

## **Downtown Development Authority February 10, 2023**

A meeting of the Eaton Rapids Downtown Development Authority was held at City Hall, 200 S. Main Street, on February 10, 2023 at 7:00 a.m.

Chair DeFrance called the meeting to order at 7:02 a.m.

Present were Chair DeFrance and members Johnson, McGee, Sheneman, Booher, and Colestock. McNabb, Carducci, and Willey were absent.

Administrative Staff Present were City Manager Ridge, City Clerk Boomer, and Parks, Recreation & Events Director Cagle.

McGee moved, Colestock seconded, PASSED, to approve the agenda.

Public Comments: None

Colestock moved, McGee seconded, PASSED, to approve the January 13, 2023 minutes and the January 27, 2023 minutes.

McGee moved, Johnson seconded, PASSED, to accept the Treasurer Report.

Committee Reports: None

Director Report: City Manager Ridge reported that she attended a Main Street webinar that focused on the National Main Street Conference. MEDC assisted with the reports that were due for Main Street and they will be submitted soon. Parks, Recreation, & Events Director Cagle is working on the volunteer list.

New Business:

- a. City Manager Ridge advised that one Match on Main application was received from Ackley Peters Insurance. The Board discussed the program. Johnson moved, Colestock seconded, PASSED, to support the Ackley Peters Insurance application for the Match on Main Grant.
- b. Ridge advised the interim director position is dependent on the Board's decision regarding Main Street Program participation.
- c. Parks, Recreation, & Events Director Cagle requested the Board continue to donate \$4,000 to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks. McGee volunteered to represent the DDA on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee. The Board discussed participating with the Chamber and other groups in a raffle for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The Board expressed support for the raffle. Moved by McGee, second by Johnson, PASSED, to approve a \$4,000 contribution towards the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks.
- d. Parks, Recreation, & Events Director Cagle proposed moving the Easter Egg Hunt to the downtown area and the possibility of it becoming a DDA sponsored event. The Board discussed the event.
- e. City Manager Ridge reviewed the Farmers Market and the need to begin working on it. Chamber Director Courtney Mead volunteered to help with vendors. The Board discussed hosting it on just Saturdays. Cagle and Ridge will work on the special event application for the City. Sheneman suggested they consider waiving the stall fee for produce vendors to encourage participation. Courtney will reach out to vendors and report back.

Old Business:

- a. The Board discussed moving forward with the Main Street program. Chair DeFrance asked Ridge to write a proposal for an Economic Development Director position that would be shared with the City as an alternative to a Main Street Director. The DDA could work toward becoming a Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) instead of Main Street.

DDA would lose the Main Street branding but could maintain grant eligibility through RRC. Colestock commented that the Main Street Director position is too expensive. DeFrance would like to consider contracting for services such as directing the Farmers Market. Johnson wants to see the opportunity for grants to continue. DeFrance advised he would like to send the proposal for an economic development director a week before the next meeting so members could send feedback to him prior to meeting. DeFrance asked for draft budgets with continuing as Main Street and without.

Board Member Comments:

- Booher commented that he would support leaving the Main Street program if the grant opportunities could continue.
- DeFrance commented that the State seems to be moving away from small Main Street development in favor of large corporate development. Funding for Main Street type programs could be at risk. He would like to see at least a part-time director to assist the Board. He advised that he and Carducci are attending a meeting at Eaton Bank about lending opportunities for small businesses. He thanked Clerk Boomer for assuming recording secretary responsibilities.
- Colestock advised that façade grant applications should go out soon.

McGee moved, Colestock seconded, PASSED, to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 a.m.

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Laura Boomer, City Clerk