

**MINUTES – CITY OF OWOSSO
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 3, 2006**

Chairman Wright called the meeting to order at 7:55 a.m.

Roll Call.

Members Present: Chm. Craig Wright, John Oliver, John Hankerd, Barb Bucsi, and Bill Gilbert.
Members Absent: Mayor Linda Robertson (exc), Jamie Irish and Jim Howe (One vacant position)
Others Present: Dave Lazar, Lindsey Eister, George Ramos, Bill Constine

Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the special meeting of April 12, 2006 were approved with the correction that John Oliver made the motion for the Cool Cities grant with a second from Popovitch.

Hankerd/Oliver m/s/p

Communications: Bill Voorheis has signed the easement for the Welcome Sign at Corunna Avenue and S. Washington Street-the sign will be constructed in June. The trash containers no longer operate with a key to remove the device for unloading. The supplier is investigating the problem and will report on it for our review at the June meeting.

Citizen/Member Comments: None

Financial Status.

A. Operating Budget:	
-Checking	\$ 2,055.14
-Savings	<u>\$ 6,394.05</u>
Total.....	\$ 8,449.19
B. Tax Increment Budget:	
-Beginning Budget	\$ 163,668
-Funds Expended or Contractually Committed	\$ 119,906
-Projected Costs for Development Projects	<u>\$ 22,181</u>
-Contingency and Fund Reserve.....	\$ 8,872

An underground heating oil tank was discovered at the Ball Street parking mall construction site. The tank served the heating system for the City Club and other buildings in the block. If the City is the responsible entity for the tanks cleaning and environmental work, a budget not to exceed \$20,000 was authorized from the Tax Increment Budget's projected costs and fund reserve.

Gilbert/Oliver m/s/p

The revised three-year operating budget and three-year tax increment financing budgets were reviewed and approved for forwarding to the City Council for the budget adoption process. The changes include the permitted increase in tax capture with the allowance for school captured taxes to pay the bond payments before other tax capture sources are used. Additionally the hotel demolition has been moved from the TIF budget to the 2-mill operating budget.

Oliver/Bucsi m/s/p

Items of Business:

A. Payment of Bills.

<i>Operating Budget:</i>	
1) Saginaw Valley Rehab Center	\$ 535.00

2) Hotel Sidewalk-Collard Masonry	\$ 864.00
3 Mid-Michigan Turf—Footbridge garden maintenance.....	\$ 900.00
4 Executive Director’s Administrative Fee.....	\$ 3,000.00
Total:	\$ 5,299.00

Tax Increment Budget:

1) Mid-Michigan Turf—Tree Replacement – 8 trees.....	\$ 3,200.00
2) Cottage Gardens—8 Ginkgo Trees	\$ 1,675.00
Total:.....	\$ 4,875.00

Oliver/Gilbert m/s/p

A. Armory Local Match Commitment. Hathaway described a “Signature Building” acquisition program offered through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The source of funds is the US Community Development Block Grant. With a 25% local match the funds may be used to acquire vacant structure of significant importance to a downtown. The Armory will be vacant in late fall and is an eligible acquisition under this program. Other local efforts including private funds, development loans, and Brownfield Authority investments may be used to lower the DDA’s local match. This amount will not be known until the development decisions are made between now and November. The other factor influencing a decision to move ahead with the CDBG Notice of Intent is the need to secure the James Miner River Walkway section that has never been acquired for that purpose. Without the DDA’s acquisition the City would have to acquire the trail section through voluntary action of a new owner. With a projected appraised value of \$168,000, the DDA approved a 25% match of \$42,000.

Oliver/Gilbert m/s/p

B. The 2006-07 leased parking plan was presented with a request to forward a recommendation to the City Council. The plan shows an expansion of leases in the Ball/Comstock Lot from 10 spaces to 10 spaces with 8 provisional spaces (month-to-month). The provisional leases are justified because the parking tenants are never there at the same time and the effective use is 10 spaces or less at all times of the day. A second alteration is the increase of leased spaces for apartments at Park and Main Street by three spaces. The rates are unchanged except for the request of George Ramos from the Chamber to increase the rates at the lots where the demand is highest to induce the use of under-leased lot at Park and Exchange Street. The leasing plan was approved.

Oliver/Bucsi m/s/p

C. Capitol Bowl Report. The surface demolition is nearly complete. The State of Michigan is reviewing the critical component of single business tax credits. A new April amendment of the Single Business Tax law has made the tax credit assignment to other parties much easier. A construction firm is completing the building plans. A flood plain permit is moving expeditiously so that the lounge on the south end may be constructed at the same time as the bowling section of the new structure. The DDA plans for the infrastructure are incomplete because they rely on the building plans to detail the improvements on the sidewalk and parking lot. The 25 year parking lease from Capitol Bowl for the Comstock Center parking behind JC Penney’s must also be amended and is ready to negotiate for renewal.

D. Entertainment Districts—Work Session. This segment of the work sessions addresses *Creative Industries*. The definition of creative industries was offered and 14 existing downtown businesses were defined as being creative industries (e.g., David-

Lorne Photographic, Aldrich Art Supply, Mootzies, CyberMedics, Z-92.5 FM). The question was

asked if there were a sufficient number of these land uses present to justify the use of the term in marketing at this time? It was decided at first that these uses were a part of the downtown's future well-being and offer use of large and small spaces with the benefit of foot traffic. It was recommended to proceed with the same level of attention to retail recruitment and to add creative industries to our target list for new business development efforts contracted with the Small Business Resource Center at the Chamber. Inroads are very possible with music, design services, computer services, software, art and antiques. At the next meeting Marla Price, Downtown Coordinator, will be present to join our discussion on marketing the entertainment offerings in the downtown.

- E. Focus Owosso Report.** The annual membership campaign is wrapping up and a new office at the Lebowky Center has been established. The Car Show is May 21st with a cruise the night before. Sidewalk Sales are July 13-15 with entertainment options added. The Board of Directors is fully functional. The budget for next year will be presented to the DDA for contract renewal at the June meeting.
- F. Retail Recruitment Status.** George Ramos reported that a new retail tenant will occupy the front of the Michael Jordan photographic studio on N. Washington Street. There was no report on the vacant space at Howe's Hallmark—members requested that this space receive special attention to find a retail tenant for it.
- G. Farmer's Market Banners.** The new poles are installed but do not have the features ordered for it (double banner arms/refractors in the globes and the outlets at 11' high). While this is being resolved, members authorized the acquisition of banners for the two poles with an estimated cost of \$50-75 per banner.
Gilbert/Oliver m/s/p
- H. Security Camera.** Hathaway requested and received support to seek costs and operational measures to install a security camera at the new footbridge garden. This is where most of the vandalism occurs on the riverwalk and the DDAs' \$40,000 investment should be protected.
- I. Attendance and Membership.** The attendance record was reviewed. Bill Gilbert has requested to remain on the DDA and make the effort to comply with the By-Laws. Cindy Popovitch has resigned because the meeting time conflicts with family obligations. The Mayor will be asked to speak with Jamie Irish and Jim Howe about resignation to permit others who have the time to fill out the DDA with regular attendance. Dave Lazar was introduced and has expressed an interest in membership.
- I. Dixie Development Status.** The investors of the old hotel site have rekindled their interest in a development at the corner and design considerations are in discussion. The DDA has a standing offer to fund a \$3,000 site plan for the public infrastructure elements about a new structure. The Brownfield Authority is the funding entity for infrastructure.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Philip B. Hathaway, Secretary-Treasurer

