

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF HIGHLAND  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
Record of the January 18, 2023 Regular Board Meeting**

**APPROVED**

**Members Present:** Supervisor Hamill, Chris Hamill, Jennifer Frederick, Roscoe Smith, Cassie Blascyk, Dale Feigley

**Staff Present:** Melissa Dashevich, Executive Director  
Karen Beardsley, Recording Secretary

**Members Absent:** Michael Zurek, Matt Barnes

**Visitors Present:** Tim Colbeck, Main Street, Oakland County, Michigan  
Elizabeth Chase, Main Street, State of Nebraska  
George Phenettas, Oakland County Planning (previously with One Stop)  
Sioux Trujillo, HVCA

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 10:47 a.m.

Approve Minutes of Regular Board Meeting of December 21, 2022

**MS. FREDERICK MOVED TO APPROVE the Regular Board Meeting minutes of December 21, 2022 as corrected. (In Director's Report, change 'finalizing' award nominations to 'reviewing'.) MR. FEIGLEY SUPPORTED THE MOTION and THE MOTION CARRIED with a unanimous voice vote (6 yes votes).**

**MAIN STREET AMERICA AND MAIN STREET OAKLAND COUNTY EVALUATION**

Ms. Chase introduced herself and asked everyone to do the same.

Mr. Colbeck shared the new evaluation processes and explained the differences and reorganization of the data collected to provide a more concise picture and allowing for more helpful feedback.

Ms. Chase asked that we share with her a brief review of successful projects completed this year.

Board members offered the following:

Mural

New Highland banners on S. Milford Rd.

Sounds Like Summer Concerts in the Park - selecting higher profile acts

Movie Night in the Park (from POP grant)

Farmers' Market -

New location, music, collaboration with library on reading program and monarch butterflies, sidewalk chalk event, trick or treat with vendors, Unity Project Quilt

Business rental subsidy grant enabled a local business to stay open.

New HDDA brochure.

Added Ladies' Day Out in the spring.

Ladies' Night Out with WOTA providing transportation.

Tree lighting with free horse and carriage rides, free popcorn and Kris Kringle Market.

Historic Signage brochure

Wayfinding project underway.

Purchase of neighboring house and property by Highland Township with possibilities of the DDA using for parking, makers' spaces, etc.

Ms. Trujillo added that she and Mrs. Dashevich have been speaking about expanding the Unity project to create awareness of diversity in district. She suggested perhaps cultural festivals with foods, entertainment, vendors, as well as inviting some of the college cultural clubs to represent with information booths.

Touching on the subject of diversity, Ms. Chase said it includes not only racial diversity, but age, gender, religion, socioeconomic, urban/rural. She suggested we get an updated demographic profile of Highland and really study where changes could be made. It is an area that needs strengthening in Highland.

Some ideas for awareness of diversity and including under-represented:

Add cultural events to concerts, (flamenco dancers), Farmers' Market, (foods) and Red White and Blues (America being a melting pot).

Introduce/highlight new businesses and their cultural/diverse connections (new Mexican grocer in Highland).

Show ADA accessible on all marketing pieces to make all aware.

Perhaps Ms. Trujillo would be willing to share some of the information she received to become certified in ADA accessibility.

Highland should highlight any non white, handicapped, and veteran and women owned businesses. Future grants will focus on these groups.

Retail meetings are good, but consider hosting a "Business Owner Mixer" - very informal, to meet, mingle, and promote community.

Ms. Chase asked what were some of the HDDA's challenges this year; Board members offered:

LOSS OF PRINTED MEDIA / COMMUNICATION (a chronic issue that Highland has struggled with)

Looking at Oakland County times, billboard advertising, PNW delivers to business Trifolds for events located in restaurants, salons, public spaces.

New shopping and dining guide

Event calendar mailing once or twice a year to Highland residents.

When people say they were not aware of our events, be sure to ask them where they might most likely look to find community information.

Supervisor Hamill suggested a nonprofit newspaper.

Ms. Chase suggested contacting Michigan film office to make them aware of our uniqueness and interest.

SEWERS NEEDED

Funding needed - very expensive.

We fall between lots of the criteria/requirements for government subsidizing: Too small for some; too large for others.

Ms. Chase suggested writing to your congressman - there can be federal dollars earmarked for this type of project.

Mr. Colbeck mentioned opportunities to sit and speak with state representatives.

The evaluation portion of the meeting was concluded, with the feedback portion scheduled for 4:00 today.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roscoe Smith

RS:kb

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APPROVED