



Downtown Development Authority

MINUTES

DRAFT

**THOMAS TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
THOMAS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
8215 SHIELDS DRIVE, SAGINAW, MICHIGAN
FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

Members Present:

F. Gray
M. Wenglikowski
R. Weise
S. Goward
R. Kretz
K. Kolbe

Absent:

L. McCoy
D. Duclos

Others Present:

D. Sika, Community Development Director
A. Bicigo, Planning/Zoning Asst.
T. Sutherland, Assistant Parks Director

Gray called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Weise, supported by Wenglikowski to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

Consent Agenda:

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Weise, to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2023 meeting.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Expenditures:

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Kolbe, to approve the expenditures as presented.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

New Business

A. Annual Report to Saginaw County Treasurer

Motion by Weise, supported by Goward to receive and file the Annual Report to the Saginaw County Treasurer.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

Old Business

A. Thomas Township Farmers Market Banners

Sika explained that the Thomas Township Farmers Market has been very successful. The Market Manager has asked the DDA to provide 10 vertical banners and one over the road banner to advertise the market. The vertical banners would be displayed along Gratiot Rd at Miller Rd, River Rd, and on the two westernmost light poles near Van Wormer Rd. The cost to produce the banners is \$1,450 for the vertical banners, and \$807.50 for the over the road banner.

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Kolbe, to approve the purchase of 10 vertical banners for \$1,450 and the over the road banner for \$807.50 to advertise the Thomas Township Farmers Market.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

B. Memo to DDA Requesting funding support for the Community Park

Sutherlund presented designs for the new Community Park on the new Thomas Township Campus. The park will have two “pods”, one for older children and one for younger children. The area will be surfaced with mulch along with either rubber mats or poured rubber where necessary for ADA Compliance. Assembly of the playground equipment will be completed by volunteers. The Township Manager has requested a total of \$100,000 from the DDA for the park, to be split evenly between the 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 fiscal years.

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Kretz to approve the request for \$50,000 in 2024/2025, and \$50,000 in 2025/2026 to help fund the Community Park.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

C. Approve Over the Road Banner Calendar

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Weise, to approve the Over the Road Banner Calendar as presented, including the added dates for the Farmers Market Banner.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

D. Approve Vertical Banner Calendar

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Kolbe, to approve the Vertical Banner Calendar as presented, including the added dates for the Farmers Market Banners.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

E. Approve 2024 Meeting Dates

Motion by Wenglikowski, supported by Weise, to approve the 2024 Meeting Dates as presented.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED

Reports:

Chairperson- None

Vice Chairperson- None

Secretary- None

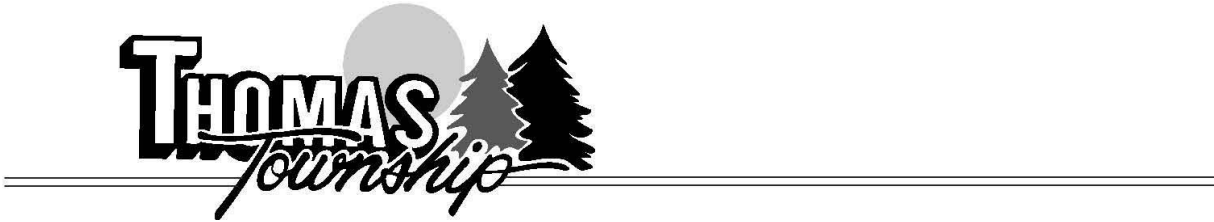
Board Members- None

Staff- Sika reported that the survey of the northeast corner of Miller and Gratiot to determine the viability of a water fountain has been completed. According to the results of the survey, there are no encumbrances that would prevent construction of a fountain at this location. Further information will be brought forward at future meetings regarding this project.

Adjournment:

Motion Wenglikowski, supported by Kolbe to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 a.m.

VOTE: YEAS: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 2 MOTION CARRIED



To: DDA Board Members

From: Russ Taylor, Township Manager

Date: November 7, 2023

Re: Community Park

No doubt you have seen the ongoing construction at the Township Campus for the past few months. The project consists of three parts. The first one being the Training & Election Room addition to the Fire Station. This building is expected to be largely completed and useable by the end of 2023, just in time for the election in February. The second piece is the new Municipal Office Building that is scheduled to be completed in late June/early July. This brings me to the third part that is the complete reconstruction of what was the Community Park into a modern day park with a variety of amenities.

Previously, the park consisted of three tennis courts converted into two basketball courts and two pickleball courts. It also had one outdoor ice rink that had 5-7 days of decent ice each year. The new park will provide a full size basketball court and six (6) lighted top-of-the-line pickleball courts. In addition, there will be a pathway through the center that leads to Culver's and to a new playground area. Along the path will be benches, trees and landscaping to add to the open air space. We are extremely excited about the fact that we are finally creating a quality recreational area for all ages on the north side of Gratiot in the heart of our community. The tennis courts were originally built back in the 1960's by our local Lions Club. Since that time, they had been repurposed as a variety of uses with pickleball courts being the latest one. Thomas Township was fortunate to have them, but over the course of time, they had developed the cracks and evidence of wear that sixty years has on concrete.

With the new design, the basketball court will be physically separated from the pickleball courts, so that they can both be enjoyed without being interrupted. The pickleball court design is exactly the same as the new Garber Courts in the City. They not only include lighting to allow for play into the evening, but they will also have fencing to separate the courts to eliminate the balls from interfering with play on other courts like we previously had.

The Township Board has included funding for the courts, path and overall landscaping. With regard to the playground area, the idea was to encourage it to be a community funded effort; rather, than solely funded by the Township Board. The hope is that funding could come from

some of our local groups and clubs with the actual construction of the play equipment being done by area residents to reflect the “Community Park” name and to encourage more personal ownership in the park itself. The design and selection of equipment is not set in stone yet as we want to leave options open to fit the funds available and to appeal to the funding sources. The basic idea is to have a tri-pod design with each pod providing play equipment for a specific age group. At this point, our Kiwanis Club has committed to \$25,000 for one pod. Likewise, our very own Thomas Township Business Association has committed to fund a pod at the \$25,000 level. Like so many things, we can spend as much as we have. The \$25,000 seemed like an achievable amount and enough funds to buy some decent equipment. Certainly, more money would enable better equipment to be purchased.

The Community Park is within the boundaries of the DDA and it will definitely be a destination that will draw people to the area and to the Gratiot Road business district due to its strategic location. Up to this point, there hasn’t been a play area for the large resident population north of Gratiot Road and the pickleball courts have been of poor quality. With the unbelievable interest in pickleball, when our new courts are completed residents of all ages and visitors alike will be frequenting the park. Thus, I think that this is a great opportunity for the DDA to join the Board, Kiwanis and the TTBA in something that will impact the business district and the community for many decades into the future. We still need funding commitment for one more pod and in addition the playground area will need to have various improvements such as the base material, trash containers, benches, a perimeter, water fountain and more. I am asking the DDA Board to consider supporting the project in the amount of \$100,000 (\$50,000 in FY 24/25 and \$50,000 in FY 25/26) as noted below. I have attached a revised Financial Forecast to demonstrate the impact of the proposed funding.

- Play pod \$25,000
- Additional play equipment \$25,000
- Playground base material and miscellaneous \$50,000

Recognition for the DDA, TTBA and Kiwanis will be in all of our announcements, grand openings and permanently on plaques at the playground. Most of the project will be constructed through volunteer community builds, though some of it will have to be done by paid staff. The breakdown as shown above of how the funds will be spent is my best guess and is not exact. It will have to vary somewhat within the \$100,000 cap as we make the actual purchases. We will be able to provide the DDA Board with an exact breakdown of where the DDA funds were spent on the project once it is complete.

Thank you for your consideration.