



Village of Suttons Bay
420 N. Front Street, Suttons Bay, MI 49682
Village Council Special and Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
Joint Meeting Minutes of September 13, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Village Council President Pro-Tem Christensen.
The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by DDA Secretary Nick Wierzba.

Village Council present: Bahle, Christensen, Smith and Yoder
Village Council absent: Case, Lutke and Suppes
DDA present: Bahle, Derigiotis, Peterson, Pontius, Wierzba and Young
DDA absent: Lutke, Millns and Popke
Staff present: Fay and Larrea

Approval of agenda, Village Council

Yoder moved, Smith seconded, CARRIED, to approve the Village Council Special and DDA joint meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: 4, No: 0.

Approval of agenda, DDA

Peterson moved, Bahle seconded, CARRIED, to approve the Village Council Special and DDA joint meeting agenda as presented. Ayes: 6, No: 0.

Downtown Development Authority meeting minutes approval

Bahle moved, Peterson seconded, CARRIED, to approve the DDA meeting minutes of January 18, 2023. Ayes: 6, No: 0.

VSF Report 2023-49 DDA Joint meeting

Comments from the manager:

- Larrea stated the need for continued joint meetings, perhaps two meetings per year, to help with communication and understanding of each board's respective roles.
- Larrea stated there has been a huge capture this year, as noted in this report.
- Regarding bathrooms, Larrea stated there should be an opportunity in the next 3-5 years to work on bathrooms, with funds coming from the Marina, the Village, and the DDA (to make them year-round, if desired.)
- Larrea has talked with a couple of planners with DDA experience for consulting purposes, that could help to identify tasks to move the DDA forward. This could be beneficial and increase efficiency. A leader is necessary to accomplish things because there has been no movement forward.

- The Master Plan (to be finalized soon), Parks and Rec Plan, Marina Plan and the Work Plan can be found online. You can compare goals and similarities by looking at these plans.
- Trees. Trees downtown do not typically work. Green Suttons Bay is currently planting trees, mostly at North Park as well as a couple of trees at Marina Park.

Comments from the DDA board:

- Supports the idea of joint meetings.
- What other things can the DDA do to generate income besides tax captures? Parking meters?
- Are there overlapping, similar goals within the various plans that can be identified for the DDA to accomplish?
- Take care of the bathrooms and then move onto something else.
- Approach the other entities with a specific project/goal that may help to generate their interest to buy in.
- Struggling to understand boundaries.
- Request to email the adopted DDA plan to the DDA board. Clerk will follow-up.
- What is the cost to hire a DDA consultant? It could be beneficial.
- There is a need for more strategic guidance.
- The DDA has the ability to market and advertise.
- Instead of hiring a consultant, implement some of the ideas. Consultants could be costly to the DDA just to tell you what you already know.
- Analysis paralysis.

Comments from Village Council trustees:

- There is a misconception that the DDA will raise taxes.
- Accomplish a small goal to produce a win and show progress and see if that generates excitement with the other entities; snowball effect.
- Fun, fund raising events, such as GoFundMe, concerts in the park. Can these fundraisers be collaborative? Check and see if the DDA is statutory able to fund raise.
- Supports a consultant for the DDA.
- When you add things to the Village, be cognitive that it adds infrastructure costs to the Village.
- Use a consultant to set a strategy and narrow the focus.

Council and DDA had the following ideas that could be funded through the DDA:

- Bathrooms
- Replacing the Pedestrian bridge (taken out by high water) at the coal dock
- Pavilion
- Sun shades, sails (donated), at Marina Park
- Benches and downtown beautification such as hanging planters
- Wayfinding signs

- Waterfront enhancements. Invest in waterfront improvements; we need a beautiful waterfront. Create a corridor from the waterfront to the downtown.

It was the consensus of the DDA board to set a special meeting in October to discuss hiring a DDA consultant.

Public comments

Public comments were received from Lois Bahle and Bill Crackel.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Shar Fay, Clerk.