

**City of Ithaca**  
**Downtown Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 12, 2021; 12:00 PM**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:11 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

**Members Present:** Kim Hodge, Kevin Collison, Marci Browne, Janet Strong and Mayor Alice Schafer.

**Members Absent:** Shelly Betancourt, Deb Vusich, Rhonda Endter and Kristyn Roethlisberger.

**City Staff Present:** City Manager Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

**Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Motion by Schafer, second by Collison to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

**Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Browne, second by Collison to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting minutes held on December 7, 2020; motion carried.

**Public Comment:** No public comment was offered.

**Old Business**

No old business

**New Business**

- a. **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 12/3/20 – 4/7/21, balance sheets, and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 3/31/21. After discussion, motion by Collison, second by Schafer to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. **Review Proposed 2020 - 2021 Budget Amendments for Adoption.** After review and discussion, motion by Collison, second by Browne to approve the 2021-2022 budget amendments as presented; motion carried.
- c. **Review Proposed 2021 - 2022 Budget for Adoption.** City Manager Conn reviewed the billboard revenue and sharing the cost for the downtown flowers since the IPC will not be paying for them this year due to restructuring the committee and a lack of funds. He also pointed out that the DDA had more expenditures than revenue for the past 3 years. Collison stated concern that the DDA may be in jeopardy if we continue

- on this path. After discussion, motion by Schafer, second by Collison to waive the Farmers Market vendor fee for 2021 only; motion carried. After discussion, motion by Collison, second by Browne to raise the billboard advertising fee to \$3000 (\$1500 per ad); motion carried. After discussion, motion by Schafer, seconded by Collison to pay \$500 toward the downtown summer flowers and \$200 towards the fall mums; motion carried. After review and discussion, motion by Collison, second by Browne to approve the 2021-2022 budget with changes; motion carried.
- d. DDA Dollars Incentive Program. The initial implementation of the DDA Dollars Program for employees, board members and volunteers was a huge success. This program helped stimulate revenue for businesses in our community. Since then, the Ithaca Rotary Club inquired about and purchased DDA Dollars to give to the employees of the Ithaca schools. The City is seeking approval of the DDA to continue this program and make it available to other organizations and individuals. Charging a handling fee was discussed. After discussion, motion by Schafer, second by Browne to approve continuing the DDA Dollars Program; motion carried.
- e. 2021 Farmers Market Vendor Fee. Last year the Board decided to waive the \$10 vendor fee for the farmers market in hopes to attract more vendors and increase the number of people who visit the market each week and it proved to be successful. In lieu of COVID, the Board unanimously thought waiving the fee again this year would be a good gesture. After discussing the expense of the market with no revenue coming in the vendor fee will be reinstated next year. After the discussion, motion by Schafer, second by Collison to waive the vendor fee for the 2021 Farmers Market season; motion carried.
- f. Update on Downtown Apartments and New Businesses. DDA Coordinator Moffit informed the Board that Gemini's downtown apartments are finished and all but two were rented. Pellerito's Law Office moved from 127 E. Center to 146 E. Center, Unit L and William Wesenberg purchased 125 & 127 E. Center from Troy Anderson. Jordan Swisher, owner of Next Level Nutrition is waiting on construction and is hoping to open mid-April at 146 E. Center, Unit M. Patrick Wojtowicz, owner of Kingdom Tattoo Co. and his daughter Gabby Pryor, owner of Salon 12 Twenty will be sharing space at 105 E. and have an opening date set for May 3<sup>rd</sup>. And lastly, Jessica Williams, owner of Rusted Roses purchased the building at 129 E. Center. She has hired contractors to repair the roof and brick on the outside of the building. She will renovate the upstairs into apartments first and then plans to open an antique store on the main floor. Browne reported that 153 E. Center was purchased Patti Warnke and Spa Nova & Waxroom plans to keep their business there. Great things are happening in our downtown!

### **Staff Updates**

City Manager Conn discussed the budget shortfall that the DDA has encountered for the past 3 years. Options to raise revenue were discussed. Manager Conn also met with Ryan Smith and he may be interested in Dan Dinsmore's building at 106 E. Center. He also informed the Board that DPW Director, Bob Studt is retiring and his last day is May 2<sup>nd</sup>. A luncheon is being planned in his honor with more details to come.

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted promoting our businesses, the DDA Dollars Incentive Program, informing businesses of upcoming grants and opportunities, the art banners for downtown will go up this year, preparing for this year's farmers market and contacting new business owners. Congratulations to Country Chef Café, Four7, Grub A Dubs Restaurant, Los Hermanos, Bones and Pins Bar & Grille who were each awarded \$10,000 from the Small Business Survival Grant.

### **Roundtable Discussion**

Browne stated that Corey Bailey of Commercial Bank was instrumental in assisting the businesses with grant applications. Hodge reported that she also received grant monies from the Payroll Protection Program. Mayor Schafer relayed that The Morning Sun had an article about E&S Graphics.

### **Public Comments**

No public comment was offered.

### **Adjournment**

Being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

The next DDA Public Informational and Regular Meeting will be scheduled for \*June 14, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.

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Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

*\*A portion of the agenda will be dedicated for public information as required by the State of Michigan, which allows the public to be informed and provide input on the goals and direction of the DDA, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.*