



**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PORT HURON
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Municipal Office Center
100 McMorran Blvd.
Port Huron, MI 48060
810-984-9740
www.porthuron.org

Tuesday, January 17, 2017

8:30 AM

Conference Room 408

Minutes

This meeting was held at The Harrington Inn.

A. CALL TO ORDER –

Chairperson Laurie Charron called the meeting to order at 8:38 AM

B. ROLL CALL –

PRESENT: Charron, Barrett, Eppley, Freed, Harris, Mills, Wilkins

ABSENT: Krabach, Kuithe

STAFF: DDA Director Watson and Planning Administrative Assistant Posey

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

1. Downtown Development Authority - Regular Meeting - Jan 17, 2017 8:30 AM

RESULT:	ADOPTED [7 TO 0]
MOVER:	Korissa Wilkins, Member
SECONDER:	Kurt Eppley, Member
YES:	Charron, Barrett, Eppley, Freed, Harris, Mills, Wilkins
ABSENT:	Krabach, Kuithe

D. REPORTS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS –

City Manager, James Freed, gave an update on the following items:

1. Downtown Projects
 - a. A grant has been received for \$12,950 from the MEC for an Art Initiative. Twenty pieces of art will be displayed along Edison Parkway for a year. There is going to be a one evening art festival and wine tasting at a date in the future.

- b. A project was put out for bid for two arches, signage, and patio areas at the River Walk. The lowest bid came in at \$172,000, which is still too much for the project. The bid is being scrapped and the project is going to be broken up into three separate bid packets. The hope is to attract more local talent and to decrease the potential cost. The two arches may be taken on by RESA students. The goal is to start the project in the spring and to use \$60,000 in DNR grant funds.
- c. It appears that the former Art Van Building is going to get tore down and possibly turned into a parking lot. It may be a partnership with the County and the City but revenue is going to be needed. City Manager Freed will pass along more information on the project as it is received.

Answering a question from Member Barrett, City Manager Freed said the City will need to own the former Art Van property in order to put any monies into it.

- d. An update was given on the cost for parking at the McMorran parking lot. It now costs one dollar an hour after the first hour with a cap of six dollars for the night. There are now gates installed to control the parking lot. An annual pass costs \$260 for the north and southwest lots. A semi-annual pass costs \$175.

Member Barrett suggested the cap on parking should be raised. City Manager Freed said to give it time and hopefully people will see the benefit of the small charge for parking.

There have been some complaints about parking not being close. City Manager Freed said there is parking available, just a block or so walk away. He mentioned it is no different than parking at the Birchwood Mall and walking inside to shop.

City Manager Freed stated a parking deck is not an option. Other towns, like Royal Oak and Traverse City, are losing money on their parking decks and would not suggest one to other Cities.

Chairperson Charron commented that parking is a decade old issue.

Chairperson Charron suggested the City put some angled parking behind the Harrington by possibly obtaining a 10 foot easement from Acheson Ventures to acquire enough space for the parking spots. Member Mill agreed that parking should be replaced.

Member Barrett suggested Acheson Ventures as a partner for a parking structure. Answering a question from Member Barrett, City Manager Freed said there will never be a parking structure built down by Desmond Marine.

2. DDA Director, Natalie Watson, has started

Natalie Watson, DDA Director, gave a brief update on a few of the items she has been working on including the creation/updating of social media accounts, such as

Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, for the Downtown. She encouraged DDA members to e-mail her any information they would like to see on the social media pages. She also mentioned she is working with a graphic designer through Loft 912 for a new logo for the Downtown.

Chillyfest plans are in full swing. Director Watson gave an overview of some of the activities for Chillyfest and let the DDA members know there is also a website for the festival, www.chillyfest.org.

Director Watson said she is also working with Mr. Pionk from the City's Parks and Forestry Division to try and come up with solutions for some of the complaints about snow and salt in the downtown. They are also going to put out bids for flowers for the spring and summer.

Another goal is to take Christmas time to the next level downtown.

Chairperson Charron suggested keeping white lights on the trees throughout the year. All members agreed.

City Manager Freed said the Engineering department is looking into streetscape for the north end of downtown. He also mentioned there are no conduits at the north end of downtown for lights.

Member Barrett suggested a formal lighting plan be created and the cost to operate it. He believes there would possibly be others in the downtown that would buy into a formal lighting plan.

Member Wilkins suggested the DDA Director duties and expectations be put online for people to view.

Member Mills asked is it was possible to get a ferry from Port Huron to Canada. City Manager Freed said the Jones Act limits this as a possibility.

E. ADJOURNMENT –

On Motion, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM

James Freed, City Manager