

## Minutes

Cascade Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority  
Tuesday, April 18, 2023  
5:30 pm  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

- ARTICLE 1.** Chair Puplava called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.  
Members Present: Kleyla, Preston, Stephan, Puplava, Growney, Lesperance, Siegle, Makkar  
Members Absent: Vogel  
Others Present: Township Manager Ben Swayze and others listed on the sign-in sheet.

Member Growney arrived at 5:31 P.M

**ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda**

**Motion was made by Member Stephan to approve the agenda. Supported by Member Siegle. Motion carried 6 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the Minutes of the February 21, 2023 Meeting**

Chair Puplava noticed an error in Article 5 stating that the motion was made by Member Stephan.

**Motion was made by Supervisor Lesperance to approve the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes with the proposed change. Supported by Member Stephan. Motion carried 7 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak**

Wendy Sturm (2570 Hunter Green) attended the meeting to address concerns regarding the library. She wanted clarity on the number of resident visitors that utilized the library in 2022 and was also confused as to why the amphitheater is still being discussed since there needs to be more space for working remotely. Her last concern was regarding the library's need to update the interior.

Member Makkar arrived at 5:36 P.M.

Manager Swayze added that there is money budgeted for the library refresh project in 2023 or 2024. The first step is getting architectural services on board which is already being initiated by the Township Board.

**ARTICLE 5. Discuss and consider Cascade Branch of the Kent County District Library**

Lulu Brown, the Regional Manager for KDL, thanked the board for allowing her to present this project. There has been an increase in traffic flow to the library creating space concerns, so the outdoor gathering space is meant to provide an alternate, natural place for people to gather.

Wes Landon, owner of Native Edge, attended the meeting to give an update on the project. He started working on this project in 2022 by creating a Master Plan for the outdoor space. The plan has evolved to become more of a community hub with various spaces for gatherings or nature programs. Landon stated that plans have changed by incorporating larger sidewalks, accommodating more people in terms of seating, and being able to host larger events such as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. There is also an updated budget since elements of the design have changed.

Brown said that construction costs are continuing to rise and they are figuring out how to create a nice outdoor space while simultaneously saving money. She wanted to present this to the DDA Board in hopes of partnering for phases 2-4 along with additional help in phase 1 for the sidewalks.

Landon explained that if there is no additional funding, Phase 1 can still be completed but will be scaled back and more in line with the original concept. To achieve the larger vision with wider sidewalks and more benches they will need additional funding. The estimated cost of Phase 1 is \$461,564 with a donor contribution for a fountain of \$30,000 and friends of the library contribution of \$201,000 leaving a remainder of \$230,564 needed. Phase 2 is estimated to cost \$714,000, Phase 3 is \$103,000, and Phase 4 is \$37,798.

Member Siegle asked if any plans include additional parking spaces since these plans will draw more people here. Brown said this has been a challenge in the past, especially on big event days, but a neighboring building does allow the use of their overflow parking lot.

Supervisor Lesperance asked how long construction would take. Landon explained the duration of the project is unknown, mainly because Phase 2 has yet to be designed with the pavilion. If he had to estimate he figured the project would be complete in Spring of 2024.

Member Siegle asked how much the pavilion costs and Landon said it would total out to roughly \$300,000 for a 60ft pavilion.

Member Stephan wondered why there wasn't a restroom on the plans and Brown clarified that would cost an additional \$100,000 plus maintenance. She also added they can utilize the library's restrooms after hours since you can access those without entering the library.

Member Makkar asked what the community engagement was like at the library. Brown said that the Cascade Library has some of the highest market penetration in terms of how many people live in the area and the number of people who are active cardholders.

Chair Puplava asked if the interior refresh should be completed synonymously with the outdoor construction. Brown indicated that they have the resources to execute the interior refresh and will complete that project at a time when the library isn't busy since they will have to close down for a few days.

Brown stated they have tried navigating other avenues for funding via donations, private investors, and the Cascade Community Foundation, along with others.

Member Siegle had some reservations about funding another large-scale project since they are dealing with items from McKenna's plan as well. He recommended having a limit to the amount funded.

Members were conflicted whether to include funding for the pavilion since it would cost an additional \$300,000. There was a suggestion to construct just the foundation and delay the structure build.

**Motion was made by Member Makkar to have the DDA fund up to \$1,000,000 for phases 1-4. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 8 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 6. McKenna – Strategic Plan & Transformation Committee Update Report**

There was nothing new to note on the reports.

**ARTICLE 7. Discuss and Consider Village Landscape Bids**

Member Stephan pointed out a few bids he was unimpressed with due to over pricing or their proposal didn't match what was wanted or needed. He was leaning towards the Enchanted Gardener since it seemed like there would be more plants.

Chair Puplava said she would be in favor of Harder & Warner since they handle the maintenance to the pots. Member Kleyla was in agreement because they work with many businesses.

Member Makkar suggested going with Enchanted Gardner with a stipulation of pot maintenance.

**Motion was made by Member Kleyla to grant the proposal to Harder & Warner for this year's contract. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 8 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 8. Brief Updates**

- Tuffy Muffler Lease – The current owner of Tuffy Muffler has been looking to sell. There has been no real momentum in transferring of the business.
- Transportation Committee – There is anticipation of a report coming to the DDA for consideration in May, and a decision will have to be made in June.
- Replacement of Economic Development Director – There were interviews held for this position with a very promising candidate.

**ARTICLE 9. Any Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- a. Strategic Plan Implementation Meeting – April 21, 2023
- b. Transportation Committee Meeting – May 8, 9, or 10, 2023
- c. Next Meeting: May 16, 2023

**Recent Meeting Minutes**

- a. Township Board (2/8, 2/15, 3/1, 3/8, 3/22, 3/28)
- b. Strategic Plan Implementation Committee (3/17)
- c. Transportation Committee (1/10)

**ARTICLE 10. Adjournment**

**Motion was made by Member Siegle. Supported by Member Makkar. Motion carried 8 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Growney, Secretary