

Cass City
Downtown Development Authority

Bi-Annual Report
March 10, 2020

Summary of 2019 Activities

Summary of 2020 Activities

Summary of 2020 DDA Goals

**DDA Financial Reports for the Period Ending December 31, 2019,
Reviewed by Audit Field Work, not yet finalized.**

Summary of Current DDA Board Members

Village of Cass City Downtown Development Authority

Summary of 2019 Activities

January 2019

- A brief presentation by local citizens on the Cass City Cultural Center, resulting in a request for a structural engineering review of the building.
- DDA goes on record to keep and save the Cass City Cultural Center.
- Management begins discussions with Dennis Tietjens to purchase the Hunt/Ball Building.
- First Impressions Tourism Assessment (FIT) through Michigan State University will facilitate a reveal event. Cass City is awarded a \$2000 grant by participating in the FIT Assessment Program and can utilize these funds to act on any of the proposed recommendations.

February 2019

- Approve listing list for sale with Kelly & Company, the Village owned property located at 4452 West Street, Cass City, Michigan for a period of three (3) months at a commission rate of 6%.

March 2019

- Pay \$30,000 as a one-time principal payment on DDA Loan at Thumb Bank and Trust, and continue the scheduled \$1,718.86 monthly payments for the remainder of the loan.
- A WKYO radio interview was done featuring Manager Debbie Powell addressing Cass City First Impressions Tourism Assessment (FIT) results.
- Mike Rule, DDA Co-Chairman gave a brief presentation on his research on Façade Improvement Programs, with focus on Marquette, East Lansing and Wayland, MI. Each community had various levels of grant matching, and process and timelines of funding.
- Per correspondence received by Manager Powell, a local group with intention to repurpose the Cultural Center requested a structural/engineering study. By consensus, the request was denied, as prior studies have been done on this building. Manager Powell was instructed to install appropriate fencing north of the building to secure its safety.

April 2019

- The Cass City Chamber of Commerce sponsored the 2019 Business Expo on April 4, 2019 at the Cass City High School, and had 43 vendors, including 13 new vendors and over 200 participants..
- DDA challenged the grassroots Cultural Center Renovation group to become a 501(C) 3 legal non-profit group, begin raising cash, survey village residents on the interest and desire to renovate and restore the Cultural Center, and build membership and participation in the non-profit group.
- Accepted the purchase price of \$20,000, with the surveying, closing costs and commission costs split 50/50 between the buyer and seller, amending the property borders as 35' north of the building, and 35' to the east of the building, with the south and west borders kept as current
- Accepted a bid for the replacement of the Thorp Building house roof.

May 2019

- Approve a no-fee environmental study on the Cass City Cultural Center, through the Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation.
- Instruct the Village Manager to seek a revised proposal from McMillan Associates, Consulting Engineers, for a Cultural Center structural review.
- Adopt a resolution to authorize the sale of Cass City Downtown Development Authority property located at 4452 West Street to Dennis Tietjens for \$20,000 and authorize Michael Rule, DDA Board Co-Chair to attend the closing and execute the warranty deed on behalf of the Cass City Downtown Authority.
- Village Clerk Walsh gave a brief overview of Public Act 57 of 2018, new legislation that repeals and recodifies multiple acts related to tax increment finance authorities and subjects TIFAs to standard reporting practices.

June 2019

- Manager Powell stated that an initial quote of \$1500 is still valid for a cursory view inspection of the Cultural Center. Their report will define the current state of the building, and an architect will be needed to identify the costs to repair. DDA approved this evaluation at \$1500.
- The Thorp Property Roof Repair roof has been repaired.
- Approved the renewal of the Thorp Tennant Lease Agreement, which also meets the terms with Human Development Commission in its Lead Abatement Program Agreement.
- Clerk/Treasurer Walsh gave a brief presentation of new requirements for Downtown Development Authorities. Two semi-annual informational meetings per year, expanded website content, project listings, and the utilization of prior years' tax capture currently in fund balance.

July 2019

- Manager Powell discussed a Façade Improvement Plan. Currently the DDA has no funds to assist with this program which in the past assisted business owners with loans to improve their stores. Manager Powell indicated that the Village may be able to help fund this program. She will get a copy of the latest Façade Improvement Plan on file and distribute it to the committee for review.
- The annual lease agreement for the Thorp Building has been signed by Dawn Campbell for one more year.

August 2019

- Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation gave a brief overview of the Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment on the Cultural Building. Phase 1 was a visual review of exterior building and its neighboring environment. Phase 2 and 3 are being requested to review the interior of the building and presence of any hazardous materials.
- A subcommittee for DDA Strategic Planning was created to develop goals, prioritization, budget for the identified projects. Committee volunteers were Prieskorn, Delamarter, Keller, Brooks and Powell.

- As a goal toward Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) certification, all agendas throughout the Village of Cass City will have this agenda item. Members are encouraged to report on webinars, seminars, training opportunities attended or share newspaper, articles or trade papers relative to the Downtown Development Authority. By documenting these opportunities, we can show continuing education of our boards.

September 2019

- Manager Powell distributed a copy of the Cultural Center Engineering Report conducted by MacMillan Associates, Bay City, MI. The Hazardous Materials Inspection, and Environmental Review will be conducted in two weeks, funded by grant dollars from the Tuscola County EDC.
- A letter from the Budget and Finance Committee of the Village Council was received by the DDA Board. The letter focused on mutual cooperation to identify goals of the DDA, to cooperatively work to attain these goals, and to support the DDA in their efforts.
- In the DDA Agenda packet, several pages of available banner designs were available for review. Members began discussion on the cost and styles of banners. A recommendation was made to reconsider banners in a year. Consensus was to focus on gateway signage into the village.

October 2019

- Pay \$8,000 as a one-time principal payment on DDA Loan at Thumb Bank and Trust.
- Approve Re-amortization of the DDA note with Thumb Bank and Trust for 84 months at 4.95%, with monthly payments of \$846.63.
- Adopt the 2020 Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Goals:
 1. Construction of an Information Kiosk, to inform tourists of Cass City attractions, events and general information.
 2. Streetscape improvements: Black Benches and/or Bistro Tables/Chairs, which tie in with the black wrought-iron theme currently on Main Street.
 3. Creation of a Facade Improvement Grant (FIG) Program. An application would be submitted by the business to request a grant, with the business matching the grant amount (50% grant/50% owner match). Improvements would be limited to exterior building improvements or sidewalk enhancements. Potential funding could be allocated from the Village of Cass City (former Tuscola Area Airport Authority funding allocation no longer obligated). If the grant funding was not allocated in a current year, unallocated funds would be rolled over into the next year.
- Manager Powell introduced the Village of Cass City Conflict of Interest Policy, adopted by the Cass City Village Council. Each board member is requested to review the policy and sign a letter of acceptance and compliance with the policy.
- Manager Powell presented a grant application for a pocket park on Seeger Street on the southwest corner of the Municipal Building property.

November 2019

- The Snow Plowing Contract with Blaine de Beaubien expires after the 2019/2020 Winter season. Mr. de Beaubien desires to extend the contract an additional two years, at the current terms and payment amount.

- The Cass City Village Council has approved the purchase of Patriotic Banners, utilizing its Community Promotion fund to pay for this purchase. The banners will be installed for Memorial Day and be removed shortly after Labor Day.

December 2019

- Approved an extension to the current contract with Blaine de Beaubien for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 Winter seasons was requested by Blaine de Beaubien, at the current terms and payment amount.
- Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation gave a brief review of a proposed petroleum removal plan (as well as asbestos and lead elimination) for the Cultural Center and the proposal submission to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Chicago, Illinois. Currently, Erickson awaits the EPA response, whereas a favorable response would commence a detailed study.
- Manager Powell gave brief remarks on her recent Economic Development conference. She highlighted the status of the State of Michigan current budget negotiations, the removal of MEDC funding, the State's economic vulnerability in a potential recession, and the impacts of rural unemployment and working poor. She emphasized the continued need for communities to grow and support business, foster a high skilled workforce, develop attractive places for quality of life, and utilize marketing measures to attract investment.

Village of Cass City Downtown Development Authority

Summary of 2020 Activities

January 2020

- Wayfaring signs have been installed as a project of the FIT Tourism Board. In the near future, Welcome Signs will be placed at the east and west entrances to Cass City.
- The 2020 DDA goals are to install an informational kiosk in central downtown, add wrought iron benches in the downtown area, and create and adopt a façade improvement matching grant program. By consensus, the FIT Committee will be asked to spearhead the kiosk project and research the wrought iron benches. Upon receiving feedback from the FIT committee after its next meeting, the façade improvement matching grant program will be addressed.
- The Village of Cass City 2020 Strategic Goals identified at the January 5, 2020 were:
 1. Update Zoning Ordinance for the Village of Cass City
 2. Update Anti-Blight for Rental Properties Ordinance for the Village of Cass City
 3. Public Education for Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Upgrade Program
 4. Downtown Revitalization
 5. Creation of a Splash Park / Municipal Park Improvements
- Blaine deBeaubien has verbally rescinded his offer for snowplowing services for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 Winter seasons.

February 2020

- The Cass City Chamber of Commerce is seeking grant funding for welcome signs to be placed at the east and west entrances to Cass City which will have similar signage as the Rotary Park wrought iron design, at a cost of approximately \$10,000 per sign. A basic permit is required from MDOT since the signs will be located outside the Village limits.
- Accepted Blaine deBeaubien letter to rescind his offer for snowplowing services for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 Winter seasons.
- Designated 2020 Informational Meeting Dates – March and September 2020 were designated as Informational Meetings.
- Approved a Resolution of Support to the Tuscola Economic Development Corporation regarding the private dam on the Cass River in Caro, MI.

Cass City Downtown Development Authority

2020 DDA Goals

After review of the current financial statements, the group was discussed availability of resources to fund improvements to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) District.

Three options were selected as 2020 DDA goals:

1. Construction of an Information Kiosk, to inform tourists of Cass City attractions, events and general information.
2. Streetscape improvements: Black Benches and/or Bistro Tables/Chairs, which tie in with the black wrought-iron theme currently on Main Street.
3. Creation of a Facade Improvement Grant (FIG) Program. An application would be submitted by the business to request a grant, with the business matching the grant amount (50% grant/50% owner match). Improvements would be limited to exterior building improvements or sidewalk enhancements. Potential funding could be allocated from the Village of Cass City (former Tuscola Area Airport Authority funding allocation no longer obligated). If the grant funding was not allocated in a current year, unallocated funds would be rolled over into the next year.

Subcommittee on Goals

Dan Delamarter

Judy Keller

Amy Peters

Geraldine Prieskorn

Michael Rule

Deboria Powell, Manager

Nanette Walsh, Clerk

September 11, 2019

11:30 am

Village of Cass City Downtown Development Authority

Summary of Current Board Members

- **Bert Althaver, Walbro CEO, retired**
 - **Robert Brooks, Walbro Engineer, retired**
 - **Eric Brown, Thumb Bank and Trust**
 - **Kimburley Donovan, Schneeburgers, Kelly and Co. Realty**
 - **James Kranz, CPA, DDA Co-Chairman**
 - **Jon Ligrow, Ligrow's 24 Hour Fitness**
 - **Amy Peters, Knight's Insurance**
 - **Geraldine Prieskorn, Local Businesswoman, retired**
 - **Michael Rule, CU Tech, DDA Co-Chairman**
 - **Dan Delamarter, Village of Cass City President**
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- **Judy Keller, Cass City Chamber of Commerce Administrator**
 - **Steve Erickson, Tuscola Economic Development Corporation Director**
 - **Deboria L. Powell, Village of Cass City Manager**
 - **Nanette Walsh, Village Clerk/Treasurer**