

**Ishpeming Downtown Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 25, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Ishpeming Downtown Development Authority was held on Monday, November 25, 2024, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Aeh at 4:00 p.m.

Present: David Aeh, Brice Sturmer, David Aro, Tracy Magnuson, Brian Buchanan, Antonio Adan, Kelly Milano, Krystan Beaumont, and Grant Getschow (9). Absent: Renelle Halverson and Carrie Meyer (2). Also present was Linda Andriacchi for Beautification and Chris Germain from the Lake Superior Community Partnership.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Member Buchanan seconded by Member Magnuson and carried unanimously to approve the September 23, 2024 minutes as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Interim Manager Grant Getschow reviewed the monthly financial report for period ending October 31, 2024.

A motion was made by Member Aro seconded by Member Sturmer and carried unanimously to approve the financial report as presented.

BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE REPORT – Linda Andriacchi reported that all baskets and supplies have been stored for the season. She also noted beautification will need another person to water flowers for next year. Discussion followed on the possibility of utilizing a DPW summer laborer for the flower watering.

She thanked David Aeh for serving the community and for all his assistance with the beautification effort in the City of Ishpeming.

7. LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORT

Chris Germain reviewed the updates from September and October 2024. He advised their workshops have been very well attended on the west end; the magazine would be available for review by the end of the year; and the small business celebration was well attended at The Mater. The LSCP has hired a Community Economic Development Coordinator and the position will run through August 2025 and another round of Match on Main will begin after the first of the year.

a. 2025 Professional Services Contract

Chris Germain reviewed some of the minor changes in the proposed 2025 Lake Superior Community Partnership professional services contract; and explained the contract allows for hours to the City and the DDA but otherwise the contract was very much the same.

Discussion followed on joining the Michigan Main Street program which can open up some more opportunities, including grant funding; and the benefits of having business workshops available on the west end.

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DDA members and staff thanked the LSCP for all their assistance during the last year.

Member David Aro advised he would abstain from voting as he was a member of the LCSP Board.

A motion was made by Member Magnuson, seconded by Member Buchanan to accept the proposed professional services contract with the LSCP for 2025 as presented. The motion passed 8-0 with Member Aro abstaining.

8. INFORMATIONAL SESSION

- a. Open Informational Session – Member Aeh opened the Informational Session at 4:42 p.m.
- b. Take Public Comment – There was no public comment. .
- c. Close Informational Session – Member Aeh closed the Information Session at 4:43 p.m.

9. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING/LETTER OF SUPPORT

a. Cliff's Shaft Mine Museum

Member Aeh explained there has been many discussions regarding the Cliffs Shaft Mine Museum renovating the old "Chem Lab" behind the new pavilion and using that location to relocate the Historical Society. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) give DDA support to the Cliffs Shaft Mine Museum.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed renovation and specifically noting that the DDA would support the project and the efforts of the Museum but would not obligate any funding. It was suggested by several members that the language of the MOU be more specific to the proposed renovation and that no funding was being requested or expected from the DDA. After the MOU was revised it should be brought back to the DDA.

Member David Aeh would abstain from voting since he was on the Historical Society Board.

It was the consensus of the DDA to table the Memorandum of Understanding and ask the Museum to incorporate more specific language detailing the proposed renovation of the "Chem Lab" with no funding requested from the DDA. Member Aeh would contact the Museum and request a new MOU be prepared and submitted back to the DDA.

b. Marquette County Landbank – Anderson Building Stabilization

Member Adan advised the Land Bank was applying for Blight Elimination funding from the State of Michigan Land Bank Authority for stabilization of the east wall of the Anderson building and for replacement of the windows. Discussion followed on finding interested developers for the site and if the wall was stabilized it would help to secure a developer for the Anderson Building.

Member Adan would abstain from voting because he was the Executive Director of the Marquette County Land Bank.

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A motion was made by Member Magnuson, seconded by Member Buchanan and carried unanimously to approve the Letter of Support for the Anderson Building as presented. Motion passed 8-0 with Member Adan abstaining.

10. REVIEW OF 2025 FAÇADE GRANT APPLICATION AND TIMELINES

There was discussion related to the timeline for completion of façade grants and it was suggested the timeline run through the end of the fiscal year, December 31st, and, also adding language that payment could also be made to the owner with proof of payment to the contractor.

A motion was made by Member Aro, seconded by Member Magnuson and carried unanimously to accept the façade grant application as presented for 2025 incorporating the two recommended changes above.

11. REVIEW OF 2025 START UP ASSISTANCE GRANT APPLICATION AND TIMELINES

There was discussion pertaining to increasing the Start Up Assistance grant from \$2,500 to \$5,000 to encourage businesses to develop in Ishpeming with this amount being reviewed on an annual basis; utilizing the LSCP to advertise the grant; adding a clearer definition of a new business; and developing a scoring/ranking matrix for the grant applications.

Also discussed was the need for additional restaurants in the City and developing a Start Up Assistance grant specifically for restaurants. It was suggested the amount for a start-up assistance grant for restaurants should be up to \$20,000 to encourage developers to open a restaurant in the City; and having the LSCP prepare scoring criterion for continuing an existing restaurant or starting a new restaurant.

A motion was made by Member Sturmer, seconded by Member Buchanan and carried unanimously to increase the amount of the original startup assistance grant to be “up to \$5,000” and to develop scoring criteria for the applications; and develop a startup assistance grant for restaurants “up to \$20,000” and develop a scoring criterion for the applications. In addition, request assistance from the LSCP to develop the scoring criteria and promote the grants.

12. COMMUNITY CENTERS GRANT – SKATEPARK UPDATE

Interim Manager Getschow advised the proposed skate park did not include a pump track due to funding and the anticipated construction of the park would in the spring/summer of 2025. There was some discussion on what to place in the grass area around the skate park since the pump track would not be installed. Some suggestions included a picnic table/bench or depending on cost, a splash pad.

13. ISHPEMING COMMUNITY EVENTS REPORT

Member Magnuson advised ladies night had a great turnout and the Christmas Festivities would be coming up.

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14. OLD BUSINESS

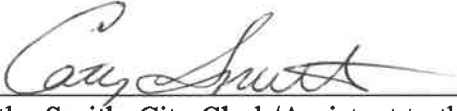
City Clerk Cathy Smith reminded the DDA of the joint meeting with the Planning Commission in January; however, the date set was January 6th and she would like to check everyone's availability for the following Monday, January 13th for the joint meeting. The Planning Commission members were available for the new date. Clerk Smith would notify all members of the date change.

15. NEW BUSINESS

Member David Aeh announced his resignation from the DDA. Members and staff thanked Member Aeh for his time and effort as a member of the Downtown Development Authority and for his many years of service to the community.

16. ADJOURNMENT

At 5:48 p.m., a motion was made by Member Aro seconded by Member Sturmer and carried unanimously to adjourn.



Cathy Smith, City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager