

**CITY OF ST. IGNACE  
DDA MEETING MINUTES  
February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
City Council Chambers**

**Members Present:** Chairman Heather Aukeman, Quincy Ranville, Erik Heffernan, Julie Lipnitz, Kristi Gustafson

**Members Absent or Online:** Cheryl Schlehuber, Tom Cronan, Barb Yshinski, Vice-Chair Pat Ramsay,

**Staff Present:** DDA Director Scott Marshall, Museum Director Shirley Sorrels, Tom Wyers

**Others Present:** Erich Doerr; St. Ignace News, Stephanie Baar, Betsy Dayrell- Hart, Clyde Hart, Tom DellMoretta, State Representative Neil Friske, and Jim Draz.

Meeting called to order at 8:00 AM by Chair Heather Aukeman

- I.     **MINUTES:** Motion by Gustafson support by Lipnitz to accept the minutes of January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Motion passed.
- II.    **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None
- III.   **FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Marshall reviewed the bills and the clerk revenue and expense Reports for January 2023. Motion by Gustafson, support by Lipnitz to accept the financial report for January 2023. Motion Passed
- IV.    **BUSINESS:**
  1. **Excuse Absent Board Members:** Motion by Gustafson, support Heffernan to excuse absent board members Schlehuber, Cronan, Yshinski, and Ramsay. Motion passed.
  2. **Welcome State Representative Neil Friske:** Marshall introduced Neil Friske. Friske gave a brief introduction and comments on his experience in Lansing being unconventional so far but that he is enthusiastic for the future. Friske said he would stay after the meeting to talk with Marshall about DDA Projects.
  3. **Marshall accepted into Michigan Downtown Association Professional Development Certificate Program:** Marshall starts training March 9<sup>th</sup> in Lansing. Aukeman noted that it appears to be a very thorough and informational training program.
  4. **Boardwalk Project Update:** Marshall updated the board on the boardwalk project specifically the fundraising campaign. Marshall had boardwalk fundraiser brochures made for the event. Marshall announced opportunity for engraved deck boards for donors. Marshall noted that 2x4 Construction donated \$5000 to the boardwalk project. Question from Jim Draz about performance areas along the boardwalk. Marshall said we hope to add those in the future but are focusing on

safety of the boardwalk first and foremost. Tom Dellamoretta concerned about tripping hazard of the engraved boards.

5. **American Legion Park Security Camera Update:** Marshall reports that the security camera invoice was paid to Mr. Burnside. The equipment has been ordered and work will begin shortly.
6. **Property Management Committee Update:** Marshall presented site plans provided by consultant Justin Knepper. The DDA Property Management Committee will meet soon. The consultant is still waiting on the estimated cost for the project. Knepper is working with an engineer to gather that information.
7. **Daughters of the American Revolution:** DAR would like to place a historical plaque in the U.P. They chose St. Ignace. Marshall said a very nice honor. No motion at this time but general board support was received.
8. **Hometown Hero Banner Program Update:** The original 2-year program is coming to an end. Tom Wyers noted that Arrow Signs can design similar banners \$140 each (less than ½ the cost of the original banners) with the added advantage of including "Thank you for your service" wording, multiple logos, and, for an extra \$10, sponsors can get a small 8x10 version of the banner for personal display. This allows for growth of the program without the need for constant grant writing. Any local family's veteran is welcome, whether or not the veteran was born in St. Ignace. Lipnitz noted that she uses a QR code generating program which provides lots of reporting data. No motion at this time but general board support was received.
9. **DDA Director Report:** Marshall is still working to meet with Mr. Azzar. Marshall is revisiting the Mainstreet Program through MEDC which opens up more grant opportunities for the community. Betsy Dayrell-Hart noted that the planning commission is working on the redevelopment ready process for the city. Schlehuber noted other local communities that have joined Mainstreet with positive results. Marshall said Mainstreet representative will attend an upcoming DDA Meeting to discuss the process. Marshall noted the MEA representative Chris Byrnes will attend the April meeting. Marshall noted that the citizen that was interested in a swing set at American Legion Park has reached out again and will discuss it at the next DDA Park Committee Meeting.
10. **Museum Director's Report:** Sorrels is excited about the Hometown Heroes Banner Program. She is working on a lot of grants including a \$25,000 Michigan Humanities Grant. She is working on three new exhibits including a Federal Policy Exhibit, Welcome to the Ojibwe World Exhibit and the Natural Healing Medicine Wheel Exhibit.
11. **Open Discussion:** None
12. **Public Comment:** Jim Drazé provided a Historical Society Update and noted that the Straits Cultural Center has recently been named as a beneficiary of federal appropriation which further closes their funding gap. The funding gap started at 5.4 million and now will be reduced to \$900,000. Mr. Drazé would like to make a presentation at the next DDA Meeting.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:45AM

Respectfully Submitted by Quincy Ranville, filling in for Barb Yshinski