

THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OSHTEMO

South Drake Road Corridor Improvement Authority (SoDA)

May 4, 2016

SoDA Board meeting was held at the Township Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Spurr at 12:11 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Theresa Spurr, Chair
Corey Ashley, Vice Chair
Dennis Patzer, Treasurer
Kelly Bringman
Libby Heiny-Cogswell
Dale Shugars

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Deb Jung
Joe Gesmundo
Jackie Kimble

Also present were Planning Director Julie Johnston.

Minutes

Motion by Mr. Ashley, second by Ms. Bringman to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2015 meeting. Carried 6-0.

Public Comment

None.

Treasurer's Report

Planning Director Johnston presented the Treasurer's report indicating that the tax revenue received in 2016 was slightly higher than expected based on what was outlined in the South Drake Road Corridor Improvement Authority Plan. The 2016 budget was planned for \$10,565 but \$12,834 in tax revenue was collected. To date, no expenses have been applied to the budget.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell indicated that the budget in the Plan was reduced because of the Costco tax appeal that was in play at that time. There was concern that if the appeal went through, the tax increment financing revenue would be reduced so the budget was intentionally conservative.

Ms. Spurr stated that there was concern that the Authority would only collect about \$4,700 in taxes a year because of the tax appeal. She thought that was the budget for 2016, not \$10,565.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell indicated that the appeal was dropped so the taxes collected were higher than expected.

Mr. Shugars asked why there was such a difference between the \$4,700 expected and the \$12,000 collected.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that it was because of more development in the area than expected by this time, the dropped tax appeal and better SEV's than expected.

Ms. Johnston stated that the Plan expected less construction to be completed within the Corner@Drake property by this time, which was reflected in the budget.

Mr. Shugars indicated that it would be a good idea to update the projected budget outlined in the Plan based on this new information.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that the Township Board did only approve a budget of \$4,700 for 2016 and that the numbers presented by Ms. Johnston are actually incorrect.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell motioned to amend the budget to the \$4,700 and accept the Treasurer's report. Mr. Shugars seconded the motion. The motioned passed 6-0.

Drake Road Non-Motorized Path Construction

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell provided some background on how the Drake Road project got to the planned 10-foot path. She indicated that originally the plan called for a 6-foot sidewalk. But, the Township learned that no bike lanes were planned in Drake Road. Because of this, the consultants tasked to help the Township with the design of the sidewalk indicated that a 10-foot path was a better option because it would support all types of non-motorized and pedestrian movement.

Ms. Spurr stated that some property owners along Drake Road are concerned about the larger easement that is required for a 10-foot path. She indicated that she definitely believes that the non-motorized path is needed because of the school in the area, but she understands that the first part of the project doesn't include the school.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that the project has been broken into two phases. The City of Kalamazoo offered to partner with the Township on a Safety Grant, which would cover the development of a portion of the 10-foot path. The boundaries on the Safety Grant are West Michigan Avenue to Green Meadow Drive, which doesn't cover the school. The second phase of the project has been submitted to MDOT who have indicated they are in support of the project.

Ms. Spurr said that she is concerned with the safety of the properties where the path will be developed. She is concerned about trash, littering and loitering.

Ms. Bringham stated she is in favor of the path as it will help the residents of Nottingham Apartments.

Mr. Shugars asked if the Township was buying the easements.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell said that the Township is buying the easements based on current cost standards.

Ms. Johnston outlined the proposal the Authority received from AVB Construction to build the path on their property, the Corner@Drake. She delineated some of the pros and cons of the offer. Pros – the path could be built quicker, may cost less, and can be built while the Corner@Drake project is being built. Cons – would not be able to utilize grant funding for this section of the project, will be a break in the path between the AVB property and West Michigan Avenue until the rest of the path can be built, and 100 percent of the costs would have to be covered by the Authority.

Mr. Shugars stated he is in support of this proposal. He believes it is good to have the project done quickly, but it's difficult to know if this is the right course without a budget for the costs.

Ms. Spurr was concerned with the gap in the path until the MDOT grant can build the remainder of the project.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell indicated that there could be a problem extending the path through to West Michigan because easements have not yet been acquired.

Mr. Ashley stated that he felt we should table any decision until costs could be provided to the Authority.

The members in attendance agreed and the matter was tabled until the next meeting. A request was made of Ms. Johnston to pull together possible budget costs.

Drake Road Non-Motorized Path Maintenance

Ms. Johnston requested the Authority discuss whether they would like to assign a portion of their budget in the coming years for the maintenance of the non-motorized path.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell stated that the SoDA board was formed for this exact purpose. The intent was to create a specific revenue source through the Authority to cover these types of expenses.

Ms. Spurr indicated that the change to Tax Increment Financing Authorities that happened at the County level altered the amount of revenue the Authority can receive, which changed the Plan.

Mr. Shugars stated that because of this maybe the cost of maintenance should be a 50/50 split with the Township.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell said she would take this idea to the Township Board.

Mr. Shugars stated that costs for maintenance might be more cost-effective being handled through the Township because they can bid out more than one property at a time.

Ms. Heiny-Cogswell reminded the Authority that revenues were better than expected so there are more funds to help cover these types of costs. She also indicated that maintenance has been a question from many of the property owners. It would go a long way with the property owners to get their support for the path if she could tell them that the Authority is going to assist with maintenance costs.

Ms. Johnston stated that she will bring back costs for both maintenance and construction at the next meeting.

Budget 2017 Discussion

This agenda item was tabled until the Drake Road Non-Motorized Path costs could be determined.

Any Other Business

Ms. Johnston asked if the Authority would like to set a regularly scheduled meeting.

Ms. Spurr suggested maybe two meetings at a time.

Mr. Shugars indicated he liked the meetings at the time scheduled for this meeting.

The Authority decided to set the next meeting for June 8, 2016 at noon.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared:
July 11, 2016

Minutes approved:
July 20, 2016