

**Approved
Downtown Management Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 15, 2019
Commerce One, 901 Saginaw Street. ~ 8:00 am**

The regular meeting of the Downtown Management Board was called to order at 8:01 a.m. by Chairman Dinauer. Members present were:

Mike Bacigalupo	Susan Fassbender	Jim Goodrow
Tara Welch	Avram Golden	Barb Engelhardt-Carter
Shirley Roberts	Dennis Dinauer	

The following were absent: Terri King, Alan LaFave, Commissioner Kerice Basmadjian and Commissioner David Terrasi

Also Present:

Sara Dimitroff, City of Bay City
Suzanne Maxwell, Executive Director
Matthew Kowalski, Administrative/Marketing Specialist
David Quimby and Jennifer Hobkirk, Weinlander Fitzhugh

PUBLIC INPUT

Fassbender began by saying many of her customers and visitors to Downtown Bay City have expressed to her how much they've liked the holiday tree and lights left up for the holidays. Maxwell thanked everyone responsible for making them look great and noted that the DMB won the 2018 2nd Ward Christmas Lighting Contest.

PRE-NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

Chairman Dinauer stated that King and LaFave notified DMB staff of their absences.

ORGANIZATION

Chairman Dinauer presented the Consent Agenda items 1-2 under Organization and asked the Board to review. Motion to approve the consent agenda by Roberts, supported by Engelhardt-Carter. Motion unanimously approved. Downtown Development Authority minutes and financial statements were presented for review. Representatives from Weinlander Fitzhugh, David Quimby and Jennifer Hobkirk, presented the board with an overview of their findings of the 2017-2018 financial audit performed October 29-31. Motion to approve by Bacigalupo, supported by Roberts. Motion unanimously approved.

DMB DIRECTOR VACANCY

Maxwell tells the board that Andrew Heppner of Populace Coffee and Rachael Reh of the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce have both applied and will fill the two vacant seats on the Downtown Management Board after being sworn in.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Santa's Arrival at Wenonah Park, along with the lighting of the holiday tree took place Friday, November 23 at 7 pm, with hundreds in attendance. The Nickless Family Community Pavilion

hosted Santa after his arrival, and kicked off the seasonal ice skating the same evening, which resulted in a packed house. Maxwell noted that the Marketing/Events Committee is planning a block party for 2019 Santa's Arrival.

Sundays in the City, November 25 - December 16 was a success with positive merchant and visitor feedback. The event featured merchant sales, movies at the State Theatre, Sleigh of Gifts, and carriage rides. The event was advertised via social media, permission based email, Santa Buck inserts in local newspapers, and on WNEM TV5.

The new Marketing & Events Committee is finalizing the 2019 Downtown calendar of events. New activities in the winter months include a Lifestyle & Wellness Weekend, January 11 & 12, a Hot Chocolate Hop Saturday, February 2. Other events discussed were a 5K "fun run", as well as a New Year's Eve Celebration in Wenonah Park on December 31.

The 11th annual Indulge event takes place Saturday, February 9th. This popular event features over 20 participating businesses and give customers a chance to win over 300 in store prizes, as well as a grand prize of a one night stay at the Doubletree Hotel and \$100 in Downtown Bay City gift certificates.

We continue to provide Downtown information using social media: the Downtown Facebook page now has 20,500+ Followers and Instagram has 4,220+ Followers. The DMB also has over 14,500+ permission-based emails. Kowalski presented social media analytics to board, noting the Instagram followers have become more engaged with content, especially as it pertains to "Meet the Merchant" posts and event information.

New businesses: Barbecue BC, located at 818 Washington Avenue, is expected to opened in January 2019. The owner of the business, Tim Schmidt, is a Bay City resident. Wrapin-n-Rollin recently opened in City Market, 401 Center Ave., and features made to order sandwich wraps.

DMB 2019 GOALS/INITIATIVES

Dinauer noted there is a lot happening in the upcoming calendar year and begins by highlighting some important actions. Dinauer pointed out Business Retention, with the Board members themselves being active throughout Downtown meeting fellow merchants and collecting information. The purpose is to have honest discussions with a main focus on the feedback provided. Dinauer says this has happened in the past and it is time to begin taking these steps again. Maxwell reported that teams, interview questions and merchant packets will be presented at the February DMB meeting.

Dimitroff explains she is working on a business owners handbook and this information could be very helpful for its success. Bacigalupo believes this initiative could be echoed by the Downtown Development Authority in collaboration. Golden suggests creating a welcome or goodbye packet from the board members themselves to new or leaving merchants. Golden also shares he believes Downtown Bay City brochures should be more present throughout the entire state of Michigan, not just the Great Lakes Bay region.

Dinauer says the next initiative would be the creation of new events, with a major emphasis on a New Year's Eve celebration at Wenonah Park in Downtown Bay City. Bacigalupo explains this is not to mirror exactly what Midland does for New Year's Eve. Current intentions are to make

this a free event that is family friendly with music, ice skating, fireworks, possibly a beer tent and food trucks. Bacigalupo believes we should keep it easy and inexpensive for an inaugural celebration, but to build upon it and make it an annual staple for Downtown Bay City events.

Dinauer explained to the board the importance of Downtown Beautification and wants to see an uptick in participation and efforts to create an enhanced vision of Downtown Bay City. Maxwell suggests creating contests between merchants to incentivize beautification, possibly including a floral-based summer imitative and a winter decoration contest.

Maxwell shares that she met with Alex Webber of Outdoor Adventures who says part of their strategic planning for the year includes more volunteering, which could directly correlate to the Downtown beautification efforts. Dimitroff shares that Real Flavors has also expressed interest in giving back to the city. Maxwell requested forming a subcommittee for downtown beautification helping to plan projects and find focus points throughout downtown; Dimitroff and Engelhardt-Carter volunteer.

DDA UPDATE

Maxwell shares the Downtown Development Authority's 2019 goals and initiatives, beginning with revamping the Wenonah Park entrance. This project is still seeking funding and would provide a welcoming archway, new stairs, fencing, etc. Another focus for the DDA is Form Based Codes, implementing the Façade program again to Downtown Bay City. The goal of this would be to help owner with matching funds.

Rod Hildebrandt approached the Downtown Development Authority with a suggestion of adding a "Welcome to Downtown Bay City" archway, focusing on specific entrances to guide visitors Downtown. Goodrow cites the overpass on I-75 near Auburn Hills which is beautiful and draws great attention to the town.

Bacigalupo explains another DDA goal of alley improvements. He recalled discussions taking place around five years ago with plans in place, but never had been executed after. The DDA has expressed a desire to bring this back to work on beautification of our Downtown alleys. This would be a program that is collaboratively funded between the DDA and the respective business owners.

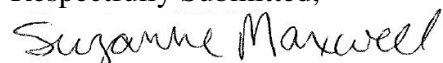
ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Maxwell reminded the board that representatives from The Michigan Economic Development Corporation will be in Bay City on Tuesday, January 29 at 8:00 am to explain the fundamentals of the Michigan Main Street program.

ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, meeting adjourned at 9:13 am

Respectfully Submitted,



Suzanne Maxwell
Executive Director