

Minutes
Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority
June 21, 2022
5:30 P.M.
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

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

ARTICLE 2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion was made by Member Vogel to approve the current agenda. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 3. Approval of the Minutes of May 17, 2022

Motion was made by Supervisor Lesperance to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2022 meeting. Supported by Member Growney, Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge any visitors wishing to speak regarding any agenda or non-agenda items

Carl Knieling, General Manager of the soon to be Sheraton Hotel, stated that many employees and construction workers use the bus as their main means of transportation every day. He explained further that there are employees who recently began using the bus due to gas prices. Knieling wishes to continue to employ these hardworking individuals to ensure their lives become more successful. In response to a question on shifts, he stated that they have 3 shifts: 7am-3pm, 3pm-11pm, and 11pm-7am.

Mike Kasmauskis, Centennial Office Park Owners' Association President, shared that, coming from an economic standpoint, there are companies and businesses he works alongside of that have national tenants who compile lists they check off before making decisions. Some of the check-offs include proximity to airports, if hotels are nearby, restaurants in the area, and public transportation. If one of the amenities is not checked off, some corporations may not move into the area, negatively impacting local businesses.

Eric Hooker, the store manager for Walmart, explained to the committee that he has many customers and associates who depend on the bus system. Some of his employees are going to school to help better their lives and some have special needs and depend on public transportation. For many associates, they already have to work around the bus schedule to schedule their shifts.

ARTICLE 5. Discuss and Consider The Rapid Bus Contract

Chair Puplava briefly went over the previous meeting. Despite legal counsel being unable to review the contract, she wanted to move forward in approving the contract

renewal. The total cost to renew the contract was \$218,754.85, coming from DDA funds approved by the Township. The agreement has a one-year term and can be terminated by either party with a 3-month written notice. The language in this proposed contract shares similarities with the language previously reviewed, negotiated and revised by the DDA. Chair Pupilava felt that, to avoid disrupting the service, the DDA needed to approve the contract. Michigan's Recodified Tax Increment Financing Act gives the board the power to enter into any contract necessary to exercise the board's powers.

Mike Homier, Legal Counsel for the township, clarified questions pertaining to review of the contract. He stated that his firm also works for The Rapid, and they have never reviewed this contract. Legally, he cannot represent both sides as The Rapid is not waving this conflict. Until the conflict is waved by both parties, he is precluded from giving an opinion of the contract for Cascade and The Rapid. He offered Manager Swayze and Supervisor Lesperance a referral to Attorney Nick Curcio, who could evaluate the contract. In terms of a threshold for the total cost of a contract, he does not believe the township has a provision. He stated he wouldn't expect municipalities to enter into any large monetary contracts without legal review.

The committee had varying opinions on whether to disregard the contract because it had not been reviewed by legal counsel and on adjusting the frequency of buses from every 30 minutes to every 60 minutes to save money. Some Members agreed that focusing on the issue at hand (extending the bus contract to ensure the public has transportation) should be the main concern. In terms of cutting bus hours, it was suggested that this be considered for the next contract. The opposition stated that any legal contract must be reviewed, and potentially revised, especially a contract that had never been reviewed by legal counsel. As far as bus frequency, it was suggested they complete a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the bus system.

Chair Pupilava honed in to clarify what way the committee was leaning. She believed everyone was in agreement that the bus service needs to be continued, and the committee should investigate how to make it more beneficial and cost effective, research any alternatives, and figure out what will best serve the community. She, and many other Members, wanted the contract to be reviewed this week to make sure Township interests are being protected.

Motion was made by Chair Pupilava to have the DDA engage Attorney Curcio to review the ITP contract on the DDA's behalf. Supported by Member Kleyla. Motion carried 7 to 0.

Motion was made by Chair Pupilava to approve the renewal of the contract with the ITP, subject to review by Attorney Curcio for protection of the DDA's interest. Supported by Member Makkar. Motion carried 7 to 0.

Motion made by Member Reynolds for Chair Pupilava to sign the contract once it was reviewed by Attorney Curcio. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 7 to 0.

Chair Pupilava asked Director Korhorn to let the contacts at the ITP know where the DDA was on signing the contract. She also requested that Director Korhorn send out a Google invite for the next Bus Committee meeting.

Chair Pupilava reiterates their decision path for the summer and wanted to discuss these points at the next meeting. In June 2022, they will investigate and analyze the full scope of services the Rapid provides, in July 2022 they will explore and brainstorm transportation options, and in August of 2022 they will investigate other transportation options for the township to provide a comparison to The Rapid's services. Member Vogel encourages other Members to share feedback and thoughts on transportation. Supervisor Lesperance thought the Township should partner with an advisor in the transportation industry to fill knowledge gaps. Members believed this was a good idea and it will be added to a future agenda.

ARTICLE 6. Strategic Plan Update

Member Kleyla stated that the advisory committee meeting was canceled for the week as they were waiting for more results to come in from the second survey. Currently, they have 200 responses and the survey closes July 5th. Results of this will be discussed at the July 8th Advisory committee meeting. Once they have made revisions from the data, they will submit the final document for the township board packet by July 22nd. Chair Pupilava will add an update on this to the July meeting agenda.

ARTICLE 7. World War II Veteran – Virgil Westdale Tribute

Supervisor Lesperance explained that the American Legion Post and a member from Cascade Community Church recently shared the background on a World War II veteran, Virgil Westdale. Westdale was the highest decorated World War II veteran and, when his time in the military ended, he spent 30 years in Cascade at Cascade Community Church. Westdale made the most of his life by becoming an author, a pilot, and a security officer at the airport before it became the TSA. At the age of 86, he became employee of the year and retired at 91 years old.

Supervisor Lesperance brought this information to Manager Swayze and explained that the American Legion Post and the members of his church would like to rename Museum Gardens Park in his honor and find way to commemorate him. The American Legion Post is willing to contribute financially to this cause.

Members were concerned that they may not be authorized to change the name of the park, even though they are all in support of it. They agreed to approach the American Legion about what their specific plan would be. Chair Pupilava will add this to the next agenda.

ARTICLE 8. Review and Consider LED Streetlamp Retrofit Labor Costs

Director Korhorn stated that 30% of the street lamps ordered came in from the retrofit project that was scheduled in 2019. Since the job was bid out 2 years ago, the contractors have requested additional funds of \$1,260 to cover increased cost of labor.

The job was originally bid for \$68,141 and, with the added cost, they are still below other bidders. Member Vogel shared that he is getting ready to add a second location for his store and bids are \$200,000 more than they were in 2017, so he viewed this as a non-issue.

Motion was made by Member Kleyla to approve the increase of \$1,260 to cover the rising cost of labor. Supported by Member Growney. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 9. Discuss Holiday Lights RFP

Director Korhorn asked for clarification on the location of lights. She wondered if they could be included into the RFP; most of the current lights are damaged. In the past, Museum Gardens Park and Tassell Park have been contracted out for lights around trees, the Pavilion at Tassell Park, and the rooftop at the museum. Buildings and Grounds have hung string lights around poles, hung up snowflake lights, and put-up artificial Christmas trees. Members agreed to create two RFPs, one for the purchase of lights and the other for installation.

Member Makkar requested a Christmas tree or at least lights to be added to a dangerous intersection for more visibility. Member Kleyla agreed and suggested they discuss that at a future meeting.

ARTICLE 10. Goal Building for DDA Board

Member Kleyla created a vision statement for the committee to review and she requested this to be added for discussion at a future meeting.

ARTICLE 11. Any Other Business

- a. The next meeting is July 19, 2022.
- b. Township Board Approved Minutes for May 11th and 25th, 2022.
- c. Joint Meeting Request- Manager Swayze has stated that he was thinking August time-frame for the meeting when the strategic plan is in draft form.
- d. Next meeting will include strategic plan update, further discussion of the Virgil Westdale Tribute, Christmas lights, and goal building.
- e. Member Growney suggested talking to Daylily Floral about planting boxwoods in the center of pots that were recently done. Director Korhorn will send an email with any financial differential.

ARTICLE 12. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Reynolds to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Kleyla. Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Growney, Secretary