

**BATTLE CREEK DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS – Meeting Minutes**

Monday, January 22, 2024 at 3:00pm – Room 302A, City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Edward Guzzo, Nelson Karre, Cody Newman, Ross Simpson, Rebecca Fleury, Monique French

ABSENT: Paul Conkey, Kara Beer, Kimberly Carter, Dr. Terence Lunger, Kelli Scott, Commissioner Carla Reynolds, Commissioner Chris Simmons

OTHERS PRESENT: Ted Dearing – Assistant City Manager, Aaron Kuhn – Revenue Services Director, John Hart – Development Director and Patti Worden – Executive Assistant

Call to order: Edward Guzzo called the meeting to order at 3:32pm.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Cody Newman moved that the Battle Creek Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors approve the meeting minutes from October 23, 2023. Ross Simpson supported the motion. Unanimously approved.

Financials

Fiscal Year 2023 Audit Presentation (review and accept):

Aaron Kuhn presented the Fiscal Year 2023 Audit.

MOTION: Nelson Karre moved that the Battle Creek Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors accept the FY 2023 Audit as presented. Cody Newman supported the motion. Unanimously approved.

Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report (review and accept):

Aaron Kuhn presented the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report.

MOTION: Nelson Karre moved that the Battle Creek Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors accept the FY 2023 Annual Report as presented. Cody Newman supported the motion. Unanimously approved.

Fiscal Year 2024 Interim Financial Statements through December 2023:

Aaron Kuhn presented the Fiscal Year 2024 Interim Financial Statements, though December 2023.

MOTION: Cody Newman moved that the Battle Creek Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors accept the FY 2024 Interim Financial Statements through December 2023. Nelson Karre supported the motion. Unanimously approved.

Project Updates:

W.K. Kellogg Company

Ted Dearing discussed the newly established Renaissance Zone serving the WK Kellogg Co., and the potential impact on the DDA budget. Mr. Dearing advised the City Commission felt the tax relief was the right move, it saved jobs and would result in economic benefit to the City. Staff is not recommending any modifications in spending at this time as the impact of the Zone will not be fully known until later in the spring.

River Restoration

Ted Dearing provided an update on the removal of the Elm Street mound. Mr. Dearing also noted funds set aside in the budget for matching dollars for dam removal to support river restoration downtown. Currently staff is reviewing next steps for river restoration with the USACE after a review of initial modeling.

Staff discussed security in the downtown parking structures and noted that the city' parking system will pick up the expense for providing security from the DDA beginning January 1, 2024. The Police Department is also reviewing the best approach to providing security.

Cody Newman asked how the river restoration will affect the railroad. Mr. Dearing shared staff's efforts to engage CN in the planning and implementation of restoration and CN's cooperation with early efforts.

Ross Simpson commented that he was serious about taking a road trip to see river projects and mentioned the Detroit River Walk to Belle Island Bridge being of interest. Mr. Dearing shared the team went to Milwaukee in November to review river restoration projects in that city.

Ed Guzzo suggested pictures of various other river restoration efforts would be helpful. Cody Newman recommended review of the Battle Creek River by the Math and Science Center.

Retail Incubator

Staff provided a brief update on the status of the DDA's new incubator tenant at 80 W. Michigan (Load a Spud).

80 West Michigan Lease Payments

Ted Dearing updated the board on the status of rent payments for DDA-owned property at 80 W. Michigan (Torti Taco)

Citizen (Public) Comments:

There were no citizen (public) comments.

Board Members Comments

Several board members mentioned the excellent work of street crews in clearing snow in the downtown. Mr Hart shared information on efforts to control pet waste.

Board members discussed the status of the Blue Oval project, the need for more developers, builders and contractors in the Battle Creek area, the old Kmart building, low-income housing development efforts, the DoubleTree Hotel, Kellogg Arena, and river restoration incentives.

Adjourn: 4:35pm