

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO

South Drake Road Corridor Improvement Authority (SoDA) June 1, 2022

The SoDA Board meeting was held in person at Township Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chair Ashley at 12:04 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Corey Ashley, Chair
Joe Gesmundo
Libby Heiny-Cogswell (attending virtually)
Dennis Patzer, Treasurer
Kelly Bringman
Theresa Spurr
Dale Shugars (joined around 12:15 PM)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Christine Morse

Also present was Iris Lubbert, Planning Director.

Approval of the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda. Chair Ashley let the agenda stand as published.

Minutes

Chair Ashley asked if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections to the Minutes of December 1, 2021. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the Minutes.

Ms. Spurr made a motion to approve the Minutes of December 1, 2021 as presented. Ms. Bringman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Chair Ashley asked if there was any Public Comment. There was none.

2022 Election of Officers – Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, and Assistant Secretary

The following slate of officers was proposed:

Corey Ashley, Chair
Joe Gesmundo, Vice Chair
Dennis Patzer, Treasurer
Kelly Bringman, Secretary
Iris Lubbert, Assistant Treasurer and Secretary

Mr. Shugars made a motion to elect the slate of officers as proposed. Ms. Bringman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Chair Ashley asked for the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Lubbert shared the Treasurer's Report for 2021 year end and the Treasurer's Report for January 1st, 2022 through May 25th, 2022, unaudited.

Ms. Lubbert noted that in running the 2021 year end report it came to staff's attention that the Township did not bill SoDA for their 2021 \$30,000 Drake Road Path payment. In speaking with the Township Clerk, it was advised that the best approach to remedy the situation is to pay for both the 2021 and 2022 Drake Road Path installments in one \$60,000 payment. In order to do so the SoDA Board will need to make a budget amendment. Ms. Lubbert also recommended that a budget increase to \$1,000 be made for the 2022 budget item 'Accounting and Legal fees' in response to the actual expenditures for this item in 2021.

Ms. Bringman made a motion to approve the two budget amendments recommended by staff. Mr. Gesmundo seconded the motion.

Ms. Lubbert noted that there have been no expenditures to date in 2022. \$75,967.59 in tax revenue has been collected. This is significantly higher than the anticipated \$40,000.

Mr. Gesmundo requested clarification on the additional amount collected. Ms. Lubbert noted that in speaking with the Township Treasurer, the increase in collected tax revenue is due primarily to the Road Millage and increased housing values. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell provided additional details on the Road Millage.

Mr. Patzer made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Spurr seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Nonmotorized Paths Update

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell noted that the Drake Road sidewalk is fully completed down to KL Avenue. The piece below this area crosses the railroad; this section is still under negotiation between MDOT and M-Trak.

Mr. Gesmundo inquired if MDOT would assist in financing the project once access to the area across the railroad is granted. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell noted that there is a MDOT grant that would be utilized.

Mr. Gesmundo asked if all property and easement acquisitions have been completed for the project. Ms. Spurr noted that easement acquisition had started with her property in 2019 but was never completed. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell explained that the Township Public Works Department oversees these types of acquisitions and that easements expire within a certain time period. She anticipates that once the negotiation between MDOT and M-Trak is completed and there is a design, the process will be picked up again.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell noted that the KL path, a 10-foot-wide path spanning between Drake Road to Copper Beach Drive on the north side of the road, is expected to finally see construction in 2023 and 2024. About two thirds of the path is within the SoDA boundary. She noted that in March the Township received a formal award of \$240,000 in Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds from KATS and a conditional commitment of \$1.47M in TAP Funds from MDOT to help fund the project. The project is scheduled based on the coordination with the MDOT US-131 bridge over KL Ave replacement project. Consultants will continue to work on easement acquisition and bidding documents this year in preparation.

Chair Ashley asked if SoDA would be responsible for this new path. Ms. Lubbert clarified that the path along KL Avenue is being planned for installation by the Township and is not the financial responsibility of SoDA. Ms. Heiny-Cogswell added that this path has been in the Township's nonmotorized plan for years and has been incrementally worked on. She noted that grant money from MDOT never covers 100% of the cost and anticipates that the Township will cover the remaining amount. Once the project costs are known the SoDA Board can consider contributing to the project.

Mr. Gesmundo noted that the Drake Road Path is the SoDA Boards priority. Without further information on the project costs, he would be uncomfortable committing SoDA funds to the KL path.

2023 Budget Discussion

Ms. Lubbert presented a proposed budget for 2023. The proposed budget generally mirrored the adopted 2022 budget. She noted that to date in 2022 \$75,967.59 in tax revenue has been collected. According to the Township Treasurer, the increase in collected tax revenue is due primarily to the Road Millage and increased housing values. It is anticipated that approximately the same amount of tax revenue will be collected in 2023.

For expenditures, SoDA generally has three expenses: the agreed upon annual \$30,000 payment to the Township toward the Drake Road Path, Drake Road Path maintenance, and accounting/auditing/legal fees. An increase to \$1,000 is recommended for 'Accounting and Audit Fees' to mirror the actual expenditures on this line item in 2021.

There was discussion on what the Board wanted to do with the additional revenue. There was consensus that safety improvements are a priority. It was agreed that \$35,000 would be budgeted for safety improvements in 2023 as a placeholder. The SoDA Board will review their TIF plan, choose specific projects to pursue, and consider any necessary budget amendments at their December meeting.

Ms. Spurr made a motion to approve the 2023 budget as proposed by staff with the amendment of budgeting \$35,000 for safety improvement expenditures. Mr. Ashley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

2022 Informational Session Update

Ms. Lubbert noted that Public Act 57 of 2018 requires that Corridor Improvement Authorities hold at least two informational meetings a year. These meetings do not have to be official Board meetings but can be designed as Open Houses to inform the public of the goals of the Board and the projects that the South Drake Road Corridor Improvement Authority is financing. For efficiency, the SoDA Board agreed to combining the two required Open Houses with the two Open Houses required for the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

The DDA is currently finalizing their plans to install sidewalk on the south side of Stadium Drive that is within their boundary. To collect public input on the project they scheduled an in-person Open House on February 16, 2022 and also utilized this meeting as one of their two required informational meetings. Given the SoDA Board's previous permissions to staff, this meeting was also designed as one of the two informational meetings required for SoDA.

Ms. Lubbert asked the Board if they wished to continue combining their Open Houses with the DDA's or if they had any specific topics they wished their open house to focus on. The SoDA Board unanimously agreed to allow staff to continue planning and holding the Open Houses as they have been in collaboration with the DDA.

Other Business

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared:
6/6/2022

Minutes approved:
12/7/2022