

**City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2023**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:21 p.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

Members Present: Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Deb Vusich, and Jared Macha and Janet Strong.

Members Absent: Shelly Betancourt, Kevin Collison

City Staff Present: City Manager, Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator, Shelly Moffit.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion by Vusich, second by Browne to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Macha, second by Browne to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from September 12, 2022; motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business

New Criteria for Billboard Selection. At the September 12, 2022 DDA Meeting it was agreed upon to revisit and update the criteria for selecting the businesses to be on the DDA billboard. After discussion, motioned by Browne, second by Macha to adopt the following criteria when selecting businesses for the DDA Billboard; choose first from new businesses who apply, second to other businesses within the city limits, third preference given to any business who has not been selected within the past two years, and consideration taken for involvement in the community; motion carried. It was also decided that an application form be created for interested applicants to fill out.

New Business

- a. Financial Reports. The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 9/7/22 – 4/5/23, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 3/31/23. After review, motion by Vusich, second by Macha to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- b. Proposed 2022-2023 DDA Budget Amendments. After review and discussion, motion by Macha, second by Vusich to approve the 2022-2023 Budget Amendments as presented; motion carried.
- c. Proposed 2023-2024 DDA Budget. Revenue and expenditure line items were discussed including the DDA Dollars Program, DDA Billboard, the Downtown Lamppost Fall Decorating and Farmers Market sponsorships. After review and discussion, motion by Macha, second by Browne to approve the 2023-2024 proposed budget as presented; motion carried.
- d. DDA Board Terms Expiring. Terms for Board Members Collison and Vusich expire June 30, 2023. Both have submitted an Application for Appointment for an additional term.

- e. 2023 Farmers Market. Discussion was held regarding the 2022 Farmers Market and the lack of vendors who participated in comparison to 2021. Various options and scenarios for vendor fees and sponsorships were talked about for 2023. After much discussion motion by Vusich, second by Macha to waive the vendor fee and encourage more sponsorships for the 2023 Farmers Market season; motion carried. The Farmers Market guidelines were reviewed and the guidelines for nonprofit organizations was talked about. After much discussion, it was agreed to limit nonprofit organizations to three per week. They will be selected on a first come first serve basis and provided space outside the pavilion unless the pavilion is not full.

- f. Downtown Flower Quotes. Quotes from Godley's Country Floral and Twin City Landscape were submitted for the downtown flowers this year. After discussion, motion by Macha, second by Vusich to accept Godley's Country Floral quote for \$900; motion carried.

- g. Update on New Businesses. DDA Coordinator Moffit updated the Board on the following businesses: Jessica Williams of Rusted Roses is working towards renovations and is projecting an opening date of August 2023. Ashley VanCourt of Biggby Coffee is wrapping up their renovations and is hoping to open May 23rd. Dan Bail of Wagon Wheel Café is hoping to open by the end of April. Bill Wesenberg purchased the Andersen Carpet building and The Dream Works Resale Shoppe is moving from the Village Shoppes into that space. Joe and Victoria Padilla of Creative Moments is planning to move into the Village Shoppes where Dream Works was and Alex & Jenkins Law Firm is moving from the back of the Village shoppes to the front of the building. Pellerito Law Office moved out of their downtown space is now empty and for lease through Gemni Capital Management.

Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted the Art Expo Banner Project, IPC Light Canopy, vacant Wendy's building and updates on businesses.

Roundtable Discussion

No comments.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, motion by Vusich, second by Macha to adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.; motion carried.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for *June 12, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**A portion of the agenda will be dedicated for public information as required by the State of Michigan, which allows the public to be informed and provide input on the goals and direction of the DDA, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year*

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Informational Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2023; 12:00 PM

DDA Members Present: Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha

Members Absent: Janet Strong, Shelly Betancourt and Kevin Collison, Deb Vusich.

City Staff Present: City Manager Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

Public Present: None

The purpose of these meetings is to inform, discuss and take comments from the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.

DDA Goals & Insight

DDA Coordinator Moffit reviewed the DDA Goals & Insight. Topics from the list of DDA goals, potential threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses were revised and updated for the current year.

Programs & Activities for 2023

Each of the programs and activities were reviewed. We also discussed potential activities for the upcoming season and goals to pursue.

Public Comment

No public comment

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 26, 2023**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Co-Chair Kim Hodge.

Members Present: Marci Browne, Kevin Collison, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha and Deb Vusich.

Members Absent: Shelly Betancourt and Janet Strong.

City Staff Present: City Manager, Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator, Shelly Moffit.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion by Vusich, second by Browne to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Collison, second by Macha to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from April 10, 2023; motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

New Business

- **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 4/6/23 – 6/21/23, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 5/31/23. After review, motion by Browne, second by Collison to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- **Update on New Businesses.** DDA Coordinator Moffit updated the Board on the following businesses: Bigby Coffee has set their Grand Opening for July 11th. A new buffet restaurant, Wagon Wheel Café, opened in downtown on May 19th. Creative Moments has now moved into their new space inside the Village Shoppes. Roselyn's Boutiques is a new business owned by Jo Beracy who shares space with Creative Moments. The Dream Works Resale Shop is now open in their new space in the old Andersen Carpet building owned by Bill Wesenberg. He is planning to renovate the apartments above the store. Jessica Williams of Rusted Roses hopes to be open for the US-27 Motor Tour. Dan Dinsmore, owner of the Signs of the Times building has been doing some work renovating his building.
- **2023 Farmers Market.** The season has started out slowly. The time of day the Market is held was talked about. A few new vendors opted not to come back due to low sales or conflict in schedules. The SNAP program that is offered at other Farmers Markets was discussed.
- **DDA Billboard Application/Quote.** The Board reviewed the draft of the Billboard Application and approved. It will be incorporated into the process. The quote for production and installation of the billboard from Skyline Outdoor was reviewed. After discussion motion by Browne, second by Vusich to approve the Skyline Outdoor quote for \$750. Motion carried.

- DDA Goals & Insights and Programs & Activities. An informational meeting was held on June 12, 2023. Discussion and review of the programs was held and updates and revisions will be made.
- DDA Logo. A new DDA logo was presented to the Board. Motion by Collison, second by Browne to approve the new DDA logo. Motion carried.

Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted the Good Morning Gratiot New Business Awards, preparing for the Farmers Market and US-27 Motor Tour and updates on businesses.

City Manager Jamey Conn gave an opportunity for discussion on the Farmers Market. Discussion was also held in regards the condition of the vacant Sign of the Times building and the concern of the buildings connected to each side of it.

Roundtable Discussion

Browne stated that ten properties are on the market in the Ithaca school district and of those ten properties, five have pending sales.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for *September 11, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**A portion of the agenda will be dedicated for public information as required by the State of Michigan, which allows the public to be informed and provide input on the goals and direction of the DDA, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year*

City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Informational Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2023; 12:00 PM

DDA Members Present: Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha, Janet Strong, Deb Vusich

Members Absent: Shelly Betancourt and Kevin Collison.

City Staff Present: City Manager Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator Shelly Moffit.

Public Present: None

The purpose of these meetings is to inform, discuss and take comments from the public of the goals and direction of the authority, including projects to be undertaken in the coming year.

DDA Goals & Insight

DDA Coordinator Moffit reviewed the DDA Goals & Insight. Topics from the list of DDA goals, potential threats, strengths, opportunities and weaknesses were reviewed for the current year.

Programs & Activities for 2023

Each of the programs and activities were reviewed. Potential activities for the future were also discussed.

Public Comment

No public comment

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2023**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

Members Present: Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Jared Macha, Janet Strong and Deb Vusich.

Members Absent: Shelly Betancourt, Kevin Collison.

City Staff Present: City Manager, Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator, Shelly Moffit.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion by Macha, second by Vusich to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Vusich, second by Browne to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from June 26, 2023; motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

New Business

- **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 6/22/23 – 9/6/23, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 8/31/23. After review, motion by Macha, second by Vusich to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- **Update on New Businesses.** DDA Coordinator Moffit updated the Board on the following businesses: Jessica Williams has contractors in her building now working on renovations. Spoke with Mark Behm who oversees the Wendy's building for the Stanton Family Trust. The building is still for sale or lease and the price is negotiable. There have been a couple of offers made but none went through. Reached out to Dan Dinsmore with no response. We have a new business downtown called Small Town Cabin Gift Shop owned by Jo Beracy. It is located in the Village Shoppes where Daric Schaul's barber shop was. She also owns Roselyn's Boutique. Chamber Director Sara Bonacci will be setting a date for a Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening for Biggby Coffee in the near future. She will also be reaching out to Jo Beracy to schedule a Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening.
- **MIFMA Farmers Market Rapid Assessment.** The Michigan Farmers Market Association will be doing a study to see the feasibility of expanding the SNAP Program to other Gratiot County farmers markets. Information gathered from the study will be summarized in a final report.

- DDA Billboard Applications. Three applications were received this year, Ric’s Food Center, Pioneer Quick Lube and Farmers Insurance Karen Smith Agency. After discussion motion by Vusich, second by Macha to accept Pioneer Quick Lube and Farmers Insurance Karen Smith Agency’s application to advertise on the DDA billboard for 2023-2024; Motion carried.
- Mums for Downtown. The Apple Barrel was unable to get 14” mums from their regular supplier this year, however, he was able to find them from a different supplier for higher price. This would put us over budget by \$28. Motion by Browne, second by Vusich to approve the purchase of the mums for the downtown flowerpots for \$728; motion carried.

Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted the US 27 Motor Tour, the Farmers Market, the DDA Billboard, downtown businesses, and the Fall Lamppost Decorating.

City Manager Jamey Conn shared that the digital sign for the downtown corner of Pine River and Center Streets will be installed next week.

Roundtable Discussion

Browne stated that the cost to look up tax information other than your own through BS&A has increased to \$6. Other municipalities and townships pay a fee and provide BS&A tax information at no cost and asked if the City of Ithaca could look into offering that option.

Discussion was held regarding DDA meeting dates and times. It was agreed that Tuesday’s at 9:00am works better for everyone’s schedules. Moffit will look into the requirements to change the date and time.

We still have a vacancy on the board that requires a person to be a DDA district resident. Modifying the Ordinance or By-Laws to change that requirement was discussed and will be looked into.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, motion by Macha, second by Browne to adjourn the meeting at 10:15am; motion carried.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be rescheduled for December 12, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary

**City of Ithaca
Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2023**

The regular meeting of the City of Ithaca Downtown Development Authority was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Chair Janet Strong.

Members Present: Kevin Collison, Marci Browne, Kim Hodge, Janet Strong and Deb Vusich.

Members Absent: Shelly Betancourt and Jared Macha.

City Staff Present: City Manager, Jamey Conn and DDA Coordinator, Shelly Moffit.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Motion by Collison, second by Vusich to approve the meeting agenda; motion carried.

Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Browne, second by Hodge to approve the Regular DDA Meeting minutes from September 12, 2023; motion carried.

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business

- **Schedule Change of DDA Meetings.** At the September 12, 2023 DDA meeting it was suggested to change the day and time of the meetings to better accommodate board members' schedules. After discussion, motion by Vusich, second by Browne to revise the DDA meeting dates to the second Tuesday of March, May, August, and November and set the meeting time to 10:30 a.m.; motion carried.
- **Amend DDA By-Laws.** Motion by Collison, seconded by Browne to amend the DDA By-Laws to reflect the new schedule to meet quarterly of the following months: March, May, August, and November.

Motion carried by roll call vote:

Yes: (5) Browne, Vusich, Hodge, Collison, Strong

No: (0) None

Absent: (2) Betancourt, Macha

New Business

- **Financial Reports.** The Board reviewed the DDA check register from 9/7/23 – 12/6/23, balance sheets and revenue/expense reports for the period ending 9/30/23. After review, motion by Collison, second by Vusich to approve the financial reports; motion carried.
- **2022-2023 audit.** The final audit for 2022-2023 has been filed. A copy is provided for informational review.

- Update on New Businesses. DDA Coordinator Moffit updated the Board on the following businesses: Jessica Williams of Rusted Roses is still in the process of renovations. Fortney Ward of Lace and Grace Clothing Company opened in the former Dicks Studio building. Robert and Karen Smith purchased 106 E. Center St., the former Sign of the Times building with plans to renovate. Rachel Shoemaker and Lisa Reidit opened The Bulldog Group-Five Star Real Estate at 108 E. Center St. Gemini Capital Management has leased the 146 E. Center St. space; however, it is unknown what business is going in there.
- MIFMA Farmers Market Rapid Assessment. The Michigan Farmers Market Association's Rapid Market Assessment Final Report for the Ithaca Farmers Market was submitted. This information will be used to determine the feasibility of expanding SNAP to the Alma and Ithaca Farmers Markets.
- 2024 Farmers Market Fee. In 2023 the Board decided to waive the \$10 vendor fee and seek sponsorships from local business to help cover expenses. Along with the sponsorship, a banner with their logo would be on display at the pavilion. This was very successful and generated \$1900 in revenue. After discussion, motion by Vusich, second by Collison to waive the vendor fee once again for 2024 and seek sponsorships to cover expenses; motion carried. Vusich suggested reaching out to the downtown businesses and encouraged them to stay open during the Farmers Market.

Staff Updates

DDA Coordinator Moffit submitted her DDA Activity Report which highlighted our newest business Lace and Grace Clothing Company, Good Morning Gratiot Business Awards, DDA Billboard and the DDA Dollars Program.

City Manager Conn mentioned the downtown digital sign and welcomed suggestions from the board member of upcoming events to put on it. Our Hometown Ithaca Christmas & Light Parade was discussed. Vusich commented on what worked well this year and what can be improved next year.

Roundtable Discussion

Browne stated that as of April 1, 2023 new rules for reporting square footage of living space for a home require seven-foot ceiling height. It is affecting recent appraisals. This could potentially affect the tax base of homes.

Public Comments

No public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, motion by Vusich , second by Collison to adjourn the meeting at 11:35am; motion carried.

The next DDA Regular Meeting will be scheduled for March 12, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.

Marci Browne, Secretary/Treasurer

Shelly Moffit, Recording Secretary