

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority
May 20, 2025, at 5:30pm
Cascade Library Wisner Center
2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE

- ARTICLE 1.** Vice Chair Stephan called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
Members Present: Vogel, Carlson, Preston, Bingham, Lesperance, Stephan
Late: Makkar
Excused: Kleyla
Others Present: Township Manager Jade Smith, Executive Assistant Jessica Stine,
Finance & Budget Director Ninciari
- ARTICLE 2. Approval of the Agenda**
Motion was made by Member Bingham to approve the agenda. Supported by Member Preston. Motion carried 6 to 0.
- ARTICLE 3. Approval of the Minutes of the March 18, 2025 Meeting**
Motion was made by Member Preston to approve the minutes as written. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 6 to 0.
- ARTICLE 4. Approval of the Minutes of the April 17, 2025 Meeting**
Motion was made by Member Carlson to approve the minutes as written. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 6 to 0.
- ARTICLE 5. Village Design Next Steps Discussion**
There was discussion surrounding the April 17, 2025 joint DDA-Township Board meeting to discuss the completed village concept. Members were especially pleased with the plans surrounding roads, traffic, and Tassell Park.
The Township will soon be going out for a Request for Qualifications, which is different than a Request for Proposal in that it lets the Township solicit bids from firms, consultants, and contractors based on their experience and expertise rather than solely on price. It will be published on May 29th and cover the current footprint of Tassell Park in addition to the former doctor's office and Tuffy properties. Staff intend to bring their contractor recommendation to the July 15th meeting. Site construction will likely take place in 2026. The portion of the project contracted to OHM is now complete, but they will likely bid on this second phase. They previously presented a phase 2 proposal, but the total cost was almost \$900,000 and staff wanted to put the project out for bid to be a good steward of taxpayer dollars.
McKenna will present on form-based code at a future meeting to show how they are working with the Township Board and Planning Commission to create

specifications/qualifications for properties in the Township. Connections with the Kent County Road Commission have been vital in this planning.

Thornapple Plaza, a key area of the village that is underutilized, is owned by a private equity firm who wants to meet with the Township to discuss potential development of community space.

ARTICLE 6. Bonding Process

Finance & Budget Director Nenciarini presented the basics of bonds.

Member Makkar arrived at 6:13pm.

She explained that the debt burden to the DDA is also a dept burden on the Township as a whole, so the whole board will be involved with decisions regarding bonding. Bonding requires contracting with many different organizations including bond counsel, financial advisors, a rating agency, and an underwriter. The resolution to issue bonds will need to be approved by the Board of Trustees and the DDA with a 'not to exceed' amount.

ARTICLE 7. Staff Updates

Manager Smith talked about the new concert series that will be taking place at Friendship Park in the summer. He also explained that the village flowerpots would be brought in-house this year, instead of using Harder & Water, and will be coordinated by Volunteer Coordinator Heibel. A new candidate for DDA Manager has been identified and Manager Smith will be meeting with them later in the week.

The library refresh project is on schedule to finish in early June and the only thing that is delayed is delivery of the shelving. Money was approved to update Wisner Center as well, so all Township July meetings that are normally held in the Wisner Center will be held at Fire Station 1.

The pedestrian bridge over the Thornapple River is almost complete and is on schedule and under budget. Once the pedestrian assets are complete, Kent County Road Commission will continue redecking the bridge. The ribbon cutting ceremony will likely be at Heritage Festival.

A new bank may be coming to Centennial Park, and a law office is moving into the village.

ARTICLE 8. Any Other Business

There wasn't any other business to discuss at that time.

ARTICLE 9. Acknowledge Visitors & Public Comment

There wasn't anyone who wished to comment at that time.

ARTICLE 10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Makkar to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Carlson. Motion carried 7 to 1. The meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Vogel, Secretary