF, gives us capital, for growth and development or a fund to help the start up for businesses to come in and start up. McIsaac stated having a TIF is important to Developers. Steffen said you can't do these types of development with these buildings that have soil contamination without some type of TIF money to help offset the cost. Crandall has often wondered why our DDA doesn't expand out to I75 including the Kmart area. He feels we need to take this one step at a time doing the TIF first than the expansion, Rombach feels if we start the TIF first then the expansion afterwards they will be able to opt out. Rombach feels if we keep them informed of our goals and plans its better. Add TIF Committee/DDA Expansion on our next month's agenda and look at the businesses that will be included. Erich Podjaske said something this board needs to think about is upcoming infrastructure repairs that need to be done and taking that additional money from this expansion if the City is willing to do this.

C. DDA/GMS Inclusion Strategy

Table until the above items are completed.

D. Re-allocate Design Donation from the Garden Club of \$875.00 received last FY

17-050

Moved by Sorenson, seconded by Steffen to re-allocate the Garden Club Donation of \$875.00 from the fund balance back to the Design Donations Line item:

Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0, Vacancies:1, motion carried.

X. New Business - DDA**A. Procedural Issues**

Rombach said himself, Rae, Doug and Stacy received a visit from Laura and Norma from MMS and wants to talk about it. McIsaac feels we need to work out a plan to remedy the situation. The remaining board members asked what was going on. McIsaac stated in short, the information she got was that this board needs to get their ducks in a row. Make sure the board commitment is where it should be and they are giving their time like they should be to get this program where it needs to be. McIsaac said the board needs to empower Rae with this, and Rae should be developing a plan for them to get where they need to be and Rae feels that is an issue, Rae feels she should be empowering the board to accomplish the goals they have set for themselves to get them where they need to be, she feels the board needs to develop this strategy and her role in this is to provide the board with the resources they don't have access to or don't have the time to access them. The board feels they have started this process in May. Rae said they have not solidified a course of action or how they are going to achieve this goal. Rae stated MMS and NMS do not see this board as a functioning board, Steffen questioned who they notified because he knew nothing and neither did Crandall. McIsaac feels we need to have another strategy session with Rae's guidance and come up with a plan. Rae stated they MMS said this board needs better direction and better commitment from the board members, and the development of our program. We don't have sustainable funding, their concern is we are not working cohesively, our focus is too narrow, we are not including all of the Main Street model into our program. Crandall said if the issue is with the board then the board needs to have a retreat. Rae said her role is basically a giant facilitator. We need to assess our program, put the numbers and information on the wall and for the board to look at this and say How are we serving our businesses?, we are not hitting the four points, where do we have gaps and figure out how to fill in the gaps. We need to identify roles and responsibility and goals of what this program is supposed to do. Crandall feels that MMS wants us to be an operational board as opposed to a strategic board. Rombach said if we identify these steps we pass them down to our 4 committees. McIsaac asked Rae if she wants us to succeed, Rae stated that she has been telling this board for months we need Chairs for these boards and now this is "do or die" time and if this board doesn't get it together and fill these roles we won't have a program and she won't have a job. Sorenson said at one time we had board members on every committee. We need to identify our roles and responsibility. The consensus of the board is to hold a work session on Thursday November 9, 2017 at 4:00 PM to sit down and figure this out.

B. Board Commitment

Discussed a little in the Procedural issues above.

C. New Board Member Application

Consensus of the board is to have the nominating committee meet with and interview Tim Chilcote.

XI. Unfinished Business – Main Street

A. Project Rising Tide Strategies – Nothing to report due to time

B. Employee Manual Changes Review from City Attorney

Nothing back from the attorney at this time

C. Accreditation – Update

Nothing to report

D. Manager’s Goals as discussed previously

Table for now

E. Vista Update

Erica Blair updated the board on some fundraising ideas. She would like to come up with a letter of what Grayling Main Street has done and send that out with “our ask” letters. She is working on a communication strategy to reach out and re-engage past donors. Still working on merchandising with our logo. Creating sustainable work plans.

XII. New Business – Main Street

A. Ron Rademacher

Thanked the board for taking the time to hear his pitch, he would like to include Grayling on a new promotion he is working on. He operates Michigan Back Roads, he stated to check him out at www.michiganbackroads.com. He would like to incorporate Grayling in a new book he is creating. The project idea is Quick & Easy Getaways for a couple who suddenly discovers that they both have a free day coming up and have someone to watch the kids, a perfect opportunity for a quick getaway, maybe a day trip or even overnight, but where to go? This project will include a book “Quick & Easy Getaways- Michigan Back Roads”, He went over what would be included in the book for example, what fun stuff to do, where do we eat, where do we shop and where do we stay. The promotion will also include online content which will include drive times from major cities. The goal is to have several spur of the moment, Quick & Easy Getaways within 1 ½ hours of most cities. Getaway sponsor will have significant input in the content online, online and book content will be updated regularly, the book is planned for early 2018. He said to go to Michigan backroads.com and click on quick and easy getaways. He went over the costs and

what we have to do. For a town or organization there is a one-time cost of \$500.00, Businesses can have a part as well, full page online content and a section in the chapter for a cost of \$140.00 one-time fee. Rombach asked how often content is updated and Rademacher stated they are updated as often as need be, online updates don't cost anything, he does short runs on his books so they are updated as often as possible. His website gets about 6,000 visitor a month. He sends out newsletter once a month featuring 6 or 7 destinations. He would like to keep in contact via email because if it's a town that he sponsors they get looked at immediately just in case they have new information. Crandall stated he gets his emails regularly and are very informative and are constantly updated.

The consensus of the board is to have Bennett to present his information to other organizations to get them to contribute towards the cost of this advertising opportunity. Bennett stated she would take the books and explain the opportunity. Rae recommends someone from the board could go to City Council for Economic Development as promoting the town.

XIII. MS Committee Reports – Nothing to report due to time

XIV. Community Meetings Update – No update due to time

XV. Public Comment – No comment due to time

XVI. Member Comments – No comment due to time

XVII. Correspondence

A. Letter from City Attorney

XVIII. Adjournment

17-051

Moved by Baum, seconded by Steffen that the meeting be adjourned:
Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0, Vacancies:1, motion carried.

Chairperson McIsaac adjourned the meeting at 8:54 PM.

Kimberly Murphy
Deputy Clerk