

Meeting Minutes

St. Joseph Downtown Development Authority

Wednesday, March 20, 2013 1:00 PM St. Joseph City Hall

	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Members	Janet Dykstra Mary Goff Stephanie Grill Tom Jennings Deb Sailor Frank Walsh Diane Wollenslegel	Vickie Campbell
Staff:	Susan Solon, Communications & Marketing Director Derek Perry, Director of Public Works Mark Clapp, Director of Public Safety Jill Stone, Director, St. Joseph Today	

Chair Goff introduced and welcomed new board member Deb Sailor to her first meeting.

Minutes. The Minutes of the February 20, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved, as presented.

Financial Reports. Solon reviewed the February 2013 financial report with the Board and the report was unanimously approved, as presented.

General discussion about the 5-Years Goals and Objectives ensued.

Agenda Items

- Prioritizing 5-year Goals. Susan Solon reviewed the list of goals and recommendation by priority. A copy of that list is attached to the minutes. Manager Walsh offered the idea for the Board to dream bigger than normal realizing that the DDA itself cannot accomplish the goals monetarily. He noted that the City is in a good financial position to take on some of the recommended goals that seem undoable by the DDA itself. Discussion ensued to pick that one big project, such as parking lots, and concentrate on that goal and working with the City Commission with putting on their radar screen.
- Banners. Solon reviewed bids from Art & Image, Benton Harbor; Revolution Design, Benton Harbor and shared recent communication from KBW BannerWorks about their position and past issues (i.e., membership with St. Joseph Today). After some discussion, Stephanie Grill made a motion to go with Revolution Design; seconded by Diane Wollenslegel; motion unanimously passed. Further discussion revealed a general consensus with using "Pacific Blue" as the color of choice. Solon reminded the Board that going down a different path design-wise, there will have to be reimbursement to the non-profits for 50% cost of their current banners since they were used only one summer. Solon will bring back the final quote with recommended design to the April board meeting.

- Main Street Planters. Derek Perry reported that he and Kathy Burczak walked the route with Michigan Department of Transportation folks. Some recommendations by MDOT were made (i.e., height of plantings and minor adjustments for placement of two planters.) Perry has submitted a permit for approval and sees no issue with a permit being issued by MDOT. Once approval of the permit is given, planters and plants will be ordered from the manufacturer and greenhouse, respectively.
- Expanding DDA Boundaries. Protocol for the process of expanding DDA boundaries was reviewed and determined that it will take approximately six (6) months before the process is finalized. The DDA millage to include The Whitcomb will take effect in with the 2014 tax year. Chair Goff and Manager Walsh will meet with David Krock at the Whitcomb one last time before moving forward. Following that, the City Commission will be asked to set a public hearing for April 22, 2014 at 6 p.m. to receive comment about this change. If approved, an ordinance will be prepared by city staff for City Commission approval upon the appropriate time line, publishing, etc.
- Parking Committee Recommendation. Public Safety Director Clapp spoke to the Board about downtown parking and the recommendation being made to the City Commission by the Parking Board. Changes will include along Lake Boulevard, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, from all-day to 2-hour parking in order to defray beachgoers from parking on top of the bluff and walking to the beach. Permanent signage will be installed along Lake Bluff Park and the fines will remain the same as in previous years as far as costs are concerned. The second recommendation being made by the Parking Committee is to return to weekend parking enforcement from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. Director Clapp invited all to the City Commission the following Monday, March 26th, at which time he will present the recommendations to the City Commission and seek their approval.

It was recommended to travel to a community or communities where downtown employee parking has been implemented and successful. Manager Walsh will survey communities through his manager email search program and provide feedback with the possibility of visiting a community firsthand.

Stephanie Grill moved, seconded by Janet Dykstra, full support of the Parking Committee recommendations being presented to the City Commission. Motion unanimously passed; nays – none.

- Overhead Wires. Public Services Director Perry updated the DDA Board about his meeting with I & M with regard to eliminating the overhead wires in the 400 block of the alley, west of State Street. I & M advised that there are six (6) wires that are not electrified and have no use. A quote is forthcoming from I & M with cost of removing the unusable wires.

- Planes, Trains & Helicopters Public Art Display. Solon updated the DDA board about the time line for the public art kickoff and the change in marketing with less billboards and more social media with an emphasis on young parents. She further noted that sponsorships have been successful and the artists are well underway painting. The kickoff event will be held Friday night, May 17th at 5:30 p.m.
- New Business Vacancies. Jill Stone, Executive Director of St. Joseph Today, spoke of a t-shirt business moving into the old Majerek space; Moxie's Too seasonal shop recently closed; the old Verizon space is being filled by Grimm, a retail store offering signage and clothing. She noted that the old Vitale's space is rented, but unable to find out who is going in there. There is a question about Bloomies moving, but only rumor. The Volunteer Center space is vacated.
- Welcome Wagon. Jill mentioned that she is voluntarily visiting new business owners as she learns about them. She is very interested in learning more about how the Welcome Wagon works.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2013 at 1 p.m. in City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Solon
DDA Director