

CITY OF ST. IGNACE
DDA MEETING MINUTES
February 9, 2024
City Council Chambers

Members Present: Chairman Heather Aukeman, Connie Litzner, Julie Lipnitz, Kristi Graham, Erik Heffernan.

Members Absent: none

Members Online: Pat Ramsay, Quincy Ranville, Barb Yshinski, and Cheryl Schlehuber

Staff Present: Museum Director, Tom Wyers

Staff Online: DDA Director, Ryan Sigmon

Others Present: Erich Doerr

Meeting called to order at 8:05 AM by Heather Aukeman

I. MINUTES: Motion by Lipnitz support by Litzner to accept the minutes of January 12, 2024. Motion passed.

II. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: Michigan Main Street Community

III. FINANCIAL REPORTS: Sigmon reviewed the bills and the clerk revenue and expense Reports for January 2024. Motion by Lipnitz, support by Graham to accept the financial report. Motion passed.

IV. BUSINESS:

1. Excuse Absent Board Members:

All board members were either present in person, or via Zoom.

2. Approval of Garden Contract:

Motion by Litzner, support by Lipnitz to accept the 2024-2025 Garden Contract from Cedars of Mackinac. Motion passed.

3. Location of EV Charging Stations:

Sigmon shared a letter of support he submitted to Cloverland Electric for a grant submission with EGLE they submitted for charging stations in Downtown St. Ignace. Cloverland was looking for a decision on where the station should be located if their grant submission is selected. The letter of support listed two possible locations, the St. Anthony Rock parking lot and the Ojibwa Museum of Culture parking lot. There was concern with the museum's limited parking if this location was selected. Graham brought up that the upper St. Anthony Rock parking area is currently a hangout spot for teenagers, so this could be a potential issue in the future if the upper lot was selected. Aukeman suggested we could recommend the lower lot in the St. Anthony Parking Lot if there is flexibility with Cloverland. Schlehuber brought up some concern that we need to make sure that any EV charging

station wouldn't take away from the aesthetic of St. Anthony Rock. Motion by Graham, support by Lipnitz to recommend to council that the proposed EV charging stations be located somewhere in the St. Anthony Rock parking lot Motion passed.

4. DDA Social Media Pages:

Sigmon stated that he was interested in creating a Facebook page for the DDA, where he could share information about businesses and events in downtown. Currently all DDA social media was through the main city Facebook page. Litzner asked how we would handle comments, especially with recent happenings on the City Council meeting zoom call. Motion by Litzner, support by Graham to allow Sigmon to start a DDA Facebook page, beginning with comments being tuned off and seeing how it goes. Motion passed.

5. Michigan Main Street Community:

Sigmon shared information related to the Michigan Main Street program and to see if the board wanted to move forward with the program, which would require the board to complete some training but would open up grant opportunities to the DDA. Litzner shared that being a Main Street community gives the city more points when applying to be redevelopment ready. There was a collective response to move forward with this program by the board.

6. DDA Director Report:

Sigmon stated that all of the board walk donor boards from the Huron Waterfront Boardwalk at Conner's have arrived and would be installed this week. There are currently five property owners who either have an expired boardwalk lease with the city, or one that will be expiring at the end of April. Chuck Palmer is currently reviewing past lease agreements to make sure the verbiage could be used again. Sigmon met with Lindsey Clark from the MEDC on Monday, February 5th to discuss Public Spaces Community Places for our potential dog park project. She thought it would be a good fit for this program, as there have been other dog parks funded through it. Next steps if we decide to use Public Spaces Community Places would be submitting an application through Patronicity. Sigmon met with Scott Marshall and Cathy Lamb on Tuesday, February 6th to discuss the proposed location at LBE. Initial thoughts on this location are positive. Sigmon asked the board to review the LBE plaque proof by Arrow Signs. An agreement was signed by Pat Ramsay on January 25, 2024 and submitted to the Chamber of Commerce and City Clerk's Office. We have until March 1, 2024 to be out of the office. Sigmon is working with Rudyard Electric and Mark and Sons to answer questions from Vortex the manufacturer of the Splash Pad, which are needed in order to have the Splash Pad fully functional again. We Build Fun is working on an updated quote with our previous recommendations, along with an option for our DPW to install it. Should have the quote in the next week or two. Sinclair Recreation will be in town on February 19th to view the site and provide an updated quote with our recommendations. Sigmon

shared that he is wanting to go to attend the MDA workshop on March 6, which the board supported him doing. Lastly, he shared he was looking into QGiv as a donation platform for the museum.

7. Museum Director Report:

Wyers shared that he was about half moved out of the Chamber Office space, and he didn't see any issues with hitting the March 1 move out date. PBS Under the Radar program made it up and filmed at the museum, and will be airing Thursday, February 29th at 8:30. Wyers shared that he has connected with the French Heritage Corridor who are a national group who promote French Heritage sites. Right now, St. Ignace is not on their site, but Mackinac City is. They are interested in knowing if we would like to form a partnership with them where the museum would be featured on the site. Chief Wawatam statue has been picked up and had been in the museum. Sigmon contacted Wyers to see if he could be repaired. The statue is infested with ants. A committee has been formed to fix the statue. The statue needs to be fumigated, along with the museum. Wyers said they will be looking where to place the statue once he is fixed, with a more visible location being desirable. The statue will be stored out of the elements during the winter moving forward. Wyers stated that they are still selling items in the store, along with setting up tours for the summer. At the Library there are two museum display cases that Wyers was unaware that items were for sale. They will be converted into display cases for artifacts for the museum instead of items for sale. Wyers said that he applied for a Michigan Arts and Culture mini grant but the museum did not receive it, but they said they told him to apply through discretionary funds and they will receive these funds. Wyers contacted Shirley Sorrels to help him with grants moving forward. Sorrels will be considered a grant coordinator for the museum.

8. Open Discussion: Schlehuber stated it looked like there was a lot going on in downtown and it's nice seeing contractors at the Pavilion for the upcoming Salty Mac Brewing Company, along with the news about the Theater and Film Festival she is seeing a positive uptick in downtown. Wyers said that he has discussed with the library about playing the movie "The Return" that the museum sponsored along with Cedar Tree.

9. Public Comment: None

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:23 AM

Respectfully Submitted by Ryan Sigmon