

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Vice Chair Mary Ann Shurlow called the meeting of the Clare Downtown Development Authority to order at 8:15 a.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2024.
Board and Authority members present:
Lisa Benic, Shari Buccilli, Dean Doherty, Lori Fassett, Ken Hibl, Jeremy Howard, Greg Rynearson, Amy Shindorf, Vice Chair Mary Ann Shurlow, and Dawn Thomas.
Members absent:
Vince Demasi, Dave Maxwell, and Gus Murphy.
Also present:
Luke Potter – DPW Director, Joy Simmer – Parks and Recreation Director, Tom Pirstill & Jeremy Switzer – CCTC, Allison Heinrich – MMDC.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** Motion by Shari Buccilli and supported by Mary Ann Shurlow to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** Motion by Greg Rynearson and supported by Lori Fassett to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.
4. **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND APPROVAL AND PAYMENT OF BILLS.** The financial statements and bills were submitted to the Board for review and approval. Motion by Dawn Thomas and Amy Shindorf supported by to approve the acceptance of the financial statements as presented and to approve the November, 2024 bills as presented. Roll call vote: Yeas: Lisa Benic, Shari Buccilli, Dean Doherty, Lori Fassett, Ken Hibl, Jeremy Howard, Greg Rynearson, Amy Shindorf, Vice Chair Mary Ann Shurlow, and Dawn Thomas. Nays: None. Absent: Vince Demasi, Dave Maxwell, and Gus Murphy. The motion was unanimously approved.
5. **OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS.** None.
6. **NEW BUSINESS.**
 - A. **Overview & Discussion of Michigan Public Act 197 of 1975 and Public Act 57 of 2018 –**
The two referenced public acts outline the authority, the procedures and rules, and the primary functions and responsibilities of downtown development and other similar economic development authorities within the state. To assist our two newest trustees, Lisa Benic and Lori Fassett, in understanding their roles as Clare DDA Trustees and for the information of any attendees we have present for the required/scheduled PA 57 hearing, the DDA spent a few minutes discussing these two acts and the provisions of the acts outlined therein.
 - B. **PA 57 Public Information Meeting –** Chairman Hibl provided the DDA Board and those in attendance an overview of the PA 57 requirements, and briefly reviewed the purpose and mission of the Clare DDA. Shari Buccilli made the motion to hold the public hearing in accordance with PA 57; Amy Shindorf supported the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Chair Hibl opened the public hearing. Tom Pirstill-CCTC Director spoke in support of the work that the DDA does and the great partnership with CCTC both past and present. He also announced his upcoming retirement and that his replacement has been hired. Dean Doherty made the motion to close the public hearing in accordance with PA 57; Dawn Thomas supported the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Chairman Hibl closed the public hearing.

- C. Review of DDA By-Laws and Procedures** – The Board conducted a review of the existing by-laws, and two additions were suggested. 1. Add Treasurer’s Report item to each agenda. 2. Add the requirement of a roll call vote for all motions that require approval of a financial expenditure. Dean Doherty made the motion for the by-laws to be adopted with the 2 additions as of December 12, 2024 for use in 2025 and Dawn Thomas supported the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Other Information & Discussion Topics

1. *Michigan Revitalization & Placemaking Program (RAP)* – Recently City Manager Howard and DDA Chair Hibl participated in a Zoom meeting with the regional MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corporation) Community Development Director and Allison Heinrich, the Clare County Director for Middle Michigan Development Corporation, related to grant and economic development opportunities and assistance that are currently available to us from the state. The state’s primary “umbrella” program is its Revitalization & Placemaking Program. As the next funding round for grant assistance closes on January 30, 2025, the DDA is not likely in a position to take advantage of the program in this round. However, it is suggested the DDA should identify projects that may be eligible for inclusion in the next round of funding in 2025.
2. *Possible Purchase of Art Sculpture by Clare County Arts Council* – Carol Santini, the President of the Clare County Arts Council, recently shared with Chair Hibl that the artist of the “My Favorite Thing” sculpture (the dog with the ball in front of the White House Restaurant) contacted Jeff Best that he would be willing to sell the sculpture to the Arts Council for \$15K rather than transporting it back to North Carolina (the artist’s home/studio). The original asking price of the piece was \$37K. The Arts Council will make a decision regarding the purchase in January, but they will require donations to assist in the purchase if they decide to move forward with the offer. The DDA would entertain a request for a donation but a condition of any donation made by the DDA would require that the sculpture’s “home” would have to be within our geographical district boundaries and that we would likely want to have a say in respect to the placement of the sculpture.
3. *Christmas Ribbons for DDA Light Poles* – The northernmost block of the DDA district along McEwan Street does not have streetscape and is lit by fiberglass light poles owned by Consumer’s Energy. Due to the fiberglass construction, the poles have extremely limited wind-loading capacity; consequently, no lighted decorations or banners are supposed to be attached to the poles. However, Consumer’s Energy has informally granted us the capacity to place red bows on the poles to alleviate the current “gap” we have in the City’s holiday decorations along McEwan Street. We have ordered 6 packages of 6 bows (16”x24”). There are 29 total poles, so this would give us 7 extra bows if there are any damaged or lost in the wind or weather. Only 7 of the poles are in the DDA District so the cost will be approximately \$70.
4. *McEwan Street Tree Planting Progress Report* – Luke Potter, DPW Director gave an overview on the progress of the removal of the old trees in the DDA on McEwan and the placement of the first few new ones. Work will continue as time and weather permit.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT.** Tom Pirnstill – CCTC inquired if there was any ordinance against people holding up signs and/or protesting on the street corners in the Downtown. The board responded with the information that it was not prohibited if they were not obstructing pedestrian movement on the sidewalk or violating any other laws.

8. **DDA DISCUSSION TOPICS.**

Discussion was held regarding the newly placed crosswalk on McEwan and that it is very helpful for the students and crossing guards, but we may need to change one of our Downtown wayfinding signs not that the turn no longer is allowed.

Discussion was held regarding maintenance on downtown light poles. Seven of them are currently removed to be sandblasted and repainted. They will be put up again when complete.

The venue is looking to host a new downtown music one day festival. More information will be coming soon.

9. **ADJOURNMENT.** Chairman Hibl adjourned the meeting without objection at 9:10 a.m.

Ken Hibl, Chair

Jeremy Howard, Secretary