



Design Committee Meeting | Thursday, April 6, 2023 | City Council Chambers | 9:00 a.m.

Minutes

Call to order, Cassie Ragan

Roll Call: Michelle Kendall, DDD Executive Director

Chris Bankston	Absent
Tara Bennett	Present
Roy Dufreche	Present
Michelle Juneau	Present
Tom Pistorius	Absent
Cassie Ragan	Present
Jeffrey Smith	Present

Old Business

1. Approval of the minutes from February 2, 2023

Michelle Juneau made a motion, seconded by Roy Dufreche, to approve the meeting minutes as written.

Chris Bankston	Absent
Tara Bennett	Yes
Roy Dufreche	Yes
Michelle Juneau	Yes
Tom Pistorius	Absent
Cassie Ragan	Abstain
Jeffrey Smith	Yes

Yes: 4 | No: 0 | Absent: 2 | Abstain: 1 | Motion carried.

2. Approval of the minutes February 17, 2023

Cassie Ragan made a motion, seconded by Tara Bennett, to approve the meeting minutes as written.

Chris Bankston	Absent
Tara Bennett	Yes
Roy Dufreche	Yes



Michelle Juneau	Yes
Tom Pistorius	Absent
Cassie Ragan	Yes
Jeffrey Smith	Yes

Yes: 5 | No: 0 | Absent: 2 | Abstain: 0 | Motion carried.

New Business:

1. Discussion of sidewalk reimbursement program

Ms. Ragan stated that at the previous DDD Board Meeting, the sidewalk reimbursement program became a topic of conversation. It was discussed that it needs more definition. Ms. Ragan said in the most recent sidewalk reimbursement, design fees were included which had not been included all other previous times. She continued to say that in the past, demolition, construction, and landscaping were included in sidewalk grants. The board requested that the design committee come up with specifics on what the sidewalk grant will cover.

Ms. Kendall said she sat down with Andre and they discussed sidewalk reimbursement splits amongst the DDD, the City of Hammond and the business owner pertaining to said sidewalk. Ms. Kendall stated that if this program is going to continuously be offered, parameters need to surround it so that it can be budgeted accordingly. Mr. Smith discussed that updating the sidewalks will also effect traffic. Ms. Ragan suggested the idea of the sidewalk reimbursement budget be updated annually depending on material costs. Ms. Ragan encouraged committee members to communicate any comments from today's meeting to the next one in May to Ms. Kendall so she may work on a draft.

2. Discussion of meeting day and time

Ms. Ragan brought up next item, discussion of meeting day and time. If the meetings were to transition to a different date and time, it would need to be the first Thursday of the month in the evening.

Ms. Bennett stated she would not be able to attend if that is the case. Ms. Kendall went over available alternative time slots. Ms. Juneau is flexible with any changes. Mr. Dufreche felt it is best to leave things as is until it becomes a problem. It was ultimately decided to not change the meeting day and time.

3. Director's Report

Ms. Kendall updated the committee regarding improved and fixed downtown lighting. She mentioned to DDD board member, Todd Delaune, and herself worked with the city



getting lights fixed in downtown. Mr. Dufreche asked about the lighting project on Thomas Street. He wanted to keep the design aspect of the project in mind.

Next, Ms. Kendall mentioned the history exhibit project. She has 5 out of 7 drafts prepared for panels. She expressed that the history exhibit needs to be a major project focus for the remainder of April, May and June. Funds will be exhausted by August. Mr. Dufreche stated that at some point in July, the final artwork mock-ups should be complete.

Information on tax credits was the next topic of discussion brought up by Ms. Kendall. Ms. Kendall would like to hold a targeted outreach session with property owners so they are informed about how the tax credit incentives work. She would like to help support property owners learn to maximize this benefit. Mr. Smith said he can help Ms. Kendall with that. She informed the committee she would keep them informed about any potential meetings regarding tax credit. Mr. Smith suggested the idea of creating a brochure listing out all of the information to hand out to business owners.

Lastly, Ms. Kendall discussed budgeting. She is following the city's budgeting procedures for 2023 fiscal year and is preparing budgets for the 2024 fiscal year. Mr. Smith asked if Ms. Kendall attends city budgeting meetings and she confirmed yes. She would like to streamline and level the budget out which, in return, could increase the design committee budget cap pending its approval.

Mr. Smith then directed the conversation to focus on a few things that concerned him. He is not in favor of the cypress trees that have been cut back on Cate Street for power line purposed from Entergy. He would like to see more middle ground with instances like this from Entergy and the City of Hammond. Ms. Ragan stated she received notification from Entergy via text message about the cypress trees being trimmed. Mr. Smith would like for there to be more conjunction with power companies if urban landscaping is going to continue. Ms. Kendall asked Mr. Dufreche for his recommendation on how to treat the situation. Mr. Dufreche could not find a realistic recommendation at the time. Mr. Smith's next topic of personal concern was learning Todd Delaune reporting broken or nonfunctioning downtown light fixtures to get fixed. Mr. Smith believes this task should be left solely for a DDD staff member or helper. Ms. Ragan stepped in to highlight the level of work overload currently being undertaken by DDD staff members while simultaneously trying to hire for a new position. Once someone is selected for the new position, that may free up more time to fulfill what Mr. Smith would like to see. Ms. Kendall noted to the committee that she does take pictures of things downtown that need fixing and informs the corresponding city department head. Ms. Kendall did state that she will work to improve on the point Mr. Smith brought up. Lastly, Mr. Smith informed that the wayfinding hammond sign across from the DDD office needs improvement. He



noticed it may need more screws due to the plastic cover protruding outward. Ms. Ragan suggested a solution could be calling ASI to see if it is under warranty for them to fix. Ms. Kendall informed Mr. Smith she brought up the trees outside the Baltzell building to Whitney and it is now on their docket.

-Adjournment

