

Minutes  
Cascade Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors  
Tuesday, May 17, 2022  
5:30 PM.  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

**ARTICLE 1.** Chairwoman Puplava called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.  
Members Present: Vogel, Kleyla, Reynolds, Stephan, Puplava, Lesperance, and Siegle  
Members Absent: Growney and Makkar  
Others Present: DDA Director Korhorn, The Rapid Representative Maxwell Dillivan, and others on the sign-in sheet

**ARTICLE 2. Approve the Current Agenda**

**Motion was made by Supervisor Lesperance to approve the current Agenda. Supported by Member Kleyla. Motion carried 5 to 0.**

Members Stephan and Siegle arrived at 5:31.

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the minutes from the April 19, 2022 meeting**

**Motion was made by Supervisor Lesperance to approve the minutes from both the open and closed portions of the April 19, 2022 meeting. Supported by Member Kleyla. Motion carried 7 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.**

There wasn't anyone attending who wanted to speak at this time.

**ARTICLE 5. Status of Strategic Plan Process**

Strategic plan consultants Danielle Bouchard and Chris Khorey presented their next steps and findings from the Strategic Plan Survey to the DDA. The first draft of the information was also included in the meeting packet. On May 25<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Commission and Township Board will have a joint meeting to discuss the outcomes and make sure they are on the same path, then they will make the decisions and information into a refined, easy to read graphic to share with residents. The next step will be another survey sent out to residents to validate their findings and dig deeper into the previous results; this should be completed in late summer or early fall.

Next steps for the DDA will include some members participating on a subcommittee with members of the public and representatives from other committees/boards/commissions to look into what the residents want in a public meeting space, submit their findings at a public meeting, create a consensus vision and work with landscaping to an action plan, and implement the plan in the next three to five years.

There was discussion as to if only the Township's branding would be getting a refresh or if the DDA branding would as well. The DDA's website and branding were redone in 2017/2018 and there will be further conversation as to if this could include an overhaul, revitalization, or shift.

Other topics included ensuring community representation on township boards and committees, establishment of official boundaries for the upper and lower village districts, amendment to the DDA TIF plan and how it can be used, updating the 28<sup>th</sup> St Corridor Plan, updating the Complete Streets Plan, implementing corridor plans in partnership with the Road Commission, establishing opportunities and funding for public/private partnerships, enhancing community spirit, ensuring transportation safety in the village area, and researching and potentially changing the township's public transportation system.

Chair Puplava suggested that updating the DDA Strategic Plan should be added to the line about updates to the TIF Plan.

Member Siegle suggested rewording the section regarding a public meeting location to clarify if the programming or the location should be developed first.

The next iteration of the community survey will be open through July 5<sup>th</sup>.

Multiple members stressed the importance of having a joint meeting with the other boards and commissions as part of the Strategic Plan.

**ARTICLE 6. Discuss and Consider The Rapid Bus Contract**

Director Korhorn explained the DDA's situation with The Rapid bus contract over the last few years and said that the committee needs to vote on whether to extend the current bus contract through August of 2023. This would give the bus committee time to research other methods of mass transit to see how they match up to service by The Rapid and if there is another method/company, or combination of methods and companies, that may be a better fit for Cascade Township. The current contract is effective through August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and the new contract would have to be signed and approved by the next meeting to continue the service for another year. Maxwell Dillivan of The Rapid Bus Service was available to answer questions about the contract via Zoom.

Supervisor Lesperance shared frustration that the bussing contracts haven't always been read and approved by legal council in the past, that the language of the contract included statements she didn't believe were necessary, she has heard complaints about The Rapid from residents, and she does not think the service the township has received in years past is commensurate of the benefit it has brought to the community. She asked Dillivan if the contract, as presented, included paratransit. Dillivan said that it did and always has; this can be found in the second line of article three of the contract.

Member Siegle suggested that the DDA did not need to agree with each line of the contract but rather if the DDA conceptually believes providing transportation for the community is something they want to fund.

**Motion was made by Chair Puplava for the DDA to pursue a contract with the Rapid to continue providing bus service on Route 29 through August 29, 2023 and direct Township counsel to negotiate an appropriate contract with the Rapid which will be presented to the DDA at its June meeting. Supported by Member Vogel. Motion carried 7-0.**

Chair Puplava encouraged commission members to share any ideas they have for alternative public transportation solutions as well as solutions that could be an effective hybrid with The Rapid.

Dillivan shared that the final decision and signing of the contract will need to take place at the next meeting, on June 21<sup>st</sup>.

**ARTICLE 7. Discuss and Consider DDA Sponsorship to the Cascade Metro Cruise Warmup Event**

Director Korhorn spoke about the success of the Cascade Metro Cruise Warmup Event last year and said that they will not be requesting many sponsorships from local businesses again this year due to the burden of the COVID-19 pandemic. She requested the DDA provide \$7000 in funding for the event, which is a reduction from the previous year.

**Motion was made by Member Stephan to provide \$7000 in funding for the Cascade Metro Cruise Warmup Event. Supported by Member Reynolds. Motion carried 7-0.**

**ARTICLE 8. Discuss Median Islands – Centennial Park**

Director Korhorn explained that, in 2008, the DDA partnered with Centennial Business Park to create a master plan. In order to complete objectives from this plan, the DDA partnered with Centennial Business Park again in 2018 to add a sidewalk loop and streetlights on Orchard Vista. The Road Commission let the township know they would be repaving the repairs in 2019/2020 and said that was the best time for the DDA to make any road improvements they were interested in. The DDA decided to add median islands at the Cascade Business Park entrances, roundabouts inside the park, and to narrow traffic lanes to help with traffic calming. These enhancements ended up being exchanged for median islands, two on Charlevoix and Tahoe and two on Formost at Orchard Vista. There are not any decisions to be made about this project at this time.

Supervisor Lesperance said that she requested this be included on the agenda to increase communications with other committees and the public about DDA project. She shared that she has received overwhelmingly negative feedback on the median islands from the Fire Department, Kent County Road Commission, Buildings & Grounds, and residents who live back in the condos. They currently lack any plantings and are frequently hit while driving.

Member Kleyla asked if the DDA looks back on their previous projects to see if what they implemented or created is working. Director Korhorn replied in the negative and Member Kleyla suggested that this may be a positive change to implement so they can see if the changes they've made are successful and fulfill the need the project set out to address. Member Vogel thought this could be a way to see if their projects are accomplishing what they set out to do because, though there may be negative feedback on a project or decision, it could still be accomplishing its goal. The DDA will formalize a procedure to track their projects and results.

Chair Puplava will reach out to the Fire station to hear about their concerns and talk to the Building & Grounds to address lack of plantings in the median islands. Supervisor Lesperance requested taller plantings be added to them but Director Korhorn said that the Road Commission will not allow increased height of the plantings in the island medians.

Supervisor Lesperance requested Director Korhorn schedule a joint meeting between the DDA and Township Board.

**ARTICLE 9. Discuss Tree Planting Grants and Opportunities**

Supervisor Lesperance requested tree planting be on the agenda because she heard about the tree match programs DTE and Consumers Energy have at the parks committee and wondered if this was something the DDA could also benefit from. Director Korhorn suggested using this to replace the trees that have fallen or been removed in the last couple years. Member Stephan requested the DDA consider sightlines to signs and businesses.

**Motion was made by Member Vogel to apply for the tree planting, grant matching application and matched the funds received. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 7 to 0.**

Director Korhorn will complete the grant application.

**ARTICLE 10. Review Chapter 8 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding the Village Design Review Committee**

Director Korhorn explained what the Village Design Review Committee is and that its sole purpose is so that, if an owner wants to make changes to their building that violate the zoning ordinance, this committee can meet to approve the design. Member Kleyla suggested the township develop a cohesive set of architectural design standards for the upper and lower villages.

**ARTICLE 11. Any Other Business**

- a. Next Meeting: June 21, 2022. The committee will talk about The Rapid bussing and will hopefully have an update from the joint strategic planning meeting.
- b. Supervisor Lesperance shared that at the previous strategic planning meeting, they discovered that DDA funds can help pay for projects outside of the business district

if it benefits the businesses within the business district. She encouraged the DDA to consider funding a pedestrian bridge over the Cascade River as the residents are very interested in this project.

- c. The next Strategic Plan meeting will be June 24 and the next strategic plan survey will launch on June 13<sup>th</sup>.
- d. Township Board Approved Minutes: April 13 & 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Chair Puplava shared that these will be noted on the agendas to keep members informed of the projects and concerns of the board and promote cross-committee collaboration.

**ARTICLE 12. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn was made by Member Kleyla. Supported by Member Stephan.  
Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Growney, Secretary