

Meeting of the Niles DDA Main Street Board of Directors
Regular Board Meeting at City Hall
333 N 2nd Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room, November 7, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.

MISSION: Strengthen downtown through economic development and encourage historic preservation to promote economic growth.

www.uncoverniles.com

CALL TO ORDER by Chair Justin Flagel at 4:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Justin Flagel, Jessica Nelson, Nick Shelton, Linda Casperson, Fredda Zeiter, Michael Reed, Chris Sears
ABSENT: Cindy Ray, Tracy Waggoner, Gretchen Bertschy
VISITORS: Tim Rogers
STAFF: Lisa Croteau

Introduction of new member Chris Sears, Four Flags Antique Mall.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Motion: **Nelson** motioned to approve the agenda; **Shelton** seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

PRESENTATIONS: None

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Board Meeting Minutes of October 3, 2024**
2. **Approving the Managers and Committee Reports.**

Motion: **Zeiter** motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; **Nelson** seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

3. **Update on Financials**

No financials until City audit is completed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Introduction of Items for Discussion/Items for Board Action Review

4. **Review Manager's Report:**

- The city received an application for an event: Shakespeare in the Park. Lisa contacted them. They will do one event at \$500 or two events for \$800.
Motion: **Shelton** motioned to bring Shakespeare in the Park to the Riverfront Amphitheater for two shows at \$800, date to be determined, paid for with grant money. **Nelson** seconded. Motion carried.
- Update on Trash: Justin met with the trash company to come up with a plan and to get a quote for a trash corral at the northeast corner of the lower-level parking lot.

5. **Update on the Forge/NODE:**

Concrete for the column supports was scheduled to be poured but was delayed when they discovered an unidentifiable pipe. It was later determined that it was an abandoned gas line. Soil compaction testing took place. Concrete is scheduled to be poured starting November 4. Scheduled to be completed by November 22. Furniture will be delivered November 18.

The board realized that the Promotions Committee will be handling many of the items relating to the area, at least to start. The DDA board can oversee the project. **A NODE Committee can be formed when it is needed.** There was discussion to live-stream the area **as was done before.** **We will ask Jim Morris, Smokin Jim's Restaurant if he would be interested in** overseeing snow removal. **If he is, we'll hire him.** A suggestion was made to offer adjacent businesses an incentive to oversee maintenance of the area. Programs can be scheduled on the DDA's website calendar. Posting events will be needed to show what's happening. A request was made to share development updates on social media.

6. **RAP 3.0 Grants Update:**

Sarah Snoeyink, MEDC is working with Jen Tabor, Souldier and Scott Moore, Ready Theater to get their applications ready to present to the MEDC Leadership team for review.

7. Hunter Ice Festival 2025

Sponsorship letters went out to local businesses. Culvers will be sponsoring ice cream at no cost. The ice cream sale booth will need to be moved to another location with electricity. The Children's Center will sponsor the sledding hill. RXO is sponsoring a refrigerated truck for delivery of the ice. Ice carvers will be staying at the Hampton Inn. Jessica Nelson shared a document - A Hunter Ice Festival – Historical Attendance Comparison from 2019-2024. Chart showed visitors in attendance and weather for each year. There was a request to show two weeks before and after the Hunter Ice Festival.

Working Meeting:

8. NODE Grand Opening and Small Business Saturday

Emails were sent to local media press to cover the grand re-opening of the NODE. The Promotion Committee is working with local businesses on business sales and Passport Creation for Small Business Saturday. Santa will be downtown from 3pm and Tree Lighting at 5:30pm. Red Chuck Productions will be playing music along with additional musicians throughout downtown. Wondering Wheels will provide carriage rides around 100 block. 18' Christmas tree will be lit. Salvation Army will be bellringing. History Center/Chapin Mansion will have an open house. Redbud Ramblers will be performing.

9. Storefront Mastery and Next Steps

It was highly recommended that business owners take the time to watch;

<https://medc.box.com/s/mavh4ps4qzri81drl12avhs647pcwll>

Storefront Mastery is about how to help make downtowns thriving by telling everyone's story.

Board Members Reports:

Shelton asked about elected officials serving on the DDA as a voting member. Lisa contacted attorney to get an opinion. DDA Bylaws don't address the issue and City Charter only states that an elected official cannot serve on another elected board. DDA board members are not elected. He also asked for the wording in the DDA bylaws that address absences. Four absences from *regularly* scheduled meetings are grounds for removal. Discussion followed regarding excused absences and discretion for excused absences, calendar year or anniversary date.

Bylaws:

READS:

Section 5 – Board Member Attendance

3. If a Member has four (4) or more absences from Board meetings in any 12-month period of time, the DDA/MAIN STREET Board shall recommend through the Mayor to City Council that the Member be removed.

Motion: **Shelton** motioned to change the bylaws to say that:

If a member has four (4) absences from a regularly scheduled board meetings in the calendar year, the DDA/Main Street Board shall recommend through the Mayor to the City Council that the member be removed.

Nelson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Report:

Jessica Nelson reported that she has been working with A.I. data. She also mentioned that during Downtown Trick or Treat people stayed at the vendor market and didn't go into downtown businesses. Safety road crossing was also an issue.

Michael Reed reported that the Economic Vitality Committee met. They meet on the 3rd Thursday at 8am at 210 Main Street conference room. They are putting together a Welcome packet. He plans to get high school student graphic department involved.

Chair Report:

Justin Flagel is working with the Chamber of Commerce for Restaurant Week in March. He encouraged board members to sign-up for giving a progress report at the Niles City Council.

Lisa mentioned that Gretchen Bertschy is the Council Liaison for the DDA Board. Her job makes it difficult for her to attend. She encouraged Tim Rogers to consider the position of Council Liaison.

ADJOURNMENT

Nelson moved to adjourn at 5:38p.m.

Next Regular Meeting Date: **Thursday, December 5, 2024.**

Respectfully submitted:

Linda Casperson, Secretary

Date