

**MEETING MINUTES**

Cascade Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors  
Tuesday, March 18, 2014  
5:30 P.M.  
Cascade Library - Wisner Center  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

**ARTICLE 1. Call the Meeting to Order**

Chairman Huhn called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.  
Members Present: Rob Beahan, David Huhn, Diana Kingsland, Joann Noto, Jennifer Puplava, Paula Rowland, Rick Siegle  
Members Absent: Kirt Ojala  
Others Present: Assistant to the Manager Sandra Korhorn, Township Manager Ben Swayze, Mike Berrevoets, Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber

**ARTICLE 2. Approve the Agenda**

**Motion was made by Member Beahan to approve the Agenda. Support by Member Puplava. Motion carried, 5-0.**

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the Minutes of the January 21, 2014 Meeting**

**Motion was made by Member Rowland to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2014 Meeting. Support by Member Puplava. Motion carried 5-0**

**ARTICLE 4. Approve the Minutes of the February 18, 2014 Joint Meeting**

**Motion was made by Member Beahan to approve the minutes of the February 18<sup>th</sup> 2014 Joint Meeting. Support by Member Kingsland. Motion carried 5-0**

**ARTICLE 5. Discussion of 2014 Projects**

(Member Noto arrived at 5:35 PM. Member Siegle arrived at 5:40 PM)

Assistant to the Manager Korhorn presented. The DDA requested further information and to have the costs firmed up according to the DDA's priority list. I spoke with Mike to ask him to review and refine costs. He did all of them but the Museum and Pat Cornelisse reviewed that project.

The Enhanced Intersections were broken down by intersection:

- Thornapple River Drive and Cascade Road came in at approximately \$121,500.
- Cascade Road and 28<sup>th</sup> Street came in at approximately \$208,000
- There were some general costs associated with the projects that came in at \$65,000 which is a grand total of \$552,000.

Member Rowland asked what was included in the pricing. Mike responded that it includes new concrete cross walks that are stamped and colored and marked with the continental cross walk markings and upgrade of the ADA ramps to meet current standards.

Member Rowland asked if the mast arm signals were included in the price. Assistant Korhorn stated that they were not included in this price but could be added.

Chairman Huhn stated that the crosswalks would be stamped but asked if they would also be colored. Mike stated that the cross walk cement would be colored red and painted with the continental markings in white.

Member Rowland stated that the mast arms would be a good idea especially after the winter we had where it would be difficult to see the pavement markings. Assistant Korhorn stated that they would add about \$100,000 to the bill. Mike suggested that if this is something you are going to add later the conduit should be put in now, to save having to dig up the road later.

Chairman Huhn requested that we vote on each project individually. Assistant Korhorn stated that we probably will not get all projects accomplished this year as we have to get the construction plans created and approved by the Road Commission. We will then have to put the project out for bid as well.

Member Kingsland thought this was one of the projects that we could fast track. Assistant Korhorn stated that the museum park and Old 28<sup>th</sup> reconfiguration can be put on the list for 2014.

Member Beahan asked where the bridge gateway project would fit in the schedule. Assistant Korhorn stated that it would fit into the 2015 timeline.

Chairman Huhn stated that the Enhanced intersections/cross walks would be a mistake to put off as this has more of a visual punch. Member Rowland stated that the medians should be done at the same time for “crowd control” of traffic. If we start on the roads, it would make sense to do it all together. Assistant Korhorn stated that the enhanced intersection, cross walk and mid-block crossing should all be done at the same time.

Chairman Huhn stated that Old 28<sup>th</sup> Street is a road project as well; I don't see the difference in putting one project ahead of the other. Mike stated that the Old 28<sup>th</sup> Street project would amount to mostly shoulder work and not have the construction impact of the Enhanced Intersections. Chairman Huhn stated that he did not see this project as a visual impact project. It doesn't make anything look better and it doesn't really change anything or do what the other projects do. We need to do projects that let the community know we are making changes.

Member Siegle stated that if we're going to disrupt traffic doing this why not accomplish all the road projects rather than disrupt traffic this year and next year as well. Chairman Huhn stated that he feels we should do all the road projects in one summer. Member Noto asked how long the projects would take to finish. Mike stated that by the time all

the plans and approvals were secured it would be the end of season before these projects would be finished. I would suggest grouping the mid-block crossing and the cross walks together as this is the greatest disruption to Cascade Road. The Old 28<sup>th</sup> project is a stand-alone as are the bridge enhancements and the Museum Park.

Member Pupilava asked if it made sense to figure out the Complete Streets Plan to see if we're going to be adding medians to the intersections or is that a project that can be added later. How far ahead do we want to move? The plantings at the crosswalks? The medians?

Chairman Huhn stated that he's not totally sold on the medians. Is traffic less in July and August when school is out vs. September and October? Would it be better to do the projects when traffic counts are lower? Assistant Korhorn stated the Road Commission may have those figures.

Chairman Huhn stated that it should be considered but it does not make me want to wait before moving forward on this project.

Member Pupilava asked if we prioritize do we start with the Museum garden and Old 28<sup>th</sup> and then think about the street related projects in 2015. Assistant Korhorn stated she agreed with that plan. The Walkability study is at the end of April and it may spur some new ideas that we haven't thought about.

Member Rowland asked if there was any reason not to do the Gateway Project on the bridge. Assistant Korhorn stated that the Bridge work would be minimally disruptive to traffic.

Member Beahan stated that he agreed with Sandra. He would hate to get into a corner by getting some projects started and then have the Walkability Study come up with ideas that may have worked better.

Chairman Huhn stated that we have worked on this for five years. We've had our own consultants look at the projects, we've had the Complete Streets, and we've had strategic changes. This is like Government in action....how many Committees can you have and still not accomplish anything? That is what it sounds like to me. Let's do another study and see if it has any better ideas and then nothing gets done.

Member Rowland stated that she would like to see the streets project done right away but if we don't have time to get it done until the end of season, is it wise to do it this year? Chairman Huhn responded we have the time we just need to push forward. Assistant Korhorn stated that the Township Board still has to approve the Complete Streets Plan. Mike has to draw up the plans and the Road Commission has to approve the project as well. It is not a quick process; there are a lot of steps involved in this.

Member Siegle asked if the mid-block cross walk location has been determined and has the owner of the gas station been contacted? If he does not agree with the plan does it eliminate this from our plans anyway? Assistant Korhorn stated that it will not impact Old 28<sup>th</sup>. This is the midway point between the two intersections and is a safety island

for anyone wishing to cross the street. The owner of the gas station has a copy of the plan but I have not heard back from him.

Assistant Korhorn stated she has been in contact with the Community Foundation and they have a fundraiser going on to raise funds for Art in the Park at the Museum. It has not been decided if it will be a sculpture or a rotating exhibit. Michelle Bottrall did make it understood that they would only be on board if there were improvements to the Museum garden. We need to let them know if we are not moving forward on our changes to the garden. I also met with the Cascade Historical Society to show them our plans. They're very excited about the changes which include the Christmas tree coming down. They talked about replacing the tree with a new one somewhere on the property. I talked to Amy Howell in Building and Grounds and she stated that some of the grasses have very deep roots and will require large equipment to remove them. She suggested that they be removed in the spring. She said the garden will look very messy and untidy during the process and we need to be aware of that. Everyone is on the same page with the improvements to the Museum Garden and are looking forward to the project.

Member Rowland asked if Assistant Korhorn could walk through the phases of the project. Assistant Korhorn stated that cutting down the tree, removing the grasses and reseeding the lawn are the first priority. The bike path connection from Thornapple River drive to Hurley would have to be approved by the Township Board as it is out of the DDA District.

Phase II is the center garden area where seating and the public art would be added. Phase III would be the brickwork by the Museum and the children's play area. It won't be a playground but more of an interactive sound garden and/or artwork.

Chairman Huhn asked what the cost was for Phase II & III. Assistant Korhorn stated that Phase II is \$220,000 and Phase III is \$75,000. Township Manager Ben Swayze stated that if the Museum Garden is going to be torn apart it would be better to do all of the work at once rather than spread it over three seasons. Member Pupilava agreed stating that if we are going to gut the park we should do it all at once and get the plantings in.

Assistant Korhorn stated that the Bridge Gateway Project total is \$209,000. The Old 28<sup>th</sup> Reconfiguration is projected at \$95,000 and the Mid-Block Crossing is \$210,000. The East and West Crosswalks are still under consideration and we don't have costs on those.

Member Siegle recommended we do the enhancements of the intersections and all three phases of the Museum Park. I would defer the other projects.

**Member Siegle made a motion that the DDA Committee recommends to the Township Board the enhancement of the two intersections and Phases I, II, and III of the Museum Park. Support by Member Beahan.**

Member Pupilava stated she thought it would make sense to wait to do the Enhanced Intersections and the Mid-Block crossing in order to disrupt traffic once rather than on

two separate occasions. I would like to see the Museum Park complete with all three phases and Old 28<sup>th</sup> Street reconfigured. My only concern with Old 28<sup>th</sup> is if it will disrupt the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration. Assistant Korhorn stated that Old 28<sup>th</sup> should not impact the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event.

Member Siegle asked if it would be wise to bundle the mid-block crossing and Old 28<sup>th</sup> reconfiguration together. Mike stated it would be better to bundle the Mid-block crossing with the Enhanced Intersections. This would cause one disruption to Cascade Road instead of two.

Member Kingsland stated that it did not appear we were going to get the Enhanced Intersections this year. If this is the case than I think we need to include the mast arms in the project and complete the whole project at once.

Member Rowland stated we have professionals stating we are not going to get the Enhanced Intersections completed this year. I would prefer to see the park completed and Old 28<sup>th</sup> and the Bridge Gateway finished this year.

Chairman Huhn asked for a roll call vote.

Kingsland	–	No
Rowland	–	No
Beahan	-	Yes
Puplava	-	No
Siegle	-	No
Huhn	-	No
Noto	-	No

**Member Rowland made a motion that we move forward on Phases I, II and III of the Museum Park, the Bridge Gateway Project and the Reconfiguration of Old 28<sup>th</sup> Street for a total of \$700,000 this year. In addition, we move forward with the planning, engineering, and approval stages for the Enhanced Intersections to be completed in 2015. Support by Member Kingsland.**

Member Puplava would like to see revised totals with the mast arms as the DDA works out the details for the Enhanced Intersections.

Member Noto would like to see an early summertime timeline on the project so the DDA doesn't have to visit this again and realize that it's September again next year.

Assistant Korhorn stated it was easy enough to plan ahead for this fall and get the KCRC's approval and the bids out in early 2015 to get the project going.

Chairman Huhn asked for a roll call vote:

Kingsland	–	Yes
Noto	–	Yes
Beahan	-	Yes
Puplava	-	Yes
Siegle	-	Yes

Rowland	-	Yes
Huhn	-	Yes

**ARTICLE 6. Discussion of Amendment to the DDA TIF Plan**

Assistant Korhorn stated Cascade Township has been approached about a development in the village. The developer wants to pursue a mixed use development of commercial and residential. In speaking with him, Assistant Korhorn realized this is the kind of development the Township wants in the district. The developer came to the township to discuss tax incentives or any other incentives to help with the construction. She did discuss the township's Commercial Rehab Program with him and there were some questions as to whether that program would be a good fit for him or not. They now have a meeting this week to discuss with the Michigan Economic Development Corp. whether this program is a good fit for him or not. However, in further discussions with him, there is another program where he can enter into a development agreement with the property owner to reimburse him for some public aspects of the development or American Disabilities Act improvements. The DDA would enter an agreement and a policy would state that he would be reimbursed over a set number of years for a portion of the improvements. This was inadvertently left out of our TIF plans. Are we interested in amending the TIF Plan to allow a developer to come to us and receive this incentive? There are guidelines and policies in place that the developer that would have to meet such as job retention, location within the DDA, number of years the monies are paid, and the total amount of the incentive.

Chairman Huhn asked what the net investment would be for the DDA. Township Manager Ben Swayze stated that the monies would come from the taxable amount that would be paid to the DDA thru taxes. Essentially they would pay their taxes and we would give it back to them based on the improvements that met the ADA requirements.

Chairman Huhn asked if the only monies that would be returned would be that which is related to the ADA accessibility improvements the developer made. Township Manager Swayze stated that this was correct but it is not currently in our TIF plan. We would need to amend the current TIF Plan to allow the incentive.

Chairman Huhn asked if this was worth the effort to amend the TIF Plan. In this area it would amount to more of a gift than a necessity for businesses. We are not an economically struggling area where this would be more necessary to encourage new business. Township Manager Ben Swayze stated that the DDA can use this as a tool to attract business that would do improvements that fit the criteria for the DDA District.

Chairman Huhn stated he cannot envision anything within the DDA that needs to be torn down or replaced. Member Pupilava stated that we are trying to make the Village area a vibrant center and this may be a means to do it. The language needs to be in the TIF Plan so that we can at least look at the projects and determine if it is a viable project. I don't think that we can prejudge the project without seeing it.

Member Siegle stated that just because the language is in the TIF Plan, we are under no obligation to give this developer those tax dollars back. Assistant Korhorn stated that this was a correct assumption.

Chairman Huhn asked what the process was for approving. Does each developer have to go through the process? Township Manager Swayze stated that once the language was in the TIF Plan, the developers would come to the DDA requesting funds. It would be an agreement between the DDA and the developer and would not have to go through other levels of government.

Member Kingsland asked what the Townships role is in all of this. Why would we all of a sudden go through the DDA for the funding instead of the Township? Who gave the incentives before this? Manager Swayze stated that up until this point only industrial projects. There are no records for commercial incentives in the Township in the past.

Member Kingsland stated this would be really new for all the people that have been in the Township for years and have never had access to this in the past. Township Manager Swayze agreed.

Member Kingsland stated that she is not in favor of the incentive. There are ways to get people to come into the area without giving developers money. If a developer is coming into the area then they obviously feel that the area is a viable solution to what they want to do. Why do we have to pay them to say that they are right?

Chairman Huhn stated that if someone wanted to start a restaurant in the area they would do so because it would be an economically viable operation; otherwise they wouldn't put it here. Any monies they would receive from the ADA improvements would be minimal or insignificant.

Member Beahan stated there are no businesses currently going in at that location. I look at it as an incentive. There are many incentive programs out there and this would be another tool to speed the process. I see what Diana is saying about the businesses that were already here but it was a different economic climate back then.

Member Kingsland stated that in listening to the general public this Township is not business friendly. Member Beahan stated that by not incorporating this it shows that we are not.

Member Kingsland stated if we are not changing anything else, like the signage requirements, what's a little incentive going to do?

Chairman Huhn asked for the reasons people feel the Township is not business friendly. Member Kingsland stated the general business community would like to do things that many times they are not allowed to. You're not going to put a business back in an area where you're not visible from the road and then you're not allowed to put up a sign letting people know you're there.

Member Beahan stated that offering the incentive is showing that we're business friendly. Member Kingsland wondered if the DDA was the only Board willing to change. Member Beahan stated that it's a slow change, but there have been changes in the Planning Department on how businesses are allowed to build and to advertise. Member Pupilava stated sometimes change begets change and we just need to get the momentum moving forward. Member Siegle stated that in creating 70 jobs in the community, I have never received an incentive. In this day and age we are competing with a lot of communities for the same business. I think we can dangle a carrot and attract business. I think by putting language in the TIF Plan that would allow us to give a tax rebate on a percentage of our gain without us going backward, I think it makes a viable option that we as a committee should have. It does not commit us to having to do it. Bottom line, I think as a group we should have this as an option.

Chairman Huhn stated that once you put it into effect you cannot say no to someone. Member Rowland stated that it's on a case by case basis. Member Pupilava stated you word the Amendment to state the DDA has discretion on the decisions. Chairman Huhn stated we have that now; this is just another thing we can say "yes" or "no" to. Member Pupilava stated this gives us the option to look at projects and see if they are adding something special to the Township. If it turns out it doesn't add anything then we wouldn't provide the additional funds.

Member Rowland asked for the process or stages that a project would go through before it got to the DDA incentive. Township Manager Swayze stated currently the TIF Plan does not even allow for this. We do not have to reinvent the wheel on this. We have not laid out the actual process yet. We can decide what process we want it to be at this point. Member Rowland asked if the project would come to us already on paper with locations or is this going to be presented more at the speculation stage where they will only build it if we give them the funds. Township Manager Swayze stated they may not be committed to the project, but they will not come to you with pie in the sky ideas. They will present actual elevations, drawings and job creation numbers.

Member Siegle stated the DDA extends down 28<sup>th</sup> Street but there are other areas of the Township that need the new business more. If a developer has the exact same plan for two areas of the Township, one that needs development and one that may not, can we approve one and not the other? Township Manager Swayze stated that legally we can reject or accept any project. There is no obligation legally.

Member Pupilava stated it would all be in the wording of the TIF Plan Amendment. All of our questions and concerns would be addressed in the Amendment.

Member Beahan stated that Ben, Sandra, and Steve would write the policy. It would come before the DDA and then go before the Township Board. Legally there's no obligation for the Plan to go before the Board, but politically, it might be a good idea to have them on board and in agreement with the direction the DDA is heading.

**Member Pupilava made a motion to move forward in amending the TIF Plan and developing a proposed policy that can be reviewed and vetted by the DDA Board. Support by Member Siegle. Motion carries 7-0.**

## **ARTICLE 7. Update of Maintenance Worker**

Assistant Korhorn stated that Township Manager Swayze presented the job description for the DDA Maintenance Worker to the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee did review it and they decided they didn't want the position identified as a DDA position. They were concerned the position would have a different title than the current Buildings and Grounds positions and wanted to keep it consistent. They have decided to hire one additional full time person and they will be an employee of the Buildings and Grounds Department. They will provide maintenance to the entire Township. This means there will be days when no one is working in the DDA District and other days when all employees could be working in the District. Currently the DDA provides about \$24,000/year to cover the B&G activities in the District. That amount will increase with the hiring of the additional person. I have a list of what are considered essential functions to the DDA. I think we need to talk about accountability to the District to make sure the functions are being completed.

Member Siegle asked if Tassell Park and the Library are in the DDA District. Assistant Korhorn stated that both facilities are within the District.

Township Manager Swayze thought the difference between the \$24,000/year the DDA already gives to the District would be in the realm of \$25,000 - \$30,000/year. He also stated the reason Personnel didn't want this as a DDA position was so that this position wouldn't be confined to a box. Basically that person couldn't come in under the DDA because most of the work in the DDA is a two or three person job. Personnel wanted to avoid duplication of services between the DDA and Building and Grounds.

Chairman Huhn asked about the Museum Gardens, Tassell Park, and Library. These are all areas that have park department as well subsidizing these. The DDA was thinking about orphan areas. These areas are not orphan areas. Township Manager, Swayze stated Township Assistant Korhorn was stating all the activity that would go on in the DDA. The Library Fund does provide monies to the General Fund as well for maintenance activities. We wouldn't necessarily track the hours for work done there. The same thing with Tassell Park. The museum and library are assets of the DDA and work would be kept track of. The goal of the DDA was to see areas of maintenance improved. Chairman Huhn asked if this would be improved by that one position. Chairman Huhn is assuming this position wouldn't get diluted with any other work in the township. Township Manager Swayze stated that goes back to accountability. What are the things not getting done now that need to be done?

Member Rowland asked who would be held accountable for this work to be done. Township Manager Swayze stated Amy Howell, Supervisor for Building and Grounds would be in charge and make sure the work gets done. But the accountability would be by Township Manager Swayze and Assistant Korhorn. They would meet regularly with Amy, Supervisor for Building and Grounds to make sure the work doesn't fall behind and if it does Swayze and Korhorn are accountable for it.

Member Siegle wanted to know the cost of this position. Township Manager Swayze stated with the salary and benefits package it would be between \$43,000 and \$57,000

depending on married with a family or single. The DDA wouldn't be expected to come up with all of that because they already contribute monies to the fund. The difference would be between the eventual full time person and the official contribution of the DDA. Chairman Huhn wanted to know if the Board believes we would go from a part-time \$24,000 allocation to a full-time or were you expecting to go from the part-time plus the full-time to go to one and a quarter? What I think you said was we're not going to add a whole 1%; we're only going to add one part of that new person. Township Manager Swayze stated a whole new person would be added to the department but the DDA would not be covering the additional cost of that because they're already covering about half of that. For clarification Chairman Huhn stated the DDA would not get the effect of what they currently have with one new full-time person added. Township Manager Swayze stated he was not certain there was enough work to do that. However, if that is something the DDA is worried about he would recommend they take a preventive step and approve this position and see how maintenance is improved in the DDA. If at a later date, Township Manager Swayze would ask the DDA if they're satisfied with the hours being given to them and they're still not happy the Township could possibly give the DDA additional hours.

**ARTICLE 8. Any Other Business**

**a. Walkability Review – April 21**

Those going on the walk will congregate at the Library with MDOT. The walk will be from 28<sup>th</sup> Street down to Cascade Road, Cascade Road to Thornapple River Drive, back up Old 28<sup>th</sup> Street and then finish at the Library. Along the way MDOT will talk and discuss pros and cons and ADA information. Upon returning to the Library there will be a quick lunch and then a presentation by MDOT. The start of the walk will be 10 a.m. The presentation will end at 3 p.m. Assistant Korhorn will send an e-mail to the members of the DDA Board and they can let her know by Friday if they will be attending.

**b. Complete Streets Meeting Date**

The Complete Streets Plan will be going to the Township Board on Wednesday, March 26 at 7 p.m. should any of the DDA Board members wish to attend and show support.

**ARTICLE 9. Adjournment**

**Member Rowland made a motion to adjourn. Support by Member Beahan. Motion carried 7-0.** The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Kingsland, Secretary  
Ann Seykora, Planning Administrative Assistant  
Debra Groendyk, Planning Administrative Assistant