

Minutes
Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority
Tuesday, May16, 2023
5:30 P.M.
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

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

ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda
Motion was made by Member Stephan to approve the current agenda. Supported by Member Siegle. Motion carried 8 to 0.

ARTICLE 3. Approve the minutes of the April 18, 2023 meeting
Motion was made by Member Growney to approve the April 18, 2023 meeting minutes as written. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 8 to 0.

ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to agenda and non-agenda items
There was no one that wished to speak.

ARTICLE 5. Discuss and consider Cascade Road Bridge Pedestrian Facilities

Township Engineer Thorne said the Road Commission was asked to create a design to improve the pedestrian walkway. They created a design that includes a barrier on either side of the current sidewalk. There would be about a foot taken from each through lane on the road to better accommodate the barrier. Also included is a rail detail made to stop a vehicle from going through it. Completing both sides will take roughly 15 days and a total of \$400,000.

Engineer Thorne added that the Road Commission gave an alternate plan creating a wider sidewalk only on the north side with no barrier, leaving the south side untouched.

Members agreed that the plan with a barrier made more sense since the initial conversation was aimed at solutions to keep pedestrians safe.

Member Siegle asked if the road lanes will still be average width. Township Engineer explained the outside lanes will have a width of 12ft, which is not unusual considering freeway lanes are about a 12ft to 13ft maximum.

Member Stephan asked what material the railing would be made out of. Manager Swayze said the railings have to be manufactured specifically for this project and he assumed they will be made of steel.

Member Preston asked if the Road Commission would consider lowering the speed with these road modifications. Chair Pupilava clarified that the only way to change the speed limit is through a traffic study, but she would like to look into alternative traffic calming measures.

Member Vogel said this project is a must-do from a pedestrian safety standpoint.

Chair Pupilava wanted an element of reflective lights added to the railings to draw more attention and awareness to them.

Manager Swayze said \$250,000 had already been included in the budget for this project.

Motion was made by Member Vogel to approve the proposal of up to \$250,000. Supported by Member Siegle. Motion carried 8 to 0.

Supervisor Lesperance left the meeting at 5:54 P.M.

ARTICLE 6. McKenna – Transportation Committee Update and Recommendation

Danielle Bouchard with McKenna presented the Transportation Subcommittee's and McKenna's findings on the current and existing conditions on Route 29 with The Rapid. The contract with The Rapid expires in August and they would like a contract renewal by the June meeting.

Route 29 runs approximately 177 weekly buses, providing services from Woodland Mall to Cascade Rd, costing \$218,000 from DDA funds. Bouchard noted that 73% of people who ride this bus do not travel passed Meijer, indicating the importance of this destination. Similarly, 79% of riders boarding in Cascade were heading westbound.

There were 3 surveys sent out to residents and business owners within the DDA area on behalf of the Transportation Committee. Of the 362 responses from township residents, only 4% said they utilized the bus. Business owners only had 33 responses and said 25% of customers or employees utilize the bus. Many respondents indicated that the bus service does not meet their needs and some even have to transfer to reach their destination.

Bouchard reached out to neighboring townships to investigate non-milage communities regarding their bus services. The conclusion was that other townships typically have fewer bus stops and pay anywhere from \$36,000 to just under \$100,000.

Some key conclusions noted were that riders on Route 29 are not Cascade residents, but are customers and employees of businesses between Patterson and Kraft. Less than one-third of riders travel beyond Meijer, so eliminating that wouldn't be largely impactful. Bouchard did not believe that the current bus route is an effective use of DDA resources per the analysis.

The final recommendation was to eliminate Route 29 and extend Route 28 to serve Meijer along with other points between Patterson and Kraft Ave.

Member Siegle asked where the core ridership primarily comes from. Bouchard said, based on the analysis, the core ridership is primarily people from adjacent municipalities traveling to Cascade and visiting various places to work or shop.

Bouchard explained another option utilizing a Lift Pass Program which essentially subsidizes Lift riders in a geofenced area. The partner is able to create their own fee schedule and process for how they go about subsidizing rides. For example, if a rider were to travel from their house to Meijer, there is a subsidy that would automatically apply to the ride. The DDA can commit to any dollar amount of their choosing to apply to individual rides in the geofenced area. She also noted that Lift covers the launching, implementation, and ongoing maintenance for government partners. Members agreed this would be a good fallback plan if The Rapid does not want negotiations.

Motion was made by Chair Puplava to have herself, Supervisor Lesperance, and McKenna negotiate with The Rapid to eliminate Route 29 and extend Route 28 to the Cascade Meijer. Supported by Member Growney. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 7. Brief Updates/Discussion

- Strategic Plan Implementation Update- Last meeting, there was discussion on the Architectural Review Board and ensuring the B2 district was included. New trails, the Burton overpass bridge, and pedestrian walkways for Cascade Rd bridge were also discussed.
- Joint Meeting Discussion- Chair Puplava will initiate a conversation to implement joint meetings.
- Planting Project Update- Manager Swayze and Administrative Assistant Madi Dodge will be meeting with Harder and Warner to discuss plantings.
- Library Project Update- Lulu Brown, library manager, said the Township Board approved the library project. They will begin by removing invasive species.
- Metro Cruise Update- There is a Metro Cruise Meeting in May. The event and name are now privately owned.
- Replacement of DDA/Economic Developer Director- There was a lack of agreement with the preferred DDA Director candidate and a new job position has been posted.
- Informational Meeting/Annual Report- There is a requirement to have an informational meeting. Chair Puplava wanted to ensure there is one schedule for the June meeting.

ARTICLE 8. Any other business

Member Vogel thanked Manager Swayze for the work he has done for Cascade Township.

Upcoming Meetings

- a. Strategic Plan Implementation Meeting – May 19, 2023
- b. Next DDA Board Meeting – June 20, 2023

Recent Meeting Minute

- a. Township Board (4/12, 4/26)

Budget to Date

ARTICLE 9. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Siegle to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Vogel. Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting adjourned at 7:09 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Growney, Secretary