

**DDA REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**WEDNESDAY, August 5, 2009 --- 7:30 a.m.**  
**Owosso Community Player's Annex – 114 E Main**  
**OWOSSO, MICHIGAN**

Chairman Hankerd called the meeting to order at 7:30am

**Roll call.**

**Members Present:** John Hankerd, Mayor Mike Bruff, Barb Bucsi, Susan Treen, Mike Rice, Linda Moiles, Jeff Reeves, Bill Gilbert (arrived at 7:34am)

**Members Absent:** Krista Strong

**Also Present:** Katie Donovan, Jackie Leone, Cheryl Downing, Carla Merrill, Joni Forster, Linda Keenan, Sue Newcom, Dave Acton, Theresa Trecha, Ron Baker, John Archer, Brent Morgan, Joe Fivas, Gordon Pennington, Cheryl Peterson, Schaffer Fox

**2) Review and approval of minutes of June 3, 2009 & July 1, 2009 meetings.** A motion to accept the minutes of the June 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> meetings as presented was made. Motion adopted: Bruff/Bucsi m/s/p

**3) Citizens Comments and Communications.**

None.

**4) Financial Report for April 2009**

a. Check Date From 07/23/09.....\$996.40

**5) Items of Business.**

**a) Payment of Invoices**

i. Office Depot.....\$15.81

Motion to pay invoices adopted: Bucsi/Bruff m/s/p

Chairman Hankerd explained the need to rearrange the order of the agenda to accommodate the representative from Donovan & Smith, Katie Donovan, who was in attendance to be recommended as a vendor for logo services from the Branding Committee.

**b) Branding**

- i. Name Recommendation
- ii. Vendor Recommendation

Branding Committee Chairman described the background of the Branding Committee, including the following information: During the July 1, 2009 DDA meeting a Branding Committee was formed to create a plan for contracting out the job of creating a logo for our organization. DDA Board Member Mike Rice was named as chairman of this committee, and the following individuals we also asked to serve:

Jeff Reeves, DDA Board Member  
Joni Forster, City Council Member  
Cheryl Downing, representing Norm Henry Shoes  
Joe Fivas, City Manager  
Natalie Burg, Main Street Manager

During the July 1, 2009 DDA meeting the question of renaming our organization following our Main Street designation was referred to the Branding Committee. This committee met on July 8 to discuss this issue.

The Branding Committee recommends the adoption of the name, "Owosso Main Street" as our new organization name. Staff recommends this decision be discussed and a motion be made to adopt the name as "Owosso Main Street."

Chairman Hankerd requested more information on why this name recommendation was made.

Manager Burg explained that the committee had decided that the term "Main Street" should be used, that there was a desire to eliminate the term "DDA" and that they preferred to use the name "Owosso" first in the title.

Committee member Reeves explained the desire to remove the term "DDA" to create more of a community and less of a government feeling around the organization.

A motion to accept the name change as proposed by the Branding Committee was made. Motion adopted. Bucsi/Bruff m/s/p

Branding Committee Chairman Rice continued to explain the work of the Branding Committee with regard to logo development including the following information: The Committee met on the following – dates: July 8, 13, 27, and August 4. During these meetings the committee decided to use the method of creating a specific concept in-house and contracting a professional marketing organization to use our concept to create a logo. A wide range of marketing organizations, branding professionals and graphic designers, both locally and regionally were then contacted. Interested parties were emailed a "Vendor Requirements" application, and three proposals were received.

After narrowing the field down to two: Donovan & Smith of Lansing and Harrington Communications of Gross Point Woods, both organizations presented to the committee. Of these, the Branding Committee felt Donovan & Smith will be the best fit for our organization.

Donovan & Smith representative Katie Donovan presented to the Board.

Chairman Hankerd expressed that there have been concerns from other potential vendors who felt they did not have the chance to present.

Reeves asked if the board was hiring a vendor at this time for just this project or if this was to be an on-going contract with Donovan & Smith, and how other companies would be made aware of future opportunities.

Manager Burg responded that this was a recommendation to hire Donovan & Smith for this project only.

Mayor Bruff added that there was a process in place to choose the vendor that the Branding Committee put in place. He encouraged the board to trust that the committee they had appointed had made a logical decision and to support the committee's recommendation.

Member of the public Gordon Pennington requested to speak and present his ideas for consideration in the branding process. Chairman Hankerd granted him permission.

Pennington gave his person background in marketing and reviewed an attempt at a branding he had initiated two years ago.

Member of the public Schaffer Fox emphasized a desire to promote Owosso's historic significance and spoke in support of Pennington as a potential branding vendor.

Branding Committee Member Cheryl Downing thanked Pennington for his desire to help and added that it would be good for Owosso to have an outside perspective in the branding effort.

Pennington said that he did not understand why there was a rush to commit to a vendor today and that he be given more time to present his case.

Donovan suggested that Pennington be brought into the branding process with her for input. She emphasized the importance of considering the customer in deciding how to market downtown.

Fox said that the city's biggest selling point is its history and spoke about the number of famous people who have come from Owosso.

Mayor Bruff responded that history is good, but not relevant to the customer today. He voiced a need to move forward rather than backward.

Committee Chairman Rice stated that the effort to create a logo is just a start, and that the greatest asset of downtown is its people who are there now.

Member of the public Sue Newcom stated that she has lived here for 30 years after living in Detroit. She supports the effort to use outside voices to help brand downtown and would like to see the city move forward.

A motion was made to accept Donovan & Smith contracted at a rate of \$120/hr for consulting fees and \$2,500 for an Image Package Flat Fee with a final cost for logo creation to not exceed \$3,220. Motion adopted. Bruff/Moiles m/s/p Vote included one dissenting vote from Reeves.

Chairman Hankerd moved the next discussion to Main Street, to be followed by Train Festival updates.

**c) Main Street**

**i. Six-Month Calendar**

Manager Burg directed board members to review the 6-month training calendar in their agenda packets, pointing out the webinar scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup> and the board training September 21<sup>st</sup>.

**ii. Committee Meet & Greets and Chairmanship Volunteers**

Manager Burg presented a two-week calendar for Main Street Committee Meet & Greets.

Chairman Hankerd requested that board members volunteer to chair each committee. Board members expressed interest in the following committees:

Mayor Bruff said he would chair Promotions.

Moiles – Design

Bucsi – Organization

Treen – Organization

Gilbert Reeves & Rice – will attend multiple meet and greets to decide

A motion was made to approve the dates for the Committee Meet & Greets. Motion adopted. Bucsi/Bruff m/s/p

Moiles exited @ 8:52

**d) Train Festival**

Chairman Hankerd shared that he heard positive feedback from visitors and downtown regarding Train Festival.

Manager Burg shared the following feedback with the board: After weeks of preparation, Downtown Owosso was ready for Train Festival 2009. The Steam Railroading Institute event succeeded in bringing tens of thousands of visitors to town as promised. The following is a synopsis of our results as a downtown district:

Owosso Main Street raised \$681.23 donations from shopping bag giveaways and water sales

Artisan Market had it's most well-attended week to date

Main Street Plaza's Kids' Activity Corner was quiet on Friday, but picked up on Saturday and Sunday

More than 25 volunteers helped to man the Owosso Main Street Hospitality Tent

Survey results from our merchant feedback are still being compiled. Here is an anecdotal summary so far:

Restaurants, especially those along South Washington did very well  
Retail who provided fliers to the Hospitality Tent saw an increase in sales  
Parking was an issue, especially in the JC Penny/Capitol Bowl lot  
Many merchants, though seeing an increase in sales expected to see more of an increase

Gilbert requested doing a post-Train Festival wrap-up meeting. He cited that the hype leading up to the festival may have scared regular customers from going downtown, and that the issue should be addressed. He was disappointed by the local turnout for the event.

Mayor Bruff agreed that locals were frightened away by the hype but said that parking was not a problem at any point during the weekend.

Chairman Hankerd directed Manager Burg to set-up a follow-up meeting for Train Festival.

Pennington added that he assisted in recruiting NPR to do a story on Train Festival. He stated that the Steam Railroading Institute said that they would do local and regional marketing, but he did not believe that they succeeded. He stated that there was nothing downtown to indicate that a festival was going on and that light pole banners should have been made.

Member of the public Theresa Trecha stated that she is happy that a follow-up meeting will occur and asked that everyone who attends bring ideas for solutions along with their complaints.

Manager Burg discussed two last-minute expenses on behalf of Main Street for Train Festival. The first was \$130 to Hero Signs for a banner across the archway of Main Street Plaza, and the second \$400 for Kiwanis for a bus stop.

A motion was made to pay the invoices for \$130 to Hero Signs and \$400 to Kiwanis. Motion adopted. Bucsi/Gilbert m/s/p

**b) VSCI Update**

City Manager Joe Fivas and Economic Development Director Brent Morgan presented background information on the Vibrant Small Cities Initiative Grant and informed the board that decisions would have to be made in the near future with regard to how to spend the rest of the money. They asked the board to consider a list of priorities and asked for suggestions.

The presented priorities included:

The Lebowsky Center

Bucsi voiced support for this priority.

Gilbert stated it was the most talked about priority.

Fivas invited a board representative to join the city and OCP at a Monday meeting to discuss the project feasibility.

Parking Lot behind Sobaks

Gilbert stated this was a long time in coming.

Fivas states this would be a \$40,000-\$50,000 project

Finish Loop Trail Ramp near Washington Street Bridge

Fivas explained that two options were available: a \$33,000 option that would be more intricate and landscaped, or a \$8,000 project that would simply complete the ramp.

Mayor said that if it would leave more funds for other projects, the \$8,000 project would be preferable.

Chairman Hankerd agreed.

Gilbert stated that the impact of fostering donations and giving if a project that was supported by donors was not finished in a quality way.

Building Official John Archer stated that aesthetic-wise, the \$33,000 would be much more pleasing to the eye, but both would be functional.

Reeves supported the \$33,000 project to make it look first class.

Bucsi agreed that the extra mile would be worthwhile.

Chairman Hankerd stated that the board would prefer the \$33,000 option.

Street Furniture

Additional block of streetscaping along East Exchange

A high-impact, visual, family-oriented project, such as a splashpad, skating park or playground

Mayor Bruff said that whatever feature is decided upon, a public restroom should be considered critical.

Rice stated that a family park downtown would be great

Chairman Hankered asked where a park might be located.

Mayor Bruff said he believes there would be a few options.

Gilbert voiced support for extending the streetscaping along Exchange

Bruff asked if that streetscaping could be included in the project for next Spring.

City engineer Ron Baker stated that it would be much easier to

incorporate it into the VSCI grant.  
Chairman Hankered suggested that wayfinding signage be considered.

Bucsi exited @ 9:52am

Mayor Bruff asked if an email network would suffice for gathering board members' final opinions on the priority list  
Fivas stated that he could call MSHDA and say they are ready to discuss and will wait to hear from Manager Burg regarding the result of the email consensus.

**e) Training/Educational Opportunities**

i. Michigan Downtown Conference

Manager Burg explained the following background: The Michigan Downtown Conference will take place in Lansing on September 15th & 16th this year. It will serve as the required quarterly management training for Main Street, and Main Street Board members are encouraged to attend as well. The cost of attending the conference is \$160 per person. A motion was made to spend up to \$480 in attendance fees for Manager Burg and up to two board volunteers to attend the Michigan Downtown Conference. Motion adopted. Reeves/Rice m/s/p

ii. Leadership Shiawassee

Manager Burg gave the following background: Leadership Shiawassee is a nine-month program, meeting monthly at a variety of locations. Our home base will be Baker College of Owosso with other locations and field trips to be announced. You will learn leadership principles, skill sets and how to apply them to your career and community service. The total program runs from September to May each year.

Each year up to 24 individuals will be selected for the program. Candidates may enroll themselves or be sponsored by their employer, a community organization, or other recognized agency. New Graduates will join an elite and highly recognized group of over 307 leaders who have completed the Leadership Shiawassee Program since its founding in 1996. These leaders have advanced their careers, accepted leadership roles in area boards and organizations and emerged as respected competent leaders in our community.

Tuition for Leadership Shiawassee is \$825.00 for Chamber Members (\$887.00 for non-members). Tuition may be paid by the employer, sponsoring organization, or by the participant. Tuition covers instruction, book, materials, refreshments, meals, trips, and graduation. Each year scholarships are awarded to organizations who wish to send representatives but are unable due to cost. Last year each scholarship was in the amount of \$400.

A motion was made to spend up to \$425 in tuition for Manager Burg to attend Leadership Shiawassee. Motion accepted. Gilbert/Rice m/s/p

**f) Art Walk**

Chairman Hankered delegated the formation of an Artwalk committee to those in attendance at the Promotions Meet and Greet.

**g) Artisan Market Update**

Market Committee Chair Sue Treen expressed the need to continue to promote the Artisan Market for the final two weeks in an effort to not allow it to fizzle out at the end of the season. She requested an additional \$1,000 be allocated for marketing purposes.

A motion was made to spend up to \$1,000 on Artisan Market promotions over and above previously allocated amounts. Motion adopted.

Gilbert/Bruff m/s/p

**h) Meeting was adjourned at 10:20am Gilbert/Rice m/s/p**

[The City of Owosso will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting/hearing upon 72 hours notice to the City of Owosso. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids on services should contact the City of Owosso by writing or calling Amy Kohagen, City Clerk, 301 W. Main St, Owosso, MI 48867 (989) 725-0500 or on the Internet. The City of Owosso Website address is [www.ci.owosso.mi.us](http://www.ci.owosso.mi.us).]