

FENNVILLE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

March 4, 2009 Minutes

Call to Order/Roll Call - The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Fennville DDA was held at Fennville City Hall on Wednesday, March 4, 2009. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Elice Menear at 7:02 p.m.

Members Present: Al LaShell (8:08 p.m.), Elice Menear, Tony Morgan, Dan Rastall, Mark Schrock, and Steve Valkema

Members Absent: Amy Cook, Claude Rummer

Others Present: Jim Lytle, Tasha Smalley

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comments – Lytle requested the DDA to pay for the printing costs of the Goose Gazette for the 2009 Goose Festival. He stated the Chamber is beginning a “Fennville First” campaign to encourage shopping businesses located in the Fennville area. The campaign has a set a goal of increasing local sales by 5% and will officially begin in April with an event yet to be determined. Tote bags with the Fennville First logo will be given to shoppers free of charge. He requested the DDA to pay for the costs of the bags. The cost is estimated at \$5 per bag.

The DDA discussed both projects briefly. The Promotion Committee has its regular meeting the following day. It will discuss the Goose Gazette request then and make recommendation to the DDA in April. The Economic Restructuring Committee is already working on a frequent buyer program, so it will consider at its next meeting the Chamber’s request regarding the tote bags. It will also make a recommendation to the DDA in April.

Secretary’s Report - The minutes of the February 4, 2009 meeting were presented to the board for review.

Motion: To approve the February 4, 2009 meeting minutes as presented.

Made by: M. Schrock Supported by: D. Rastall

Results: Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report – Morgan reported the cash balance as of 02/28/2009 was \$109,792.65. One invoice from Al LaShell for reimbursement for mileage and parking expenses incurred to attend the 7th Annual West Michigan Alliance conference.

Motion: To approve the payment of the invoice as presented.

Made by: D. Rastall Supported by: M. Schrock

Results: Motion carried.

Also presented were the following budget amendments:

Contract Services account increased by \$5,000 for a total budget of \$10,000.

Marketing account increased by \$1,500 for a total budget of \$6,500.

Community Promotion account increased by \$12,500 for a total budget of \$17,500.

Liability Insurance account increased by \$1,000 for a total budget of \$1,000.

Motion: To amend the budget as presented.

Made by: D. Rastall Supported by: S. Valkema

Results: Motion carried.

Communications

- A. 7th Annual West Michigan Alliance Conference – Sheaffer and Valkema presented their reports from attending the conference on March 3rd.

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- B. Letter of Resignation from Margee Overhiser
Motion: To accept, with regrets, the resignation of Margee Overhiser from the DDA.
Made by: D. Rastall Supported by: E. Menear
Results: Motion carried.
- C. Michigan Downtown Association 2009 Conference – The conference is being held April 3rd in Chelsea and will discuss downtown marketing and the Michigan Film Office. Both Schrock and LaShell expressed an interest in attending.
Motion: To send Mark Schrock and Al LaShell to the Michigan Downtown Association 2009 Conference with a registration cost of \$35 each.
Made by: D. Rastall Supported by: E. Menear
Results: Motion carried.

Old Business

- A. DDA Coordinator Job Description – The job description had been amended to incorporate the suggestions made during the last DDA meeting and presented for approval.
Motion: To approve the job description for the DDA Coordinator as presented.
Made by: D. Rastall Supported by: E. Menear
Results: Motion carried.

New Business

- A. New Candidate for Vacant Position – Tasha Smalley, owner of the new downtown business, Lucky Tee's Printing, and employee of Michigan Township Services, was present to express her interest to serve on the DDA in the term vacated by Margee Overhiser. The candidate needs the approval of the DDA and then will be officially appointed by the City Commission at its March 16th meeting.
Motion: To accept Tasha Smalley to finish the term vacated by Margee Overhiser.
Made by: M. Schrock Supported by: A. LaShell
Results: Motion carried.

Committee Reports

- A. Economic Restructuring – Menear reported the Winterlude festival had been very successful. The committee is now working on the next festival, which is Cinco de Mayo. Events and a budget are being developed. One event will be a beer garden, and the committee is getting the paperwork prepared for a one-day liquor license.
Sheaffer reported the window mural project has been stalled and requested permission to take responsibility for getting it finished. LaShell agreed to work on it as well.

The committee reviewed and updated the façade improvement loan program. It is being repackaged as well. Sheaffer also reported on the grant program for façade improvements. She requested input regarding the maximum amount allowed. Most communities limit it at \$5,000. The committee was considering \$2,500, which would allow for more grants to be offered since the total budget is \$5,000. The DDA agreed to the \$2,500 maximum amount. The grant program document will now be sent to the attorney for review.

The committee is researching the sister city program. It was originally thought to have the program in place for the Cinco de Mayo festival. However, the program is extensive, and there is not enough time to get it established for the festival.

Sheaffer reported she, Valkema and Don Riley are developing a frequent buyer program for the downtown area.

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- B. Organization – The committee is planning the first quarterly business meeting, which will be held Thursday, March 26th at the Fennville District Library. There will be a brief presentation regarding the DDA and its projects, followed by a question and answer period to discuss the needs of downtown businesses.
- C. Physical Elements – There was no meeting tonight of the committee. However, several members had met with Consumers Energy regarding decorative street lighting. Consumers Energy is currently working on a cost estimate, which will hopefully be ready by the end of the week.

Members also met with Consumers Energy regarding the placement of utilities underground in the south alley. Underground placement is appearing to be too cost prohibitive, but Consumers Energy had offered several less expensive ways of consolidating the wires in order to create an aesthetically pleasing area.

No one from Verizon showed up at the meeting scheduled with the company.

- D. Promotion – LaShell present a mock-up of the community newsletter, which will be distributed electronically by linking to the various contributing websites. He has already been in contact with the schools, the library and Fennville News.

LaShell is also redesigning the fennville.com website in order to complement the look of the newsletter. Also incorporated onto the website will be a "coupon corner" link, which takes users to coupons, discounts, etc., for the downtown businesses. Both the newsletter and new website will be presented at the March 26th business meeting. LaShell can get vinyl stickers with the fennville.com logo for distribution to downtown businesses.

Motion: To approve payment of creating vinyl stickers with the fennville.com logo not to exceed \$50.

Made by: T. Morgan

Supported by: D. Rastall

Results: Motion carried.

A marketing plan is being developed as well as a contest to name the art sculptures.

Miscellaneous – Rastall reported the City Commission is considering applying for a recreation grant to purchase property on 56th on which to develop hiking and bike trails.

Morgan discussed a letter from Karen Martin of the Center for Women in Transition and its fundraising event in April. However, the DDA is not allowed legally to contribute financially to this organization.

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m. with the next regular meeting to be held on April 1st at 7:00 p.m.

(Minutes submitted by Lisa A. Sheaffer)