

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OCTOBER 16, 2007
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call To Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Williamston City Hall Council Chambers by Vice Chair Tom Mitchell and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call:

Vice Chair Tom Mitchell, Authority Members Barb Vandenberg, Timothy Grossman, Emily Lilly-Lacca, and Karen McGarry. Absent: Ken Zichi (arrived at 7:05), Bev O'Malia, Jeremy Emmi, and Alyson Wendt.

Motion by **Vandenberg**, second by **Grossman**, to excuse O'Malia, Wendt, and Emmi. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

Also Present:

Deputy Clerk Holly Thompson, Community Development Director Michelle Aniol, Community Library Foundation Representative Leo Sheets, and Susan Graff, and citizen Mike Thomas.

4. Approval of Agenda:

Add 11e. Christmas Lights, 11f. Methodist Church Parking Lot, and 11g. Brochures.

Motion by **Vandenberg**, second by **Grossman**, to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

5. Audience Participation:

*Zichi arrived at 7:05 p.m.

Susan Graff distributed information and commented that CADL is asking the TIFA's to pass the money they capture from CADL back to CADL. The Williamston Library Foundation is asking the TIFA's to keep the money in the community rather than sending it to CADL.

Member Grossman asked Ms. Graff how the Foundation feels about CADL's plan.

Ms. Graff responded that they cannot take a stance on the issue but the Foundation does have some questions about the plan. They are planning to use the property they have purchased on West Grand River Avenue. She added that the Foundation will keep the DDA informed of what is going on.

Leo Sheets commented that he believes Williamston could use a 15,000 square foot library. He added that Hastings built their library using 100% donations.

Mike Thomas commented that discussions have taken place with the EDC regarding the desire for electrical outlets at the Farmers' Market in order to get more vendors for the market. He added that the DDA may want to consider taking over the Farmers' Market because the EDC will not be able to support it soon.

Member Zichi commented that he would like to see an awning structure put up for the market as well.

6. DDA Regular Minutes of September 18, 2007:

On page 3, item 15. 7 lines down delete "next" and add "November and December", and the 8th line down add and "s" to "meeting".

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Grossman**, to approve the regular DDA minutes of September 18, 2007 as amended. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

7. Accounts Payable:

Motion by **Vandenberg**, second by **Zichi**, to approve the bill from Wilcox in the amount of \$5,500 as presented. Yes: Grossman, McGarry, Zichi, Mitchell, Vandenberg, Lilly-Lacca. No: None. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Grossman**, to table the Bronner's bill until the next meeting. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

8. Treasurer- Budget Report:

The City Treasurer did not submit a financial printout for September for DDA review.

9. Community Development Director:

Director Aniol reported that the final Williamston is Livin' Large workshop will be held on Wednesday, October 17, 2007 at 7:30 a.m.

The last day of the Farmers' Market is October 25th.

The building at 109 E. Grand River Avenue is being looked at by a potential buyer.

Director Aniol commented that she hears a lot of negative comments about the City from potential developers that they have heard from other business owners. She encouraged the business owners to talk positively about Williamston. She commented that she is amazed at all the ways the City helps the business community.

The City has authorized McKenna to do a diagnostic and technical review of the Zoning Ordinance.

A holiday marketing campaign will begin in November.

10. Action Items

10a. Property Boundary Survey:

Member Zichi commented that the DDA needs a better explanation of what is being asked for and the City needs to find out whether there is title insurance to cover the cost of a property boundary survey.

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Grossman**, to table the property boundary survey until the next meeting. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

11. Discussion Items

11a. Status of 109 E. Grand River in Condemnation:

Previously discussed.

11b. Signage Grants- Committee to Set Guidelines:

Members Grossman, Vandenberg, and Lilly-Lacca volunteered to serve on the Signage Grants Sub-Committee.

11c. City Council News:

Member Zichi commented that he hears that the City needs to be more business friendly, and expounded on the many things the City does to encourage business in the City.

Member Grossman commented that he has not personally had problems in dealing with the City.

Member Vandenberg commented that she has had problems with the building inspector when working on her building.

Member Lilly-Lacca commented that there trivial things often get overlooked by the City like the fecal matter on the sidewalks.

Director Aniol gave an example of a town that took pride in their business fronts and made sure that their stoops were swept every morning before opening. The City puts money into advertising and marketing campaigns. She added that the upcoming campaign should encourage everyone to take pride in their City.

Member McGarry commented that the City should look into the answer to a question before telling a customer they do not know. She commented that she

notices when people are having a bad day on the other side of the front counter. There should be more of a welcome to the community from the City.

Member Grossman commented that there is a perceived lack of friendliness with the staff and contracted services.

11d. Excess Christmas Décor:

Director Aniol reported that there are a lot of excess Christmas decorations that need to be either used or gotten rid of. She suggested having a garage sale, selling it on E-bay, or to other municipalities.

Member Zichi commented that he would like to see some of the decorations used on the platform for the tree lighting.

11e. Christmas Lights:

Director Aniol reported on the need for new lights and garlands for the lamp posts. She also suggested that the DDA use the person that waters the planters to put up and take down the decorations.

Motion by **Vandenberg**, second by **Grossman**, to authorize up to \$4500 of incidental expenses of Christmas decorations as well as installation and removal. Yes: Mitchell, Vandenberg, Grossman, Lilly-Lacca, Zichi, McGarry. No: None.

Motion passed.

11f. Methodist Church Parking Lot:

Director Aniol reported that she received a call from Celeste Reed from the Methodist Church regarding people cutting through their parking lot to avoid the stop light. She asked the DDA for suggestions on improving the situation.

The DDA recommended that this issue first be addressed with the Police Department for enforcement.

11g. Brochures:

Director Aniol reported that the Shop, Dine, and Services brochures are running low and new ones should be printed.

The DDA suggested a holiday guide, like the one that was done the previous year detailing store hours, and days of operation.

This will be on the next agenda for action.

15. Public Response:

Vice Chair Mitchell called for public comment at this time and there was none.

16. Adjournment:

Motion by **Zichi**, second by **Grossman**, to adjourn. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

Meeting Adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Holly M. Thompson, Deputy Clerk

Date Approved: _____