

**Approved
Downtown Management Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 17, 2019
Commerce One, 901 Saginaw Street. ~ 8:00 am**

The regular meeting of the Downtown Management Board was called to order at 8:04 a.m. by Chairman Bacigalupo. Members present were:

Mike Bacigalupo	Susan Fassbender	Jim Goodrow
Tara Welch	Avram Golden	Paul McGinnis
Alan LaFave	Sara Dimitroff	Ali Smith
Andrew Heppner	Barb Engelhardt-Carter	

The following were absent: Rachael Reh

Also Present: Suzanne Maxwell, Executive Director
Matthew Kowalski, Administrative/Marketing Specialist

PUBLIC INPUT

Fassbender asked how the Downtown Management Board can help the Midland Street district, noting declining business and visitors. Sara Dimitroff noted that help is available to Midland Street district. Engelhardt-Carter noted the recently completed renovations to Realtor Park and hope that could attract business to west side area. Welch mentioned Art Around the City near Midland Street at the Sage Library.

Maxwell stated that she will attend the next Midland Street Management Board meeting to answered any questions and offer assistance.

NEW DIRECTOR INTRODUCTION

Ali Smith from Ayre/Rhinehart Bay introduced himself as the newest member of the Downtown Management Board.

Heppner present via telephone at 8:17 am

ORGANIZATION

Chairman Bacigalupo presented the Consent Agenda items 1-2 under Organization and asked the Board to review. Motion to approve the consent agenda by Engelhardt-Carter, supported by Welch. Motion unanimously approved. Downtown Development Authority minutes and financial statements were presented for review. Maxwell reported that Weinlander/Fitzhugh will be conducting the annual audit beginning October 22. Once completed, a representative of the firm will attend meeting and present findings.

“OPEN SUNDAY” SUBCOMMITTEE

Heppner shared with the board the “Open Sundays” initiative for Downtown Bay City. The goal is to get 90% of businesses to open during an agreed upon window. Heppner hopes this will improve the chances of City Market staying open on Sunday as well. The sub-committee put out

a survey in which to take data to present to businesses that may be on the fence. Heppner wants to see businesses Downtown thriving on Sundays. Bacigalupo noted there are church services on Sundays that host large groups with limited options to stay Downtown on Sundays currently, would like to see this movement happen. Heppner shared that Sundays are one of his busiest days, and believe some merchants are wasting 52 revenue days that they currently pay rent for. Heppner also shares the stigma that Downtown seems to be closed on Sundays, and would like to see that change. Maxwell shared that Sundays in the City is not far away and hopefully the trend can continue afterward as well. LaFave suggested starting a branding campaign. Maxwell suggested having events on Sunday to show people that stores are open..

Heppner exited phone call at 8:35am.

MARKETING & BUSINESS UPDATES

Downtown Marketing & Business Activities:

Wine Walk will take place September 19, 5:00 - 9:30 pm featuring wine and appetizer samples from 16 participating bars/restaurants. Tickets are available and usually sell out. Welch notes that artists will be outside of some businesses painting a scene, to add some artful interaction to the popular event. Golden wants to have galleries open during Wine Walk. Smith says a photobooth/backdrop somewhere may be fun for attendees.

A Taste of Downtown Bay City took place Saturday, August 24 under the Nickless Family Community Pavilion in Wenonah Park. The event hosted 720+ guests that highlighted Downtown Bay City restaurants and specialty food shops and featured a cash bar.

Fall into Autumn Open House took place September 6 -7, with 30+ participating businesses featuring Fall offerings.

Welch shares that Studio 23 is co-hosting Treats & Treasures with The DMB Saturday, October 26. This is a free and safe event for families to visit the area. Welch noted that she is seeking candy donations and will be creating a flyer soon, and has all of City Market participating in the event.

The Marketing & Events Subcommittee began planning Sundays in the City, scheduled for December 1 - 22.

Santa's Arrival, November 29th, is the unofficial kickoff to the Downtown holiday shopping season. The event will have more of a festival style atmosphere with food trucks, additional activities for kids, a warming tent and carriage rides.

Business News:

MI Table, a farm to table style restaurant, is open 213 Center Avenue. The restaurant is located inside the Legacy. Retro Rocks bar is opening at 708 Saginaw Street, in the former location of Rattlesnake Rick's. Date TBD. Little Shop Boutique, 107 Fifth Street, is closing in the near future. The Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and Bay Future have relocated to the Mill End Lofts building at 812 Water Street. The offices of the DDA/DMB will remain at Commerce One, which will undergo interior renovations in the near future. Maxwell added that the offices will relocate to the front of the building.

We continue to provide Downtown information using social media: the Downtown Facebook page now has 21,900+ Followers and Instagram has 4,900+ Followers. The DMB also has over 14,500+ permission-based emails

Welch discussed with the board a MCACA grant for project support in 2020. This art grant can be used to promote public engagement, arts, murals, etc. An example was a previous community had redesigned the power boxes throughout their district in an artful manner. She explained that the DMB has to be the one to apply, and can ask for \$5-30k in 1-to-1 matching funds. Golden suggests using billboards for murals, where they can be changes easily. Welch explains that Alpena designed displays on the windows of all closed storefronts.

Maxwell noted that placing art in underutilized spaces, or areas that are poised for growth are worth considering as well.

DMB SPECIAL ASSESSMENT RENEWAL UPDATE

Maxwell shares the Special Assessment board will be meeting at 2:00pm in room 306, September 17th, 2019. The plan that the DMB has previously approved, proposing an equal 5 mils throughout the district will be presented.

WENONAH PARK FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Maxwell reported after presenting to foundations for grant funding, it was brought up that the plaza areas inside Wenonah Park are recommended to be updated prior to the entrance project. Maxwell shared that she will submit the project to the upcoming Leadership Bay County group to see if they would be interested in revitalizing the area. The area is old and dated, and DDA is looking to brighten up the area to make it more inviting, which could include many possibilities. Maxwell says this would be a positive addition to the plans moving forward with the completion of the entire park. Bacigalupo shares that the Downtown Development Authority is looking to add a small play structure in Wenonah Park for children, more details to come.

MDA ANNUAL MEETING

Maxwell shares with the board the MDA annual meeting is November 7-8 in Holland, MI, noting some great workshops and speakers that will be presenting.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Fassbender shares that she has sold her business, Asian Noodle, and will be closing with the buying in the coming week. Though there will be new owners, they will remain open.

ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the Downtown Management Board, meeting adjourned at 9:14am.

Respectfully Submitted,



Suzanne Maxwell
Executive Director