

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 3rd. 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 2nd. 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.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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.*

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Informational Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2021; 12:00 PM

DDA Members Present: Shelly Betancourt, Kevin Collison, Kim Hodge, Deb Vusich, Rhonda Endter and Mayor Alice Schafer.

Members Absent: Marci Browne, Janet Strong and Kristyn Roethlisberger.

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

Public Present: Lexi Endter.

The purpose of these meetings is to inform, discuss and take comments from the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.

Review of DDA Goals, Direction and Projects

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit reviewed the DDA Goals & Insights. Several topics from the list of DDA goals, potential threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses were revised and updated.

Programs & Activities for 2021

Each of the programs and activities were reviewed and discussed. Although some of the activities had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are several that will still be able to be carried out. We also discussed potential activities for the upcoming season and goals to pursue.

Public Comment

No public comment offered.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2021; 12:00 PM

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:47 p.m. by Vice Chair Kim Hodge.

Members Present: Kim Hodge, Kevin Collison, Shelly Betancourt, Deb Vusich, Rhonda Endter and Mayor Alice Schafer.

Members Absent: Janet Strong, Marci Browne and Kristyn Roethlisberger.

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

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion by Betancourt, second by Vusich to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Collison, second by Betancourt to approve the minutes from the DDA Regular Meeting minutes held on April 12, 2021; motion carried.

Public Comment: No public comment was offered.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

New Business

- a. **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 4/12/21 – 6/16/21, balance sheets, and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 5/31/21. After discussion, motion by Betancourt, second by Collison to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. **Board Member Terms Expiring.** Board members Rhonda Endter and Kristyn Roethlisberger terms end on June 30, 2021. Neither member is seeking re-election. One position needs to have interest in a business within the DDA district and one position needs to be a resident of the DDA district. Moffit sent an email to all DDA businesses to inform them of the openings and asked the Board Members to seek interested persons.
- c. **Update on New Businesses Downtown.** DDA Coordinator Moffit informed the Board of the new businesses that have opened downtown. Next Level Nutrition, Kingdom Tattoo Co., Salon 12 Twenty and The Pink Cactus. The roof of Rusted Roses has been repaired and the Planning Commission has approved the plans for an

outside stairway next to the alley. The upstairs apartments will be renovated first and then the antique store on the main floor. A lease has been signed for 125 E. Center St. and a coffee shop will be opening. Renovations are being done and bathrooms have to be installed. They also plan to have baked goods, soups and paninis. The Chamber will be holding two ribbon cuttings, The Pink Cactus on Thursday, June 17th and Kingdom Tattoo Co. and Salon 12 Twenty on Monday, June 21st. Moffit encouraged attendance and support from our DDA Board.

- d. DDA Billboard. Letters to businesses for the opportunity to advertise on the DDA billboard will go out in June and will be chosen at the September 13, 2020 meeting.

Staff Updates

City Manager Conn stated that the Council approved the sidewalk renewal and it will be on the ballot for the November 2, 2021 State General Election. He will follow up on the informational meeting discussion of a splash park, parking for downtown tenants and signage near the expressway. Her further explained the regulations that MDOT has for signage on state owned roadways.

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted advertising for and promoting our businesses, the ongoing DDA Dollars Incentive Program, continue to inform businesses of upcoming grants and opportunities, coordinate for the art banners to be put up downtown, coordinate for the farmers market, represent the DDA at IPC meetings and delivering welcome packets to new downtown businesses.

Roundtable Discussion

Moffit thanked Endter for her commitment and service on the DDA Board for the past four years and always welcome her input.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

The next DDA Public Informational and Regular Meeting will be scheduled for *September 13, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

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.*

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Informational Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2021; 12:00 PM

DDA Members Present: Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Deb Vusich and Mayor Alice Schafer. Shelly Betancourt via zoom.

Members Absent: Kevin Collison, Janet Strong.

City Staff Present: DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

Public Present: Jared Macha, Rhonda, Lexi and Drew Endter.

The purpose of these meetings is to inform, discuss and take comments from the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.

Review of DDA Goals, Direction and Projects

DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit reviewed the DDA Goals & Insights. Topics from the list of DDA goals, potential threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses were discussed. Continued interest for a splash park was brought up and discussed.

Programs & Activities for 2021

The updated list of programs and activities were reviewed and discussion was held. The Farmers Market is going extremely well this year with no vendor fees being charged. The US-127 Motor Tour was a big success with approximately 255 vehicles in attendance and many of our downtown businesses had merchandise for sale outside or were promoting themselves. It is good to see an increase in participation from our businesses. Fourteen Ithaca businesses sponsored lamppost downtown to decorate for Fall, along with several businesses and people who donated decorations. The Keg has been purchased and will be reopening. There were twenty teams for the golf outing that was put on by the Ithaca Promotional Committee along with the Rock the Block community event, the City-Wide Garage Sales and Quilt Exhibit. Main Street Pizza did some painting to spruce up their storefront. There is potential for additional activities, however, we had many successful events so far this year. The come back from many events being canceled due to COVID-19 is very encouraging.

Public Comment

No public comment offered.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2021; 12:00 PM

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by Vice Chair Kim Hodge.

Members Present: Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Deb Vusich and Mayor Alice Schafer. Shelly Betancourt via zoom.

Members Absent: Kevin Collison, Janet Strong.

City Staff Present: DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion by Browne, second by Vusich to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Browne, second by Schafer to approve the minutes from the DDA Regular Meeting minutes held on June 14, 2021; motion carried.

Public Comment: No public comment was offered.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

New Business

- a. Board Vacancies. Jared Macha, Branch Manager of Isabella Bank, has turned in a DDA Board Application which will be submitted to the City Council for approval. There is still one seat available which has to be a resident of the DDA district.
- b. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 6/1/21 – 8/31/21, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 6/30/21. After discussion, motion by Vusich, second by Browne to approve the financial reports; motion carried. Suggested by Browne to send an email to Ithaca businesses and remind them that the DDA Dollars Incentive Program is still available.
- c. DDA Billboard. There were five businesses who submitted interest to be on the DDA Billboard for the 2021-2022 year. After much discussion and decision, motion by Schafer, second by Browne for Ric's Food Center and Mills Excavating and Civil Services to be on the billboard for 2021-2022; motion carried.
- d. Update on New Businesses Downtown. DDA Coordinator Moffit reached out to Samantha Campbell of Humbly Rooted Café. They had to repurchase some of their equipment after inspections. She is hoping for an October opening date.

- e. After speaking with Jessica Williams of Rusted Roses she is still waiting on final bids from the contractors. Once the final bids are turned in, she will forward them to MEDC for assistance with grant money. This process could take six to eight months. There was talk that Grub-A-Dubs Restaurant had closed. Moffit will reach out owner Bob Milks to confirm. It was confirmed that Biggby Coffee was opening a store in Ithaca. They will be leasing the front of Mills Excavating where Pro Hardware use to be. Troy Andersen of Andersen Carpet and Tile said that he and Cindy Taylor of Dream Works Resale Shoppe had signed a purchase agreement. The plan is for them to move their store from the Villages Shoppes to across the street. Vusich stated that the Village Shoppes was a great place to have the quilt exhibit for the Rock the Block party and should be utilized more for other kinds of activities. Moffit visited the downtown businesses and encouraged them to promote themselves during the Rock the Block party and the US-127 Motor Tour. Several of them set up tables outside their business with their merchandise.

- f. Farmers Market Vendor Fees. It had been suggested by Browne that instead of charging the vendors the \$10 weekly fee for the Farmers Market that we see if there would be enough businesses willing to sponsor the Farmers Market to cover the costs for the year. In return, there would be a sign to promote and thank the businesses for their sponsorship. There have been more vendors this year then we have ever had in the past. The hope is for it to continue to grow. Moffit will get with the Treasurer to find out what the yearly expenses are for the market so discussions can be held at our next meeting.

Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted advertising for and promoting our businesses, coordinate and promote the famers market, send businesses information regarding the DDA billboard, represent the DDA at IPC meetings and attend events, laminate newspaper articles about our businesses for them, assist in organizing the US-127 Motor Tour, giving welcome packets to new businesses and inform our business and the public of what the purpose is for the DDA and the vacancies that are available.

Roundtable Discussion

Schafer thanked Jared Macha for his application for the DDA Board vacancy. All are looking forward to working with him. One vacancy is still open for a DDA district member. Applications are on the city's website or can be picked up at city hall.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for December 13, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2021; 12:00 PM

Prior to the meeting, City Clerk Cathy Cameron administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed DDA Board member Jared Macha, Ithaca Isabella Bank Manager.

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:08 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

Members Present: Kevin Collison, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha, Janet Strong, Deb Vusich and Mayor Alice Schafer.

Members Absent: Shelly Betancourt and Marci Browne.

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

Approval of Meeting Agenda

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

Approval of Informational & Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Vusich, second by Collison to approve the Informational and Regular DDA Meeting minutes from September 13, 2021; motion carried.

Public Comment: No public comment was offered.

Unfinished Business

- a. 2022 Farmers Market. The DDA Board discussed several ideas, thoughts and options for the planning of the 2022 Farmers Market. After discussion it was decided that a \$100 fee per space would be charged for seasonal vendors or a \$10 fee would be charged for weekly vendors. Registration forms and vendor fees to be paid prior to set up on market day. The first week will be offered for free to each vendor attending the market. There was discussion in regards to Ithaca businesses sponsoring the Farmers Market to help with yearly expenses. In return we would purchase a banner and display their logos at the pavilion. Collison graciously offered to sponsor \$500 on behalf of Commercial Bank. Moffit will email all the Ithaca businesses to see if they would like to be a sponsor. The flowers purchased in the spring for the downtown flower pots was also briefly discussed.

New Business

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 9/1/21 – 12/8/21, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 10/31/21.

After discussion, motion by Collison, second by Vusich to approve the financial reports; motion carried.

- b. DDA Meeting Dates for 2022. After review, Motion by Vusich, second by Macha to approve the 2022 DDA Informational and Regular meeting dates; motion carried.
- c. 2021 Audit Financial Statement. Motion by Collison, second by Hodge to acknowledge and accept the 2021 Audit Financial Statement; motion carried.

Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report and highlighted the Ithaca Promotional Committee for the wonderful job they did organizing the “Our Hometown Ithaca Christmas” event and the immense support received from the community.

Manager Conn shared that he and Moffit had attended the Ribbon Cutting for the new owners of The Keg Party Store and it was a great turn out. Also, Healthy Horizon Nutrition, who purchased Next Level Nutrition, has applied for a permit to install a new sign for their business. They will be scheduling a Ribbon Cutting in the near future. Trident Manufacturing will be expanding to have space for material storage and Misenhelder Welding is looking to construct a new building too. Manager Conn announced that Alison Jerome is the new council member who replaced Scott Gray who did not seek reelection.

Mayor Schafer shared that the Laundromat is in the process of constructing a new storage facility. In discussion it was shared that the Jerky Man’s Shack had closed its business.

Roundtable Discussion

Mayor Schafer stated that the City Council is pleased with our City Manager Jamey Conn and the job he has done running the day-to-day operations of the city. Chair Strong stated that Alley T has been short staffed and has a hard time getting away to attend meetings. She has been seeking qualified people for hire. Collison agreed that it is difficult to find people who will show up for an interview or that is committed to work. He also shared that Commercial Bank is going to remodel the inside of the Ithaca branch with a new lobby, teller line, offices and conference room. The drive thru will be open during this process. Hodge concurred that it is difficult to find people who want to work. Vusich stated that skilled workers are hard to find. Manager Conn shared that there will be construction work at the south bound 1-27 and the on-ramp at Washington Road in mid-April.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, motion by Schafer, second by Collison to adjourned the meeting at 12:56 p.m.; motion carried.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for April 11, 2022 at 12:00 p.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary