



City of Marquette, MI

300 West Baraga Ave
Marquette, Michigan 49855

Meeting Minutes City Commission

Monday, March 11, 2024
6:00 PM
Commission Chambers

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Present: Davis, Hanley, Larson, Ottaway, Schloegel, Smith

Absent: Mayer

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Hanley moved to excuse Commissioner Cody Mayer due to personal reasons, seconded by Commissioner Jerney Ottaway and Carried Unanimously

Approval of the Agenda

Commissioner Jennifer Smith moved to Approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Paul Schloegel and Carried Unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Davis had no announcements.

Public Comments - Comments may not exceed three minutes per person. Please state your name and physical address when making public comments.

Margaret Brumm invited the public to an event that will be held in the lower harbor, commemorating the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic four years ago. She then advocated for the city to plant clover, rather than grass.

Public Hearing(s)

1. Downtown Development Authority TIF Plan - Roll Call Vote

Mayor Davis opened the public hearing, inviting comment from interested members of the audience.

Jen Tucker provided support for the recommendation to approve the TIF and she praised the DDA. She said that 30 years may seem like a long time, but it's really not. She said this is about the future of the district, and the City.

Nichole Durley-Rust supported the plan, and talked about downtown statistics and district needs. She highlighted the increased traffic to the downtown.

Geraldine Nault talked about the City's budget concerns. She said she lives on a fixed income, and this TIF seems like a subsidy for the DDA, but no one is

subsidizing her budget. She said the length of a 30-year TIF concerns her. Wes Pernsteiner spoke about the DDA's role in the increased vibrancy of the downtown area. He said the current TIF plan has diverted some DDA revenue away from the areas around Washington and Spring streets and into the Third Street corridor. He said that isn't equitable in the long-term and a failure to extend the TIF along Third Street would be an indication of the City's priorities. Margaret Brumm commented about the cleanliness of DDA streets, which she said could be better, and spoke about the cost of items at the farmers market. She recommended the City Commission postpone a decision on this item. Sheryl Feldman spoke about home ownership. She said she wouldn't mind extending the TIF district for a year or two, and said she thinks too much focus is placed on tourism. Libby Nelson, representing The Bodega, said the restaurant's support system is local residents, not tourists. She said tourists may not live here and may not contribute to the community year-round, but that they do provide an environment that supports the locals, including the staff at The Bodega. Fred Stonehouse said 30 years is a long time and said there is no direct connection between a tourist visiting the city and the budget of the city. Meagen Morrison expressed support for the TIF plan. She said she is a homeowner in Marquette and that she chooses to live in the city in part due to the vibrant downtown. Erica Smith said she recently closed her shop on Washington Street and said that it is clear that the Third Street corridor gets neglected, when compared to Washington. She said she supports the TIF extension. Janelle Buttery, representing Kognisjon Bryggeri, voiced support for the TIF. She said their business is focused on the locals, the residents and the community, and the tourism is a bonus.

With no one else looking to comment, Mayor Davis closed the public hearing. Commissioner Jerney Ottaway moved to approve the Downtown Development Authority TIF Plan #4 with a term ending in 2036; waive the development area citizens council requirement; direct the creation of an ad hoc committee to include City Commissioners and DDA board members, as well as City and DDA staff, to develop a revenue sharing plan prior to amending and extending the current TIF plan to 2054; and to direct the Mayor and Clerk to sign the resolution. Commissioner Paul Schloegel seconded the motion. Discussion ensued, with commissioners praising the work of the DDA and talking about the best way to facilitate an equitable TIF structure that supports the entirety of the district, while also finding a balance between the growth of the DDA and the long-term budgetary needs of the City. Commissioners noted that much of the original TIF was established more than 30 years ago, meaning that the amount of tax revenue received by the City for the existing TIF district has remained unchanged for decades. Commissioners discussed options that could help the City's general fund to realize some revenue from the area without undermining the DDA's tax capture. Following discussion, Commissioner Jennifer Smith made a motion to amend the motion on the floor to read as follows: Approve the Downtown Development Authority TIF Plan #4, however with a term ending in 2036 to match the existing timeline of the plan approved in 2010, and to further waive the development area

citizens council requirement and direct city staff to work with DDA staff and to bring back a plan to the city commission to amend and extend the TIF plan to 2054, and to direct the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the resolution.

Commissioner Paul Schloegel seconded the motion to amend, which carried unanimously.

The commission then voted on the amended motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

2. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Michael Larson moved to Approve the Consent Agenda as written, seconded by Commissioner Paul Schloegel and Carried Unanimously.

2.a. Approve the minutes of the February 20, 2024 regular Commission meeting

2.b. Approve the total bills payable in the amount of \$2,980,512.56

2.c. Carden Circus - Special Event Permit

2.d. Door and Glass Purchase

2.e. KBIC Funding for the Hospitality House of the Upper Peninsula, Inc.

2.f. KBIC Funding for the Marquette City Fire Department

2.g. KBIC Funding for the U.P. Children's Museum

2.h. Marquette Beautification and Restoration Committee, Inc. Petunia Pandemonium Project

2.i. Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Funding for the Hospitality House of the Upper Peninsula, Inc.

2.j. Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Funding for the U.P. Children's Museum

2.k. Schedule Public Hearing - Rezoning of 756 W. Washington Street

2.l. SIMP and Front/Crescent Street Sewer Extension Project

2.m. Superior Watershed Partnership Funding

New Business

3. Purchase Agreement Extension - 600 W. Spring Street

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Hanley moved to Approve the addendum to the purchase agreement with Habitat for Humanity, and authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign, seconded by Commissioner Michael Larson and Carried Unanimously.

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Margaret Brumm referred to her prior comment, when she said the DDA streets should be cleaner. She said that, after being challenged on that point, she will now be very happy to share with the City Commission how dirty the streets are.

Patricia Sala said she works downtown and does not see a lot of trash or litter. She praised the DDA for the work that they do, including trash and snow removal.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Ottaway had no comment.

Mayor Pro Tem Hanley said it was a good work session and meeting, and asked if the City Manager could share an update on the Cliffs-Dow site.

Commissioner Schloegel said he thought the meetings tonight were engaging and well-thought out.

Commissioner Smith said she was thinking about all the times this TIF conversation has come up previously. She said she is happy to finally take steps on this, and not kick the can down the road.

Commissioner Larson said, in response to a public comment from earlier in the meeting, that this plan is not being "pushed through". Rather, this has been a long and public process. He said the DDA has been planning for years, and this is the next step.

Mayor Davis said this was a very difficult, but very rewarding, meeting, and she said the topic had consumed her for the last week. She acknowledged that it has been four years since the Covid pandemic was declared.

Comments from the City Manager

City Manager Karen Kovacs discussed the TIF and commended the DDA and City staff for the work done to this point. Regarding the Cliffs-Dow site, she said the City had been negotiating with the state, working toward a plan that would site a new home for veterans on the property, and city representatives thought they were making some progress. She said the City was seeking compromise on a few points, including the ability to provide some protection to the City from any future third party liability, well as a desire to define the responsibility for any contaminated materials found on the site. She said the state is operating on a tight timeline that involves state and federal funding schedules, and representatives from the state indicated today that the plan would not be moving forward on the City property. She said the City supports the state in their future efforts to find a location for the home.

Adjournment

Mayor Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Sally Davis, Mayor

Kyle Whitney, City Clerk

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