

CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) MINUTES
Tuesday, May 14, 2012 — 6:00 p.m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Council Chambers, Charlevoix, MI

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Hugh Mason.

II. Roll Call of Members Present

Chair: Hugh Mason
DDA Director: Keith Carey
Members Present: Dan Barron, Fred DiMartino, Kirby Dipert, Jeannine Wallace, John Yaroch, Mayor Norman L. Carlson, Jr.
Members Absent: Gina Whitney, Todd Wyett

III. Inquiry Into Potential Conflicts of Interest

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes

The Board discussed the comments made by Mayor Carlson and Member Wyett and clarified the comments. Motion by Member Barron, second by Mayor Carlson, to approve the April 22, 2013 minutes as corrected. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

V. Old Business

None.

VI. New Business

A. Discussion of Future DDA Staffing

Director Carey was asked for his opinion on staffing needs. Mr. Carey stated that the future goals of the DDA will guide the staffing needs; however, if the job description stays the same, this is a full-time position. At times, Mr. Carey's efforts are community-oriented and not necessarily DDA-specific.

Mayor Carlson stated that he would prefer the activities of the DDA not be reduced and to maintain or increase community-oriented activity. He and City Manager Straebel have discussed the idea of this position evolving to promote the entire Charlevoix area, including the DDA, industrial park, schools, and community. The title of the position may need to change to reflect the new focus of a community promoter.

Member Barron agreed that overall community promotions will help the DDA and noted that Charlevoix could be promoted as an ideal location for small groups meetings. Networking with summer visitors, corporations, and associations may help bring these types of small conferences to our area. Promoting the industrial district would benefit the City. Expanding the role of this position to community promoter can help encourage meetings at the Country Club, the Castle, and hotels outside of the DDA, all of which will benefit retailers and restaurants within the DDA.

Mayor Carlson shared Member Wyett's e-mailed comments, which suggested that a Director could be shared with Boyne City and East Jordan. Mayor Carlson is opposed to the idea; a "community promoter" for Charlevoix would have a greater impact on Charlevoix than a shared DDA director.

Upon questioning, Treasurer Brandi stated that there are funds available in the Industrial Park fund that, if approved by Council, could be used as a joint effort to promote the DDA and Charlevoix as a whole. The Industrial Park funds could be used to supplement DDA funds for two or three years, at which time the DDA may be able to reconsider funding the entire salary. Mayor Carlson reminded members that a full-time position will attract more qualified applicants than a part-time position would attract.

Member Yaroch noted that the Castle has been able to increase shoulder season activity and stated that the Convention and Visitors' Bureau is primarily responsible for attracting this type of activity.

Mayor Carlson suggested that the DDA talk to the City Council to see if they are willing to expend some Industrial District funds on a joint-venture position.

Member Dipert reminded the Board that a large portion of the director's salary is fringe benefits. If the Board changed the position to part-time, the majority of the fringe benefit cost would be eliminated. Member Dipert questioned if a full-time presence is necessary, or if part-time would suffice. City Treasurer Brandi suggested that it may be possible to work with a part-time City employee to take on the duties of the office; this would make that employee full-time, but the fringe benefits would be spread over more than one department.

Mayor Carlson asked the Board to keep an open mind and “think outside of the box.” If the salary of this position can be shared with other departments, it will entice more qualified people at a reduced cost for the DDA.

Member Barron stated that, in his opinion, the position will require more than 30 hours per week; however, it may be possible to hire a part-time director and supplement the work with a part-time assistant.

Human Resources Assistant Jennifer Nash strongly recommends that the Board determine what they can afford and what the expectations are for the position before proceeding to how the position should be filled. This will guide the Board towards an affordable, satisfactory judgment.

Member Dipert stated that, while it would be helpful to define expectations for the position, it will be very difficult to determine how many hours are necessary to complete the work.

Mayor Carlson reminded the Board that the DDA salary is in the budget and in the five-year forecast. The budget may be tight now, but will hopefully get better in two to three years. Any money that they save now will be money that can be used on other programs, but the Board needs to consider the long-term success of the DDA and the City.

The Board discussed hiring procedures.

Member Dipert suggested that the Board consider outsourcing the duties to the Chamber. The Board generally disagreed.

Member Yaroch stated, in a position that promotes the DDA and the industrial park, marketing skills would be essential, with the ability to focus on light industry, special events, and promotions. The combination position may work well for the DDA, but areas of responsibility and priorities need to be specifically defined.

Chair Mason asked if the previous members of the hiring committee would be willing to serve again. They are, and the hiring committee will consist of: Mayor Carlson, Kirby Dipert, and Fred DiMartino.

Human Resource Assistant Nash reviewed the Board’s plan: to approach Council regarding the possibility of a joint effort for the DDA and Industrial Park, then to hire a full-time person with strong marketing skills. The Board agreed. Member Yaroch suggested that he and Member Barron could provide a better outline of the DDA’s needs for marketing and promotion, which they will present to the Board before Ms. Nash takes any action.

DDA Director Carey stated that it appears the DDA is looking for a Community Development Director with duties that include the DDA. Mr. Carey indicated that he hoped to be able to help the DDA in the future with small projects.

Ms. Nash confirmed that it will take three to four months after the search begins before actually having a person “on board.”

VII. Call for Public Comment

Chair Mason opened the meeting to public comment at 6:58 p.m. There was no public comment, and Chair Mason closed the public comment period.

VIII. Executive Director’s Report

Director Carey thanked the Board for the privilege of working with them. He has enjoyed the opportunity to return to Charlevoix and have a positive impact in this community.

IX. Miscellaneous Business

None.

X. Future Agenda Items

None.

XII. Adjournment

Motion by Mayor Carlson, second by Member Wallace, to adjourn.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Stephanie C. Brown

Deputy City Clerk

Hugh Mason

Chair

Carol A. Ochs

City Clerk