



Marquette Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes for June 8, 2023

Call to Order

A meeting of the Marquette Downtown Development Authority (MDDA) Board of Directors was held on Thursday June 8, 2023, at the Marquette Commons. The meeting was called to order by Board President N. Durley-Rust at 8:02 a.m. with Directors A. Adan, M. Morrison, P. Sala, R. Caron, R. Stern, L. Rowland, K. Kovacs, and M. Weinrick present.

Others in attendance were Sean Hobbins-Marquette Assistant City Manager, Tara Laase-McKinney-DDA Executive Director, Michael Bradford-DDA Business Outreach & Promotions Director, and Jodi Lanciani-DDA Operations Director.

R. Stern made a motion to approve the agenda with addition of a discussion of support of the 4th of July Committee funding request. M. Weinrick seconded; motion passed.

Public Comment

Wes Pernsteiner from Ore Dock expressed concern over the impact of homeless population and requested the DDA address this as a high priority.

Chelsea Wilkinson introduced herself as the new executive director of Room at the Inn.

Consent Agenda

K. Kovacs made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the minutes from 5/11/2023, bills for approval 5/01/2023 – 5/31/2023, and financial reports as of 5/30/2023. M. Weinrick seconded; motion passed.

#9 Farms	37.00	Lake Superior Press	625.85
906 Pet Treats LLC	5.00	Lammi Fire Protection	301.25
American Welding & Gas Inc	36.64	Little Parsley Farm	55.00
Aramark	237.96	Lowe's	6,440.92
Audrey Seilheimer	1,000.00	Mares-Z-Doats Feed Supply	203.94
Bad Seed Hot Sauce	5.00	Marquette Monthly	1,192.50
Bakery Barn Yooper Yummies	12.00	New Dalton Farm	33.00
Baraga Telephone Company	17.69	North Country Disposal	455.00
Blue Cross Blue Shield	1,902.60	Northwoods Publishing, LLC	295.00
Board of Light & Power	2,474.84	OK Rental	679.24
C. Pesola LLC	1,700.00	Peninsula Fiber Network LLC	342.30

Capital One Commercial	81.72	Pileated Farms	20.00
Cardmember Service	6,081.10	Rock River Farm	80.00
Carquest	180.32	Seeds and Spores Family Farm	246.00
Case Country Farm	7.00	SEMCO	454.43
Charter Communications	59.98	Shady Grove Farm	16.00
Chesla & Associates PC	280.00	Smith Construction	6,142.86
City of Marquette	1,528.82	Staples	53.51
Cook Sign Service	4,345.00	Superior Culture	14.00
Curran & Company	620.00	Swampy Acres LLC	33.00
Dalco	149.10	T2 Systems Canada Inc.	1,900.00
Doozers	14.00	Three Sisters Farm & Forest	5.00
Fairest Promises	11.00	Tonella Farms	38.00
		Traffic & Safety Control Systems	
Foxy Flowers	9.00	Inc	950.00
French-tastic	5.00	Treasa's Treasures	23.00
Freshwind Farms	76.00	U.P. Kubota	278.62
Full Plate Farm	59.00	UP Gourmeet	80.00
Getz's Department Store	175.00	UP North Roast	38.00
Gladstone Berry Farm	37.00	UPHS Occupational Medicine	60.00
Guindon Farms	89.00	Waite, Michael	100.00
Heartland Services	1,620.35	Xerox Corporation	252.91
Integris	79.00	Yoopers Country Farms	108.00
Jesse Wright	135.00	Payroll/Benefits	35,533.22
L. Naylor Design	1,180.00	Total Expenditures	24,251.12

Presentation from Bob Doyle of Smith Group regarding a potential plan for the RAP grant application.

Old Business

Pay Station Software Upgrade: J. Lanciani provided an update as outlined in the board packet. Labor warranty expires in September, which moves project to July/Aug instead of Oct/Nov. Cost to upgrades is more than anticipated. M. Weinrick made a motion to re-approve the pay station upgrade to \$14,500. R. Stern seconded; motion passed.

New Business

Spinway MQT: R. Stern made a motion to approve the addendum of the SpinwayMQT, LLC to transfer the lease to Thomas S. Fure of MQT Bike Rentals LLC. P. Sala seconded; motion passed.

Queen City Half Marathon: M. Weinrick made a motion to approve the event support request. L. Rowland seconded; motion passed.

Nheena's Neighborhood: R. Stern made a motion to approve the event support request. P. Sala seconded; motion passed.

Special Board Meeting for Budget: N. Durley-Rust made a motion to include special budget review August 10th as part of the regular board meeting. A. Adan seconded; motion passed.

4th of July: The DDA budgeted \$5000 this year for event support grants, but thus far none of those funds have been utilized. The 4th of July committee is in need of funds for July 3rd fireworks and the July 4th sensory friendly light show on the ore dock. T. Laase-McKinney proposed a \$2000 donation from the event support grant funds and \$500 donation towards the 4th of July Parade. P. Sala made a motion to support this donation, R. Stern seconded, motion passed.

Committee Reports

Personnel & Executive: The committee met and discussed updates to the personnel policy including adding paid time off after 6 months of employment and reducing the paid time off that can be paid out at separation from 540 to 200. Other minor changes were discussed. The next step will be to have a lawyer review the policy and then present the changes to the board for approval.

TIF: The TIF committee met and went over projects and the schedule going forward. The next step will be to have a work session with the city commission, hopefully in July. Antonio commented that our consultant explained TIF well and he encouraged board members to talk to the public and businesses about TIF.

Parking: P. Sala commented that she now has a better understanding of the Vault Parking Project. There will be about 210 spaces, all of which will generate revenue. S. Hobbins commented that the design will need to be automated and self enforcing. R. Stern stated there will need to be security cameras. Other parking items discussed included the 3 pay stations that are underutilized and potential relocation options.

Business Development and Promotions: Blueberry Fest poster winner was picked - Blueberry Memories was chosen out of 21 submissions. The committee talked about a survey to be sent to business owners about Wednesday Farmer Market street closure with a plan to do a survey after 2 weeks and after 5 weeks. Music on 3rd starts next week and will have 17 locations, including 2 new locations on the north end. Social district paperwork approved for the DDA but not yet enough businesses received their approval, so we are looking at June 20th for the start date.

Director's Report: T. Laase-McKinney addressed the comment from the public about homelessness. There was a letter urging the DDA to potentially fund a staff position to come up with solutions. T. Laase-McKinney thinks this is outside of the scope of the DDA, but believes the DDA has a role in advising and working with others to solve the issue. T. Laase-McKinney reiterated the information about the social district and will reach out to MLCC about the potential start date of June 20. On June 12th, Arbor Day, there will be dedication and new trees planted at Rosewood Walkway at 1 pm. Board Members are invited to attend. The downtown flowers should be going up soon. Thanks to volunteers from North Iron Church, the Commons Parking Lot hillside has new landscaping, and the lower Bluff Ramp back wall was painted. We recently promoted a full-time employee to the maintenance mechanic position and hired seasonal part time workers. Maintenance and office are currently fully staffed.

J. Lanciani informed the board that Passport Parking App may be increasing their convenience fee but were given the opportunity to object. The DDA will be discussing their objections with Passport.

Public Comment: None

Board Member Comment: L. Rowland – Farmers Market looks great, super busy. Social district signs around town look good. P. Sala – Volunteered at FM on Memorial Weekend. Likes the rebrand, looks fresh, and it was nice to see the crowd. She appreciates posters of events and media attention around events. M. Weinrick – Attended the FM and farmers said they are selling out which is good for them and the community. N. Durley-Rust – New FM vendors appreciated. Social district signs look great. Signs up before start is good, gets people used to where the district is. Comment on homeless issue – Not the DDA responsibility to fix the issue alone. This is county wide issue, not just a downtown issue. Would like to see an advisory council from city and DDA member could be on this. R. Stern – Econo lodge is housing some of the homeless in Harvey – thus not just a downtown issue. Painting lines on upper deck of Bluff Ramp soon. He suggests arrows painted in Lower level would help traffic flow. K. Kovac –Calls for service from police regarding incidents related to homelessness have grown to about 30% of their calls. Local government wants to be part of the solution, and they are looking at forming a task force led by government, perhaps with the county. A long-term solution needs to include not only housing but also and social services and rehabilitation.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meagen Morrison



Meagen Morrison, Secretary and Jodi Lanciani, Operations Director