

**CITY OF ALPENA, DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY BOARD
APPROVED 9/10/2024**

Meeting date of August 13, 2024 at 3:00 pm

Meeting was held at City Hall Council Chambers, 208 N. First Ave. with the option for members of the public to join virtually.

Present: Todd Britton, Corey Canute, Loren Jackson, Cristi Johnson, Mike Mahler, Brian Peterson (arrived 3:25 pm), Melissa Tolan-Halleck, Matt Wojda, Ben Young

Absent: Jen Calery, Quintin Meek, Cassandra VanHorn, Rachel Smolinski

Staff Present: Anne Gentry

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm by Chairman Mahler.

2. Citizens Appearing before the Authority:

- Laura Shearer, owner of Rusty Petunias Marketplace (123 W Chisholm St) addressed the Board. She complimented the progress of Downtown Alpena and the DDA's efforts. She shared that the empty storefronts throughout downtown are a problem that are hurting existing businesses. She stated there needs to be efforts to allow these properties to come for rent/sale and to improve the appearance of those that are blighted if Alpena wants to grow as a destination.

3. Approval of the Agenda: It was moved by Wojda and supported by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carries.

4. Review and Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meetings (July 2024): It was moved by Britton and supported by Young to approve the minutes from the July 2024 Board Meeting as presented. All ayes. Motion carries.

5. Hearings: None.

6. Executive Director's Report: Gentry gave an update on four more murals being completed this summer through Fresh Waves, façade grant projects and their progress, and the downtown map going to print. Gentry shared she submitted a \$44,000 grant request through the Michigan Arts & Culture Council for Fresh Waves and pavilions for performers and an upcoming deadline for grants related to street trees. Gentry also shared the Sunrise Side Co-Op got approval from the City to use the parking lot on River and 3rd St. to host an outdoor market through the end of October.

7. Correspondences: None to share.

8. Review and Acceptance on Monthly Financial Reports (July 2024): It was moved by Tolan-Halleck and supported by Jackson to accept the monthly financial reports from July 2024. All ayes. Motion carries.

9. Committee Reports:

- a. Budget/ Finance: Did not meet.

- b. Education & Promotion: Jackson gave an update on the murals being completed this summer as part of Fresh Waves, the review of strategic planning goals, and fall events. The committee is also looking into billboard advertising and sending out a holiday mailer.
- c. Design & Beautification: Britton gave an update on a request for phased reimbursement for Clem's Bait & Tackle's façade grant, changes to the Cellar Building's façade plans, the alleyway, and review of strategic planning goals.
- d. Economic Development: Young reported on the committee's discussion regarding strategic planning goals. The top priority is identifying entrepreneurs and businesses to locate within the district and developing recruitment tools through the DDA.

10. Report from the City of Alpena: None.

11. Unfinished Business:

- Strategic Plan Priorities: Gentry reviewed the Strategic Plan as prepared by POW Strategies. Each committee has reviewed its respective goals and identified top priorities.
- Façade Grant Request: Cellar Building (309-313 N. Second Ave)- \$35,244. Gentry reviewed the amended façade plan for the Cellar Building and amended grant request. It was moved by Jackson and supported by Tolan-Halleck to approve the façade grant request as amended (\$35,244). Britton abstained from deliberation and vote. All ayes. Motion carries.

12. New Business:

- September 2024 Board Meeting Date: It was moved by Wojda and supported by Young to move the September Board Meeting to Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 3:00 pm. All ayes. Motion carries.
- Empty Storefronts Downtown: The Board discussed empty storefronts downtown and reasons that buildings aren't actively for rent or purchase if they are vacant. The Board discussed the need to diagnose each property and assist in having them filled with businesses that contribute to the downtown.

13. Adjournment: It was moved by Britton and supported by Johnson to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 4:04 pm.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Anne Gentry.