

**CITY OF WARREN  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD**

**Meeting held on September 4, 2024**

A regular meeting of the City of Warren Downtown Development Authority was called for 3:00 pm on Wednesday, September 4, 2024.

**Present:**

Mayor Lori M. Stone  
Oscar Zamora  
Hank Riberas  
Michael Wiegand  
Gregory Jackson  
Tom Petzold

**Absent:**

Joseph Vicari  
Nicholas Lavdas

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Lori Stone called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Mayor Lori Stone took roll call of present members.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Zamora, supported by Mr. Wiegand, to excuse the absent members: Nicholas Lavdas & Gregory Jackson.

No opposition, the motion passed

\*Mr. Jackson arrive at 3:06 pm during audience participation.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Wiegand, supported by Mr. Petzold, to adopt the September 4, 2024 agenda.

No opposition, the motion passed

#### **4. Audience Participation**

#### **5. Approval of Minutes (August 14, 2024) (pg. 1)**

##### **MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Riberas, supported by Mr. Zamora, to approve the minutes for the August 14, 2024 DDA meeting.

No opposition, the motion passed

#### **6. Old Business**

##### **A. Change Order to PO 2528647, City Square Fountain Pumps Replacement – Great Lakes Pump & Supply (Anthony Casasanta [pg. 11])**

Anthony Casasanta explained the need for additional funding to cover shipping costs for the replacement of city square fountain pumps. The pumps have been delivered and installed. The cost for shipping was not included in the original request for funding.

##### **MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Zamora, supported by Mr. Jackson, to approve a change order to provide additional funding for shipping costs associated with the replacement of City Square fountain pumps by Great Lakes Pump & Supply in the amount of \$210.07.

##### **ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mr. Wiegand	Yes
Mr. Riberas	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

No opposition, the motion passed

#### **7. New Business**

##### **A. 6020 Chicago Road Surveys and Assessment – Professional Service Industries, Inc (Tom Bommarito [pg. 13])**

Mr. Bommarito discussed the need for environmental testing (asbestos, mold) at the newly acquired property on 6020 Chicago Road to ensure safety before proceeding with any design ideas. Discussion on how this property was listed as a historic site that could be repurposed for community use ensued. Approval of funding for asbestos survey, baseline mold assessment, and lead-based paint survey is being requested. Mr. Bommarito has confirmed that the roofing component will be managed by Jeff Reeves in collaboration with Schena Roofing.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Petzold, supported by Mr. Jackson, to approve funding for Asbestos Survey, Baseline Mold Assessment & Lead-Based Paint Survey for 6020 Chicago Road by Professional Service Industries, Inc in the amount of \$3,500.00.

**ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Wiegand	Yes
Mr. Riberas	Yes
Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

No opposition, the motion passed

**B. ADA Compliance/Braille Signs for W.C.C. - Signarama (Tom Bommarito [pg. 20])**

Mr. Bommarito opened the discussion by reminding the board of the previous approval for the purchase of Braille signs for Warren City Hall and the Police Department. He emphasized the importance of continuing the city's efforts to enhance accessibility by updating signage at the Warren Community Center. The implementation of these updates would ensure that the facility meets ADA compliance standards, aligning with the city's ongoing commitment to improving accessibility throughout all public spaces.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Riberas, supported by Mr. Wiegand, to approve funding in the amount of \$916.50 for the purchase and installation of braille signs at the Warren Community Center by Signarama, including authorization for an upfront deposit of \$458.25 (50% of the total).

**ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Riberas	Yes
Mr. Wiegand	Yes
Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

No opposition, the motion passed

**C. Community Center Pool Slide – Empex Productions Limited (Anthony Casasanta [pg. 23])**

Anthony Casasanta reported to the board that while inspecting the pool during its shutdown period, it was discovered that the slide in the children's zero-entry section was cracked. Although all other components of the water park were found to be in good condition, the slide needed to be replaced. Mr. Zamora noted that the crack in the slide indicated frequent use, which is expected as fiberglass doesn't last forever, particularly after years of wear.

The slide had been in place for 25 years, well beyond its warranty period. He emphasized that a thorough inspection had been conducted not only by internal staff but also by an external company specializing in pool and equipment inspections. Based on these findings, the board confirmed that the replacement of the slide was necessary.

Mr. Zamora remarked on the importance of addressing the issue promptly to avoid any potential injuries, such as people getting pinched or encountering fiberglass splinters while using the slide. The discussion also touched on the fact that the replacement includes installation, which was confirmed.

When asked about the timeline for the pool's reopening, Mr. Casasanta stated that they were aiming for September 16th, though there might be delays depending on the arrival of the remaining equipment and supplies. Mayor Stone expressed appreciation for the proactive management of the pool's inspection and staffing, and she expects the pool to be in its cleanest condition once it reopens.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Wiegand, supported by Mr. Zamora, to approve funding for new pool slide at the Warren Community Center from Empex Productions Limited in the amount of \$2,212.23.

**ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Wiegand	Yes
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Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mr. Riberas	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

No opposition, the motion passed

**D. Parks & Recreation Enclosed Trailer – American Trailer Mart (Anthony Casasanta [pg. 27])**

Mr. Casasanta opened a discussion regarding the purchase of an enclosed trailer from American Trailer Mart for use by the Parks and Recreation Department. The primary purpose of the trailer will be to house and transport snow plowing equipment during the winter months. It was noted that the department currently has a side-by-side vehicle used for snow plowing that does not fit into the existing trailers. Although there is another trailer available, it is too large and impractical for day-to-day operations, particularly when transporting smaller equipment like the side-by-side.

In addition to snow plowing, the enclosed trailer will be used year-round for transporting sensitive items such as Christmas decorations, flowers, and event equipment. For instance, flowers that are displayed in the spring need to be transported in a climate-controlled environment, as it is often too cold to move them in the open bed of a truck. Similarly, the trailer will be used to haul tables and chairs for various department events, protecting them from adverse weather conditions.

The trailer is being considered as a more environmentally neutral option, offering better protection for delicate items during transport and enhancing operational efficiency for the department. Ultimately, while its primary function will be for snow removal equipment, the trailer's versatility in handling a wide range of tasks makes it a valuable asset for year-round use by the Parks and Recreation Department.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Riberas, supported by Mr. Wiegand, to approve funding for the purchase of an enclosed trailer from American Trailer Mart with the amount not to exceed \$9,896.00.

**ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Riberas	Yes
Mr. Wiegand	Yes

Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

No opposition, the motion passed

**E. Atrium Furniture – ISCG (Dave Mazzarelli [pg. 32])**

Dave provided an update on the proposal to purchase new modular furniture for the atrium in City Hall, highlighting that this is the second phase of the ongoing program to update the space. He emphasized that the atrium is a meeting place and an important area for the public to enjoy, describing it as a "gem in the city." He addressed concerns about funding, noting that savings from a previous project, the carpet installation at City Hall, was recently completed and had freed up funds. These savings are now being allocated toward the furniture purchase.

Dave explained that this approach is similar to previous situations, such as when savings on conference room TVs allowed for the purchase of new conference room chairs. He reiterated that the funds saved are being used to improve the building for both the administration and the citizens of Warren, ensuring that the atrium is a functional and welcoming space.

The new modular furniture was praised for its versatility, accommodating a variety of uses, from meetings to casual relaxation. Dave noted that the furniture includes features like ports for charging electronic devices, reflecting the city's efforts to modernize. Additionally, the modular design allows for the furniture to be easily rearranged for events or activities in the atrium.

Mr. Mazzarelli highlighted the environmentally friendly aspects of the furniture, as it is made from recycled materials and sourced from Michigan-based companies. The purchase is also being made under a cooperative contract, ensuring it meets procurement standards. He also mentioned that this phase of the furniture replacement primarily focused on the atrium, while the first phase involved replacing broken or outdated furniture in the second-floor offices.

Councilman Boike raise the question whether the funding reallocation required approval from the City Council. Mark Knapp, Assistant Controller, and Mary Michaels, Acting City Attorney, interjected to clarify the budget and appropriation process regarding the furniture purchase for Warren City Hall. Mark Knapp explained that, contrary to concerns, no funds were being moved between line items. Instead, the funds for the purchase came from a single capital improvement line item. He reiterated that there are various projects listed under the capital improvement line, and when savings occur—such as those from the carpeting project—it is permissible to reallocate those funds within the same budget line.

Knapp emphasized that excess funds would never be used for a project if council had previously denied funding for it during the budgeting process. However, when a project runs over or under its estimated amount, the available funds within the same capital improvement line item can be adjusted to cover related costs. He highlighted that this process had been employed in the past and was standard practice. Specifically, for this case, less money was spent on carpeting than originally allocated, freeing up approximately \$88,000 to be used for other City Hall improvements, including the new furniture.

Mary Michaels further explained that there was no violation of any legal standards or court judgment in making this appropriation. She provided additional clarification regarding the DDA's budgetary role, noting that once the DDA adopts a budget, it can re-appropriate funds as needed, without requiring further council approval, unless the situation directly involves a previously denied expenditure.

The conversation then shifted to the broader, long-standing issue of the roles of the DDA and council in the budgeting process. Councilman Boyd raised concerns about the legal distinctions between council's approval of the budget and the DDA's ability to reallocate funds. Mary Michaels acknowledged this issue, noting that similar concerns had arisen in the past, and there had been discussions about seeking clarification from the state to resolve any ambiguity in authority.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Petzold, supported by Mr. Jackson, to approve funding for furniture for Warren City Hall from ISCG in the amount of \$74,165.72 with a 50% deposit upfront in the amount of \$37,083.00 and the remaining balance of \$37,082.72 to be paid upon completion of the order.

**ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Wiegand	No
Mr. Riberas	Yes
Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

5-1 vote, the motion passed

**8. List of Bills**

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Zamora, supported by Mr. Jackson, to approve the September 4, 2024 list of bills.

**ROLL CALL:**

The motion carried unanimously as follows:

Mr. Zamora	Yes
Mr. Jackson	Yes
Mr. Petzold	Yes
Mr. Wiegand	Yes
Mr. Ribera	Yes
Mayor Stone	Yes

No opposition, the motion passed

**9. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Several upcoming community events and updates were announced:

1. **Small Business Seminar (October 10th):** A seminar will be held by the Velocity Center at the Maybelle Burnette Library, aimed at small businesses. The event will cover products, seminars, and training opportunities provided by the Velocity Center. Promotion is ongoing, with flyers in the works.
2. **Connect Macomb Partnership (September 17th):** The city is partnering with Connect Macomb, the Macomb County Chamber, to host an introductory event at Betty Jane's. The event is free and open to local businesses and residents interested in getting involved. Information is also included in residents' water bills.
3. **City Square Street Fair (Starting September 11th):** Anthony announced that the community street fair will kick off on September 11th and will be held every other week through October. The event, taking place on Wednesday afternoons, has 45 vendors signed up and will feature food trucks and entertainment.
4. **SMART Public Transportation:** It was confirmed that the City of Warren provides SMART public transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Residents can sign up for this service through Parks and Recreation, with at least two weeks' notice required due to limited drivers.

The mayor also praised the success of the recent **Birthday Bash**, particularly the drone show, which continues to receive positive feedback from the community.

**10. Next DDA Regular Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at 3:00 PM, in the City Hall 1st Floor Conference Room.**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Mr. Riberas, supported by Mr. Wiegand, to adjourn.

The July 10, 2024 DDA meeting adjourned at 3:41 pm.

**X**

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Thomas Bommarito  
DDA Director

**X**

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Lori M. Stone  
Mayor