

**MELROSE TOWNSHIP DDA MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting of September 10, 2018**  
**At Melrose Township Hall**

**I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

Chair Broc Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

**Members present:** Broc Johnson, Vern Goodwin, Jonathon Borisch, Mike Strobel, Steve Whittaker, Dave Rentschler, and Judy Goldsmith.

**Members absent:** Calvin Penfold and Bob Vratana.

**Also present:** Recording Secretary Tom Mackie

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Dave Rentschler motioned, Steve Whittaker seconded, to approve the minutes of July 9, 2018 as presented. All ayes, motion carried.**

**III. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Tom reviewed the financial statements.

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. US131 Corridor:** Broc noted we tabled this agenda item at our last meeting as a few interested members were not in attendance. The US131 Corridor Committee has asked for a \$2,000 commitment to fund their social media proposal. Vern indicated the City of Petoskey has already agreed. Dave expressed support for a one-year commitment with any future support contingent on the first year's results. Broc indicated agreement.

**Dave Rentschler motioned to provide \$2,000 to fund the US131 Corridor Committee's social media initiative for the first year. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Vern Goodwin. All agreed, motion carried.**

- b. Hemmingway Monument and Signage:** Ben and Jonathon Borisch have researched potential grant funding. The Michigan Council of Arts evaluates requests using a point system for their minimum \$5,000, maximum \$30,000 matching grant but only the Township can apply, and the project may have to be located on public property. Jonathon indicated other funding sources are possible, and the Northern Michigan Hemmingway Society has indicated they would contribute.

Audience member Susan Gilmette noted Emmet County used private funding for a similar project and suggested we consider the same approach, and reserve DDA funds for other projects. Broc responded our consensus is to pursue grants initially. Our budget does include \$50,000 to move the project forward, but the initial emphasis is on outside grants, fund-raising opportunities, and private funding.

Susan proposed alternative projects including highway advertising to promote the beach, water access, and boat launch facility. Vern noted the DDA's mission is to

support downtown business rather than public amenities. Broc stated we haven't really discussed highway advertising, but it may be worth considering. Jonathon indicated billboard advertising has not been successful for the hotel.

Broc noted we've also been discussing the installation of historical signage in Circle Park. Cost information is now available and sign content and positioning are under consideration. The current thinking is to position a natural progression of signage beginning with the railroads and advancing to boats near the lakeshore, then to hotels. Additional historical notes would also be provided. A consensus developed to include boat building (specifically the 17-meter sailboat and Mastercraft). Signs would be aluminum for year-round use. Boyne City's Wood Shop has estimated \$1,500 each for larger free-standing signage and \$600 for smaller ones intended to be mounted to existing structures. A seven-sign package is estimated at \$21,000. Broc suggested this could be added to next year's budget.

Dave asked what would happen if the signs are installed and the property is then sold. Jonathon is hopeful the township will buy it but can't offer a guarantee. Broc expressed concern for vandalism if the signage is moved to the Township Park. He also noted including this in the budget is not a mandate to spend the money, but we can't pursue it if it's not included. Steve stated he can see a benefit and supports including it in next year's budget unless a better proposal is offered. Mike expressed agreement. Judy stated she supports the proposal for signage but is concerned about a statue. Dave likes celebrating our history but is not sure signage will promote visitors as much as products for sale will. Jonathon stated he is very much in support of both signage and a statue based on the success of these items in other communities. Broc cited statistics concluding an overwhelming draw to any Hemmingway-related projects.

Audience member Bunny Marquardt expressed support for the signage project but suggested they may be better spread around the village rather than only in Circle Park. Broc noted the intent is to create a "Walkable history area" so this may be a good idea.

**Dave Rentschler motioned to include \$31,000 in next year's budget to fund a "Walkable history area" using signage. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Judy Goldsmith. All agreed, motion carried.**

Bunny offered an old Mastercraft sign if it can be used in this project. She and Susan also offered to help with the historical walking tour signs.

- c. **US131 Mettler Property Update:** Vern reported the Township Clerk is forming a committee to develop a Dog Park that could utilize this property. The Township will not formally know if we will obtain clear title to this property until next year.

## V. **NEW BUSINESS – Future Project Discussion:**

- a. **Future Project Discussion – Feedback from Businesses:** The downtown business owners are forming a Merchant's Association and will be meeting again in October. They have discussed ideas including a part-time consultant to develop a social media-based marketing plan and a lighting event ceremony which would include a steel drum band.

**Vern Goodwin motioned to have the DDA sponsor the steel drum portion of the lighting ceremony as proposed by the Merchant's Association. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Judy Goldsmith. All agreed, motion carried.**

Vern additionally recommended the Merchant's Association partner with the US131 Corridor project by developing their own social media content.

- b. Walloon Holding Proposal:** Jonathon announced a new proposal has just been submitted for the Township's acquisition of Circle Park and the parking lot south of the General Store. Vern noted this proposal will be discussed at tomorrow's monthly Board of Trustees meeting. A subsequent discussion included the impact on taxes and economics if the proposal is approved, as well as the potential loss of the village's unique waterfront identity if the property was developed for commercial use.

Bunny expressed support for public open-space if the details can be worked out, but also indicated a need get lake traffic to the other side of the street. Broc asked if the DDA was willing to endorse Walloon Holding's proposal to transfer property to the township.

**Steve Whittaker motioned to express the DDA's support of Walloon Lake Holding's proposal to transfer ownership of Circle Park and the South Parking Lot to the Township. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jonathon Borisch. All agreed, motion carried.**

**VI. DDA MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Dave noted we traditionally have had trouble identifying projects to support and encouraged everyone to look for more opportunities.

**VII. CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

Bunny asked if further consideration has been given to a proposal to provide irrigation in the Township Park. Broc responded this has been proposed many times as a Parks and recreation Committee project but there is minimal support from the township Board to spending the necessary money. Broc indicated this is definitely something the DDA should consider.

In response to an audience question Broc indicated the DDA does not presently have a logo.

**VIII. NEXT MEETING: Monday November 12, 2018 at 7:00 PM.**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.**

Prepared by:

Approved by:

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Tom Mackie, Recording Secretary

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Judy Goldsmith, Secretary