

**CITY OF IRON RIVER  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
March 8, 2018  
12 P.M.**

Vice-Chairman Holroyd called the meeting to order at 12:23 P.M.

Roll Call: Glen Waarvik, Jim Duda, Mark Saigh, Ed Lindwall, Roger Zanon and Holroyd.  
Absent: Terry Tarsi.  
Also Present: City Manager David Thayer and City Clerk Rachel Andreski.

Public in Attendance:  
None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Capital Plan for 2018: Thayer included in the agenda packet the Downtown Development and Tax Increment Financing Plan revised in 2008. The goal of the plan is reserving our public space, acquiring and razing old buildings and implementing development. Holroyd asked what the real dollar amount available for the group's disposal is once all approved commitments have been paid. Thayer reported that \$200,000 of revenue is generated and \$60,000 is in savings. After the cost sharing with the City for the Cost to Coast and Central School bond payments, that leaves \$40-50,000. There are façade grants, partnerships and the flower program which will leave the group approximately \$38,000.

Holroyd asked what ideas the group had to offer. Saigh stated there are the two lots downtown (former Coast to Coast and Wardo's buildings). Thayer reported the State may have funding available for a pocket park with a grant of \$75-90,000 with a match. Thayer would like contract with a designer/architect to generate new ideas such as a four season building, which will provide a place for people to congregate year round. Zanon suggested something similar to what the fairgrounds has where there's a stage for a band and open on the sides with a roof. Saigh likes the four seasons building idea, however, would like to see a bandstand area as well. He suggested utilizing both lots.

Holroyd asked if there was a way to utilize some of the finances for marketing or locating companies to come to the area to convince them this is the area to come to. Thayer stated he is in contact with ICECA to work with a similar idea. He feels the best option is to have the property ready to go so when there is a potential developer, the slate is clean and shovel ready, which will help close the deal.

Duda notices that people state we need another industry here like Coleman Products. Duda feels that's one of the worst things that happened to our community, because when they pulled out, it really hurt our area. Our small businesses are struggling to employ people.

Holroyd would like to improve curb appeal in the City. Perhaps the DDA could offer in the District services such as exterior power washing/cleaning of buildings and sidewalks to make the downtown more presentable.

Thayer stated certain DDA's across the state are finding people who want to go into business but don't have the funding required to do so. These DDA's will pay things such as rent and set-

up costs and has proven to have a 80% success rate. Waarvik stated this is what the Bearded Apple has been doing for the past six years and has been successful. To give the support they need and get them over the hurdle is huge for them. He feels this retail business incubator is an effective way to assist in rebuilding business.

Saigh had to leave at 1:16 p.m.

Waarvik also explained the Patchwork Quilt approach by taking all of the groups in the area to mesh together to make a quilt. How does the DDA work with other organizations to maximize resources? Waarvik would like to see an economic development study of our area or a survey to give us a really good idea of what we have available. He used the new high speed internet line we didn't know existed as an example.

Lindwall asked what it would cost to move the City's wells located on US-2 elsewhere and utilize that property for its prime location. Thayer stated the costs associated to drill new wells are very high.

Zanon asked Thayer what, in his opinion, needs to be done. Thayer would like to acquire the Nelson property, use incubator projects to get existing buildings utilized, implement "Show Me the River" program and clean-up along US-2.

Duda likes the façade program as he's noticed changes in the downtown. He added some years back, there was a similar project of washing the outside of the buildings. Unfortunately, when they were through, the windows were filthy. He added he liked the idea of this meeting and would like to have another one after digesting what discussed today.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

#### **DDA Member Comments:**

#### **Adjournment:**

Lindwall moved, with support from Zanon, to adjourn at 1:41 p.m. All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Saigh and Tarsi.

  
Rachel Andreski, City Clerk