

Minutes

Cascade Charter Township
Downtown Development Authority
Tuesday, August 15, 2023
5:30 P.M.
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

ARTICLE 1. Chair Puplava called the meeting to order at 5:34 P.M.
Members Present: Vogel, Kleyla, Preston, Puplava, Growney, Lesperance, Siegle
Members Absent: Stephan and Makkar
Others Present: Planning Director Brian Hilbrands, Interim Manager Ted Andrzejewski, and those listed on the sign-in sheet.

ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda

Motion was made by Member Growney to approve the current agenda. Supported by Member Vogel. Motion carried 6 to 0.

ARTICLE 3. Approve the Minutes of the July 18, 2023 Meeting

Motion was made by Member Kleyla to approve the minutes of the July 18 meeting minutes as written. Supported by Member Preston. Motion carried 6 to 0.

ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak

Terri Riggle (2765 Orange Ave) lives at a senior low-income household in Cascade. She stated that losing The Rapid and Go Bus will be very impactful for some residents. Riggle encouraged Board Members to make a decision tonight so residents can have some sort of transportation.

Frances Foley (2765 Orange Ave) expressed concerns about weekend transportation. She hoped this project wouldn't stall any further as there are emergencies that happen on weekends and residents need transportation.

ARTICLE 5. Discuss and consider transportation planning

- Hope Network services proposal

Member Siegle arrived at 5:44 P.M.

Interim Manager Andrzejewski said there have been many calls to the township office regarding transportation. The goal is to eventually provide services similar to The Rapid, with the initial emphasis on getting people to work and ensuring disabled and special needs individuals have transportation. Details on the preliminary route will be available on the Cascade Township website. Ride Link is another option for transportation with weekday hours of 7:30 A.M.- 4:30 P.M. The cost is \$2.00 each way.

The implementation of Hope Network and the Go Bus is being done within one month; a process that usually takes many months to complete. Interim Manager Andrzejewski

anticipates there to be mishaps, but the transportation organization is flexible and will adjust to any issues.

Scott, manager of the Wheels to Work program, attended the meeting to answer questions related to Hope Network. He explained that Wheels to Work is the other side of Hope Network that helps individuals travel to work. The program can be flexible, and if there is an expressed need to extend bussing hours, he believed that could happen. Scott mentioned that funding is a major factor in ensuring everyone's transportation needs are efficiently met.

Member Vogel reiterated that the transportation issue has been an ongoing topic of concern and discussion for the past 2 years. After attempting to negotiate alternative transportation methods with The Rapid several times, no agreement was reached. As a result, the township pursued other options for bussing. He empathized with the fact that this change is impacting the lives of residents.

Chair Puplava proposed to have the DDA fund Hope Network through the end of the year with the remainder of the funds allocated for transportation.

Scott mentioned that, with the lack of data, it will be hard to initially estimate the total cost. Figuring out the bus size and frequency of stops will be crucial in the implementation.

Interim Manager Andrzejewski stated that there was an email sent out to businesses advising them to figure out how many of their employees would participate in this program and what time services would be needed.

Motion was made by Chair Puplava to have the DDA approve the reallocation of the remaining 2023 fund budgeted for transportation to negotiate and solidify a contract with Hope Network's Wheels to Work Program. Supported by Member Siegle. Motion carried 7 to 0.

- Termination of McKenna SOW re LyftPass

Chair Puplava said there were difficulties in dealing with Lyft regarding the previously approved implementation of the program. Legal counsel identified obstacles relating to how they structure payments through their standard services agreement.

Danielle Bouchard with McKenna said they are looking to terminate the contract as written up to this point and everything else will be null and void.

Motion was made by Chair Puplava to terminate the statement of work given to McKenna as it relates to the implementation of the LyftPass program. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 6. Discuss and consider Thornapple Plaza planning

- Proposed Amendment to DDA Strategic Plan Contract

Bouchard said there have been developing connections made with owners of the Thornapple Plaza. McKenna has been meeting biweekly to discuss expectations, assess where projects are going, and add any assistance they may need. McKenna associates decided to have an architect create possible designs, which are included in the packet. Bouchard proposed to amend the current contract to focus on the implementation of Thornapple Plaza updates. The same amount of funding will be allocated for this project.

Motion was made by Supervisor Lesperance to approve the contract amendment to reallocate funding to assist in updating the Thornapple Plaza. Supported by Member Vogel. Motion carried 7 to 0.

Member Siegle expressed concern about other property owners in the plaza area not being in agreement with the design concept. He suggested obtaining a letter of intent to ensure cohesiveness.

ARTICLE 7. Project Updates

- **Cascade Road Pedestrian Bridge** – Cascade Township’s engineer has been working with Spaulding DeDecker and the Road Commission to come up with a plan. Members agreed construction would make more sense in the summer months, as traffic is not as heavy.
- **Tassell and Westdale Memorial Park** – Buildings and Grounds staff have updated these parks.
- **Pathway Committee** – The pedestrian bridge on Cascade Road will have higher railings and more lighting.
- **Master Plan Amendment** – Cascade Township is working with McKenna to align the Master Plan with the Strategic Plan.

ARTICLE 8. Brief Updates

- **DDA/Economic Development Director** – No update.
- **Strategic Plan Implementation Update** – No update.
- **Joint Meeting Update** – No update.
- **Update Regarding Scheduling of Information Meeting** – The Informational Meeting is scheduled for September.

ARTICLE 9. Any Other Business

- Upcoming Meetings
 - a. Strategic Plan Implementation Meeting – **August 18, 2023**
 - b. Next Meeting: **September 19, 2023**
- Recent Meeting Minutes
 - a. Township Board (7/12/23, 7/26/23)

Budget to Date

ARTICLE 10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Vogel to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Kleyla. Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting adjourned at 7:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Growney, Secretary