

MINUTES
ST. IGNACE DDA MEETING
September 13th, 2019
(unofficial)

Members Present: Chairman Jim North, Vice Chair Mayor Connie Litzner, Pat Ramsay, Barb Brown, Secretary Barb Yshinski, Cheryl Schlehuber, Linda Bell
Members Absent: Phil Ruegg, Heather Aukeman
Staff Present: DDA Director Scott Marshall,
Others Present: Erich Doerr from the St. Ignace News, Samantha Belonga

Chairman Jim North called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

I. MINUTES

Motion by Schlehuber; support by Ramsay to accept the minutes of August 9th, 2019. Motion carried.

II. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: Cheryl Schlehuber

III. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Marshall reviewed the bills and the revenue and expense report inside the DDA budget line by line. **Motion** by Schlehuber, support by Ramsay to accept the financial report. Motion carried.

IV. BUSINESS:

Excuse Absent Members – Motion by Brown to excuse absent members, support by Litzner. Motion carried.

Little Bear Park Project- Marshall updated the board that on August 21st, the city manager asked if he would be willing to take over the park project since recreation director Williams will be leaving. Marshall said he would make some phone calls since the bid deadline is August 22nd. Marshall called contractors in the area and they weren't aware of the project. Marshall contacted the DNR grant coordinator, the city engineer and the city manager and requested a deadline extension to September 6th. Marshall spent the next 3 weeks talking to contractors. All contractors were interested in the project but were booked for 2019 and starting to book for 2020. On September 6th, the city received 2 bids that were very high according to engineering estimations. Marshall spoke with the grant coordinator and explained that this project has had 4 different project coordinators which have slowed the progress thus resulting in bidding a project out in August in a seasonal state. The grant coordinator said that the project extension has ended and the city needs to request a new extension and it may not be granted. Marshall repeated the difficulties of going through 4 different project leaders and also how the recession forced a lot of small contractors to find another line of work and now that the economy has picked up there isn't enough contractors in our area to keep up. I told her that I would like to bid out the project in the winter with a start date of spring. Marshall said that this is a great

project for St. Ignace. It will positively impact everyone, families, youth, visitors and businesses. Marshall updated the city manager and the mayor about the project extension and asked if they would provide a letter of support with the project extension. The city manager asked Recreation Director Williams to complete the extension request and asked to review it before it is submitted. Marshall emphasized that this project is very doable and it needs to get done. Marshall also suggested that whoever is the project leader should have a committee working on the project and meeting weekly and also updating donors and the public with progress. Marshall also advised that there will be more hurdles. The next round of bids may be high and then we will have to make some cuts but we can make these cuts, as a group making smart choices. North talked about the importance of having the recreation board support the project. Litzner confirmed that the recreation board supports the project.

America in Bloom Program: Marshall played a video of Holland Michigan participating in the America in Bloom program. Samantha Belonga spoke about the benefits of the program and her willingness to be the leader of this project. Brown questioned where the America in Bloom people comes from? Belonga said the first step is seeing if the community would like to participate. Will this project be in the downtown only or a whole city project? Schlehuber said that we should involve the townships. Brown suggested that Belonga meet with other organizations to see if they will participate. Belonga said that she will take this project to the city council.

Crosswalk Update: The crosswalk committee Marshall, Barb Brown, Tony Brown, Schlehuber and Carol Bell walked downtown on September 5th to look at the crosswalks and the sidewalk trees. Suggestions were to outline the crosswalks with pedestrian lime green paint, post a sign at both ends of town alerting drivers that there are upcoming crosswalks and to have signs at crosswalks that alert drivers. Another suggestion was to have the crosswalks signs alert pedestrians to cross only when traffic is clear. Marshall has spoken to MDOT who will not give us the authority to put up signage to control traffic but Marshall believes that we are still able to alert traffic about the crosswalks. The DDA Board and MDOT both have said that this is a city decision that must come from the city manager. The DDA is here to offer input on would they would like to see for signage. The committee also suggested a crosswalk at city hall and the north side of McCann at the downtown shell. North said that the DDA would be open to contributing to some of the cost since the crosswalks get people to the boardwalks and parks. North also stated the importance of having crosswalks near the boardwalk entrances. Brown said that there should always be a crosswalk in sight. The board agreed that the crosswalk on the south end of town going up the “Y” should be removed for safety reasons since traffic is coming down the hill too fast with limited sight distance. Litzner said that crosswalk signage is very important. The committee suggested replacing some of the trees with sidewalk art in the locations where there are too many trees in a short distance.

Set Budget Committee Meeting: North asked Marshall to send possible dates to the committee members. North suggested meeting sometime between Sept 30 and Oct 4.

Azzar Boardwalk Update: Marshall said that Azzar made a counter offer of \$18,000. Marshall wrote another letter to Mr. Azzar explaining that the DDA can't afford \$18,000 but we would like to resolve this situation. Marshall emphasized how important the boardwalk is to the community and his wishes to build a better relationship between Mr. Azzar and the City of St. Ignace.

Museum Manager's Report- Sorrels is on vacation visiting family. Marshall said that Sorrels updated him on the sales for July and August and her grant work.

Additions to the Agenda-

Schlehuber asked about the horse trailer at the Star Line parking lot and if there is any way to keep the parking lots attractive and open to the visitors. It was discussed and determined that the city doesn't have any authority in this situation.

Other – None

Public Comment – None

There being no further business: Meeting adjourned at 9:38AM

Respectfully submitted: Barb Yshinski