

City of Beaverton DDA

Regular Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2023

Meeting opened by Kurt Grove at 5:15pm at the Beaverton City Hall

Roll Call:

Present: Kurt Grove, Chair, Jason Blades, Lou Stornello, Christine Gerace, and Interim City Manager Scott Govitz.

Absent: Cindy Trumble, Mayor Ray Nau, Kelly Wyrembelski, Renee Lang

City Staff: Janelle Keen

No approval of September 11, 2023 minutes due to no quorum present

No approval of Financial Reports due to no quorum present

Old Business:

- The improvement project on the corner of Pearson and M-18 is in process. Govitz will reach out to F&V to get an update on the progress. Project will be paid for by DNR grant. Surveyors have been on site.
- Our real estate agent Jennifer Acosta is no longer processing property sales although she will continue work on the Roman Motors building sale. There is a purchase agreement in place.
- Winona Fassett property is still owned by DDA. Govitz will work with Wyrembelski to check into value of property. He suggested selling it ourselves instead of seeking a new real estate agent. The City received blight funds and had the home removed. A "for sale" sign can be put in front of property with the City of Beaverton and a phone number on it. We should have in mind a starting sale price so that we don't get into difficulty of having some say they didn't have a chance to purchase and we get our minimum amount. Property is zoned commercial.

New Business:

- It was discussed with Santa's Light Crew about putting lights up permanently in the community and on buildings and also stringing lights across the bridge. This can be done but some of the poles on the corner of the bridge do not have the electricity needed. Also, if the lights were not within a certain distance, the lights would not sync with the lights in town to change colors as desired. We would also have to have permission from MDOT to hang the lights. The cost was approximately \$13,000 for just the bridge portion along with the cost of getting the power to the bridge corners. If MDOT did a project on the bridge it is possible it might interfere with the lights. It would have to be checked into. This is a project to check into for next year.
- The Huntington Bank parking lot purchase is still in the bank's hands. The property is encroached by the hardware building by approximately 2 feet. Huntington needs to fix that before the purchase can be completed. It's not known if the owner of the hardware store has been informed. Scott will reach back out to Huntington. We need to close the Gladwin County Endowment Fund grant for the project.

- The City has undertaken decorating downtown with pumpkins and straw bales. The school art classes paint the pumpkins. The cost this year for the pumpkins and hay bales was \$625. He asked members to think about what else could possibly be used instead of hay bales. Govitz feels this should be a DDA expense instead of a City expense. We could also look to other sources and possibly some donations of hay. BABA could possibly partner with the DDA on the cost also. Gerace suggested a fund raiser of pumpkin bowling or something like that to cover the cost. At this point, support in general for DDA to pay for this and believe it's a good festive look.
- A new member is needed on the DDA board. They must be a resident and must live within the DDA district to fill a vacancy left by same.

Other Communication:

Stornello approached Govitz about some structural changes to the building he leases from the DDA. Customers have to walk through the shop/bays to get to the office and this is a potential safety issue. He would like to move the office near the customer entrance door. The structure of the building would have to be studied to see if this would be possible and still maintain the structure of the building. Stornello will continue to work on solutions and bring information back to the DDA. This would be a lease holder improvement to be approved by the DDA. More to come.

Govitz stated that the City has written several million dollars worth of grants. We did receive notice that we will receive 6.5 million dollars of 100% grant funds for water improvements in the City water related items. We are having a water well issue that we are dealing with and we will use some of those funds on that well. In addition, we have written one for just over 10 million dollars that we hope to hear on in the next couple of weeks. Govitz said he is anticipating several million dollars from that grant. A letter of interest has been sent for a grant from the State Department of Rural Agriculture Development for a downtown survey. The grant would look at our downtown and find ways to enhance and build it up. This grant would allow us to bring in an outsider's perspective to look at our structures and what's currently going on in our downtown buildings. They would offer thoughts, ideas and opinions on how we can take advantage of existing programs at state and federal levels for such things as housing downtown. Matt Lang has identified the potential for up to 15 apartments in the downtown area. The other side of it is the businesses and storefronts and how to create more businesses. We have some businesses that are out of place in the downtown area. There may be some funds from this grant to start to move forward with some of these items. The grant would be for \$40,000 but there is an \$8,000 match needed. The options for match money would be the DDA, BABA, the City or to write an additional grant for it. Govitz is working on another grant that could possibly be used for match funds. This grant is up to \$63,000 to help us enact projects as well. Discussion took place on how to bring small businesses into the downtown. The DDA's funds are in the grant and those in attendance support providing the match. Govitz indicated that funds would be there between this and next year's DDA budget and this is a great fit for what the DDA is intended for.

We'll be in good shape due to watching our finances even after the project down by the theatre is done. The objective will be to help support business, community growth and housing. Govitz questioned the members about their thoughts on the \$8,000 match for the \$40,000 grant. The grant has to be finished by November 2nd. In the grant, it has to be stated that we have support for the \$8,000 match needed. This grant would be for someone to come in and give suggestions to business owners on how to increase the income of their building or upgrade their storefront by use of certain grants. He provides the business owner the plan and the information behind it to

prove it's possible. MSHDA has programs for creating opportunities for the business owners to obtain housing in their buildings but the housing is just one part of the program. Some of the businesses that do not have a storefront could actually move to another location and possibly open up a storefront. Govitz asked for the members' thoughts on this grant opportunity and also the match funds. Between this years and next year's budget, there are plenty enough funds to cover this expense. There would have to be a budget amendment but the money is there for the amendment.

The city is also applying for an MEDC CDBG grant for planning resulting from the 2020 flooding. Kurt Grove, Christine Gerace and Lou Stornello being the general public, input is requested on the following: The same grant that the City wrote for the 10.3 million dollar CDBG grant that includes several projects around the community related back to the flood mitigation, we now intend to write a grant for planning under the same grant. Infrastructure was one element and now the MEDC has opened the planning portion. There are approximately 5 plans related to the Beaverton dam. Studies are recommended and required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission under a grant that we have under the Federal Energy Management Administration. These plans would do things like look at the probable maximum flow for flood, a dam safety plan for the hydro dam along with other elements. There are approximately \$280,000 in studies that would be accomplished under this grant. The other portion as of today would be a separate one for a storm sewer study in the City and possibly others to be submitted. These two grants are in process with previous council approval and should be submitted this week. Grove stated that we should have a safety plan study with what we went through with the dam. Govitz stated that these are 100% grants. Gerace stated that she is in definite favor of the grant.

Newsletter will be going out tomorrow. It will be on the website and you'll also receive an email including the newsletter. Govitz will be working with the new City Manager and he will be phasing out as she takes over her duties.

Meeting adjourned at 6:14pm

Respectfully submitted,

Janelle Keen
City Clerk