

Downtown Lansing Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Online Meeting
July 8th, 2021

Members Present: S. Schriener, J. Tischler, C. Zarkovich, K. Dorshimer, T. Benoit, J. Estill

Members Absent: J.V. Anderton, Ashlee Willis

Board Advisors Present:

Board Advisors Absent: B. Dowd, P Spadafore

Staff Present: C. Edgerly, Julie Reinhardt

Guests Present: Stewart Powell

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 11:36 am

II. **Citizen's Comments:** None

III. **Correspondence** - See parking later on the agenda

IV. **Consent Agenda Approvals**

a. **Agenda for July 8th, 2021**

b. **Minutes from June 10th, 2021**

c. **Committee Reports**

C. Zarkovich moved to approve Consent Agenda items, J. Estill supported. Motion passed.

V. **Downtown Business & Development Update:** Stewart Powell Owner of Linn & Owen Jewelers is here today. He's bringing 47 years of downtown experience to the table. He thinks we need to focus on these three obstacles:

1. Parking: it's too complicated. Customers don't see signage or know how it works. Businesses are spending a LOT of time and money handling this. It costs an additional twenty cents just to use a credit card.
2. He would like a 20 minute grace period without clients getting a ticket, as well as better parking signage.
3. Vacant Buildings: Weeded and un-kept spaces make it look sad and dangerous. Property owners should be required to maintain these eyesore properties so it looks safe and welcoming. The city should be saying "fix it, or we will and charge you for it."
4. Retail is experiencing something odd, and we don't know if brick and mortar will come back to this degree again, we may end up a lot more online. His business is not downtown workers, it's drive up business. We need to keep adapting.

VI. Downtown Maintenance Update & Report (Lake State): Jimmy said everything is as expected. Weeds have been a bit of a struggle because of the weather. Cathleen asked for the rain gardens and issues on Michigan Ave to be addressed today.

VII. Old Town Update (Ben Dowd, OTCA): Art Feast is August 21st

VIII. Reports

Director Report – C. Edgerly: Several events are upcoming: Lansing Alive, Summit Comics' Grand Reopening. The first AfterGlow Market was last week, and lessons were learned for going forward. Those will continue every Friday through Sept. 3rd. Tacos and Tequila at the Stadium and the Car Show are also coming up July 24 and staff are working with event partners regarding public transportation options and businesses offering extended hours to keep people flowing and spending local dollars downtown. Aug 5th will be a Downtown Grub Crawl and the Chamber is assisting with that. There will be more seating areas and sponsorship to cover these additional outdoor seating spaces. C. Edgerly also met with a local foundation. The foundation may have some additional support for DLI with our goals including lighting, permitting, interior rehab, micro-market support programming and funding for marketing staff, etc.

President's Report- JV Anderton: None

Monthly Financials- Jim Tischler: Straight forward this month. Not much happening. But if you look at June, we ended up getting 93K from the city (rather than 30K) to cover the gap we had from last year.

K. Dorshimer moved to support approval of all reports and placing them on file, J. Estill supported. Motion passed.

IX. Action/Discussion Items

a. Downtown and DLI Strategic Plan - A. Willis, J. Estill, J. Tischler

J. Tischler asked us to postpone this discussion for A. Willis and the full board to be in attendance for guidance.

b. Development Projects Downtown - C. Edgerly, K. Dorshimer

There is a new program: Sunrise Small Business Grants. Info is available and K. Dorshimer suggested to send it to everyone who may need it. Open for another 3 weeks.

Lake Trust property looks like it may be moving forward to be converted to residential.

Brownfield agreements are being finalized and those projects will start soon also. It will retain the historical integrity.

-The Hookah Lounge may become a music venue which could be a great new addition. Waiting on financial proposals and working with potential new owners to make sure numbers work, as well as working through development liquor license

-Also with the Lansing Built To Last competition, the winner is moving forward with the former Hallmark space and she should be there soon. Runners up are looking like they are planning for downtown as well.

-A new plant shop has a soft opening today Neva Lee's! Stop in and see them over the next few weeks as they come into fully opening.

c. **New DLI Office Space & Incubator - J. Reinhardt:** The move got pushed back a month so that the property owner can get the space built out appropriately. Sept 1st is looking like the ready date. For the incubator space there has been a lot of meetings and planning held in order to ensure that these businesses become viable post-incubator. Programming and training being offered to businesses while they are incubating is hopefully our route to success. Right now it's looking like a pop-up holiday market start and then a real launch in the spring.

d. **Parking:** This is an issue for everyone right now. The board suggests first 15 minutes or half hour free, no fee to use the app, training on the app, etc. It's driving people away from a very fragile downtown. In the packet there is some correspondence and may be some collaborations with OT and the CVB.

J. Tischler asked that Parking be a topic on the agenda next month and that we consider a dedicated monthly discussion on this topic.

X. Other New Business

Maintenance - J. Estill: Jen and Jimmy clarified what is Lake State's responsibilities downtown, but she shared concern that there are places on the River Trail related to the Lansing Center and Afterglow market that look horrendous and unsafe and it needs to be addressed. Also the trees are dying and she wonders if we should be pushing for them to at least be trimmed to be safe?

J. Tischler spoke to the river trail bridge replacement and other dangerous areas that aren't being maintained and would like to know if we can get our hands on some sort of plan and strategy.

XI. Adjourn: J Tischler motioned adjourned the meeting at 12:53 pm. K. Dorshimer seconded. MOTION PASSED.