

**Van Buren Charter Township  
Downtown Development Authority**

**Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – 5:30 pm**

Chairperson Dolph called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Chairperson Dolph, Vice Chair Atchinson, Secretary Zoller, Director Bird, Director Bechtel, Director Blank and Supervisor Combs.

**Members Absent:** Director Baskin (excused), Director Miller (excused), Director Laginess (excused) and Director Richter (excused).

**Others in Attendance:** DDA Executive Director Ireland, Recording Secretary LaMothe, and an audience of four.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion Atchinson, support Zoller to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion Bechtel, support Combs to approve the DDA Minutes of Tuesday, September 24, 2013 as presented. Motion carried.

**REPORTS:**

**1. Director's Report:** DDA Executive Director Ireland provided an update on the status of outstanding projects including: Belleville Road sidewalk (warranty deeds have been received for two parcel from Tyler north and need to be recorded), I-94 North Service Drive Sidewalk, Wayne Country Zoo Millage, Belleville Road Curbs, Belleville/Ecorse Road Landscape, Belleville Road Fence between Harmony Lane and Sunrise, Van Buren Township Hall Roof, Aerotropolis

**2. Communication Associates – Marketing initiative updates:** Website Traffic and Social Media, Business Cards, Photography of DDA Zone, Networking / Brochure Distribution, Additional Marketing Opportunities/Events, Van Buren Township Website, Michigan Downtown Association

**3. Wade Trim:** Belleville/Ecorse Road Intersection is in the final phase of construction and Wayne County will soon move to the process of closing the project out and providing a final project cost accounting to the DDA. Also the contractor is finishing the punch list of items remaining to be completed.

MDOT has run out of FY 2013 funding for the signalization project leaving it unfunded. Wayne County agreed to move the project into FY 2014 and use its portion of their federal funding allotment to sponsor the project. Wayne County has placed the project into the required State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) managed by SEMCOG. The project will be out for bid this winter and awarded in late winter/early spring for 2014 construction.

**4. McKenna Associates:** Landscape at Ecorse/Belleville Road Intersection discussions have occurred with Wayne County to begin the surplus right-of-way determination process for the land located east of the service drive near Stacks. McKenna is trying to determine if the ownership is Wayne County or the State of Michigan and will update the DDA as necessary.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1.** Executive Director Ireland reviewed background information on the genesis of the fence on Belleville Road along the Belle Harbor Subdivision. Executive Director Ireland requested that a survey be done to determine where the fence is located and the survey clearly indicated that the fence is located in Wayne County right-of-way [this information was confirmed with the Director of Engineering, Wayne County Roads]. Some portions are two (2) inches inside the right-of-way, while other areas are nearly four (4) feet. There are trees falling on the fence, some areas have barbed wire along the top, there is extensive growth of poison ivy and the overall appearance is unsightly which is inconsistent with the DDA Plan. Wayne County has agreed to approve removal of the existing

fence to be replaced with a tongue and groove 6' high vinyl fence in the color Frontier Blend in the same location where the chain link fence presently sits. An inventory of all trees has been conducted.

Director Bechtel expressed his disapproval of the Belleville Road fence project for three reasons: 1) He feels the project is outside the DDA scope, which is to benefit all residents and this project could be perceived by some to only benefit 11 residents. 2) Concern of potential legal ramifications [citing an example]. 3) The DDA setting a precedent of other homeowners wanting their property beautified.

Executive Director Ireland informed those present that the project is located within the DDA District and it benefits anyone who walks, drives and/or bikes past the fence. This project is in a prominent area that markets the image of downtown Van Buren and this would cure a blighted condition [noted in the DDA Plan] along the main corridor of the DDA

Executive Director Ireland notified in writing the 11 homeowners who would be directly impacted and also attended a Belle Harbor Subdivision meeting with Vice Chair Atchinson to address any questions or concerns. It was explained the existing chain link fence is located in the Wayne County right-of-way and not on private property. Of those residents in attendance 80% voted in support of the DDA's project to remove and replace the fence. One property owner is concerned with regard to the privacy fence they had installed and the removal of trees near the lot line. It was explained that unfortunately the trees that are growing in the fence will have to be removed and if it is the homeowner's desire that the trees be saved it would require that their privacy fence would have to be removed. It was requested that the property owner convey their preference to the DDA in writing and an e-mail was received that they want their personal privacy fence to remain intact.

Each of the Directors present was asked and provided his/her opinion on the project. Executive Director Ireland added that, she wanted the DDA to acquire a supply of replacement parts and ensure that the project area and fence is photographed and/or videotaped before any work is performed.

Motion Blank, support Bird to approve the Belleville Road Fence Replacement plans, to advertise for bids with bids expected to be due and opened in November; approve the proposed services of McKenna as outlined in the correspondence of October 16, 2013 on a time and materials basis up to \$6,000 and approve Resolution DDA 2013-001, Fence Maintenance and repair. ROLL CALL VOTE. Yeas: Atchinson, Zoller, Bird, Blank, Combs and Dolph. Nays: Bechtel. Absent and excused: Baskin, Miller, Laginess and Richter. Motion Carried.

2. Motion Bechtel, support Atchinson to consider approval of Resolution - DDA 2013-002, Reimbursement Resolution. Motion carried.

**NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** November meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, November 18, 2013 at 5:30pm.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion Atchinson, support Blank to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karin E. LaMothe  
Recording Secretary