

**IMLAY CITY  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Informational Meeting  
**December 11, 2023 @ 5:00 PM**

**INFORMATIONAL MEETING MINUTES**

A special meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held on Monday December 11, 2023, at the Imlay City Hall, 150 North Main Street, Imlay City MI 48444.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Barga called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL** – Executive DDA Director Malzahn called the roll:

Present: Walter Barga, Stu Davis, Justin Shattuck, Kelly Villanueva, Neil Docherty, Mayor Joi Kempf  
Absent: Kim Jorgensen (arrived at 5:10 pm), Steve Robbins (arrived 5:05pm)

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Shattuck, support by Kempf to approve the agenda as presented.

All in Favor 6 / Nays 0 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – none

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Bi-Annual Information Meeting Material**

Director Malzahn presented the informational material packet she created and led the Board and meeting attendees through the 12-page document. Highlights included:

On page 2 you will find our vision statement and a quick recap of Stats from Jan 1 – through December 31, 2023 (with assumptions that we will hold no special meetings later this month. The recap reflects the DDA held 12 regular, 2 special meetings and 2 informational meetings. We sponsored 8 concerts in the park, 22 Farmers Market days and one special event WinterFest.

The DDA district welcomed two new businesses; Celebration Specialists and Collection Connection and held an additional ribbon cutting for Botannas El Plaza for their new Third Street location. As I was preparing my notes for tonight’s meeting, I realized that I failed to include El Ranchito as the 3<sup>rd</sup> new business here in downtown at the old Nachos location.

New in this report on page 3, you see a quick summary of all the contracts that the DDA is currently a partner to. They include:

- Irrigation System with Aqua Turf - \$300 each season w/ \$60 per billable hour. This contract expires in April 2024.

- Streetscape with GreenScape Solutions - \$40,000 for seasonal flowers/plants with maintenance to planting areas from April through November. This contract was just renewed through April 2025.
- Community Promotion contract with Outfront media for the billboard space that is on M53 near the viaduct. This one-year contract for DDA sponsored campaign includes 12-monthly installments of \$764 and expires in August 2024.
- The DDA contract with Dan's Tree Service to install holiday lighting on most trees along Third Street and Almont Avenue along with the gazebo, Lamb Steele Park Christmas tree and the city hall building. The contract is for installation only and does not include hardgoods. The cost is \$8,000, the current contract will expire in March 2024.
- Lastly, the DDA owned building at 150 Bancroft Street is contracted out to tenants as an incubator space allowing a rent-free bricks and mortar location for up-and-coming business owners to implement their business plan for up to 6-months. The current tenant is the Collection Connection and their contract expires in March 2024.

The list of Goals and Direction of where we've been in FY 2022-2023 remains that same, but I've updated the Goals and Direction list of what we planned to accomplish in FY 2023-24 to give you a status update. As you see we have 12 of the 19 goals cited in our current plan that have been activated and are listed as "Works in Progress". Since this past July we have completed 5 of the 19 projects. They include:

- Replacing and/or repairs to brick paver areas along Third Street and Almont Ave. *This was actually a city project that the DDA did not finance, but helped to facilitate its completion (so the credit for this one really goes to our DPW director Ed Priehs)*
- Purchase additional trash receptacles, pet waste disposal systems.
- We engaged with Giffells Webster to learn about their Next Steps for Downtowns Program.
- We submitted 5 grant applications including a \$1.2 million dollar request to fund a pavilion structure.
- We issued an RFP for professional services to assist us with a market study to help determine an appropriate business mix, to identify recruiting strategies and for plan creation to revitalize the downtown area.

The budget details on page 6 remain the same as the July meeting info, but you'll see on the bottom of page 7 a section on grants. The DDA has submitted 5 grant funding requests since July totaling nearly \$1.3 million dollars. 2 submissions have been awarded totaling \$34,000. As of this meeting date 2 submission are still pending and 1 was not awarded for the Community Partners art project.

The DDA has awarded \$18,426.50 in façade grants this calendar year to local business/property owners, with a new application being considered tonight at our regular meeting.

Wrapping up the updated report on pages 8-11 with data from our website showing we had just over 4.3k pages visitors since March 2023, with the majority looking at our events/calendar page with 899 visits.

The DDA social media sites show a significant uptick in engagement on the Downtown Imlay City Facebook page just since July with a reach of over 60,728 and 847 visits to our page. That's a 208% increase.

The Imlay City Farmers Market Facebook also shows impressive growth of over 107% in reach and 105%- or 216-page visits.

You will note the decline in number on the Art-In-The-Rough data since we are not activity working on that event.

As you can see the DDA is quite active and engaged in this community. We are now compliant with all required reporting at the local and State levels and maintain a very open and transparent website with all of our meeting & budgeting documents updated regularly. The website also hosts information on opportunities for residents to participate in some community programs like the Hometown Hero Banners, Memorial Paver Bricks, façade grants and info on the fun stuff like the Farmer Market, Summer Concert series and the new Winterfest page dedicated to all the fun activities we planned for this past Saturday.

This report is reflective of the good work that this volunteer Board oversees and how very important our plan is within the city government functions. Along with me as your executive director we are working hard to bring back the shine of this historic gem of a small city. Building back some of what has been lost in the downtown and surrounding TIF district areas.

**7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None heard

**8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board members thanked Malzahn for her thoroughness in creating the 12 page report, noting that some of the photos used in the pamphlet were quite old, but the information was good to have.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Robbins, support by Jorgensen to adjourn the meeting at 5:22 pm  
All in Favor 8 / Nays 0 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Christine Malzahn, DDA Executive Director

DDA APPROVED: January 8, 2024

CITY COMMISSION APPROVED: