

City of Hamtramck Downtown Development Authority

Board Of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 20, 2023 • 6:05pm
City Hall Conference Room (3rd Floor, City Hall) • Hamtramck City Hall, 3401 Evaline St.

Mission Statement: The City of Hamtramck's Downtown Development Authority supports people, projects, and partnerships that further the economic growth and stability of a thriving Hamtramck.

1. Call to order: 6:15 pm

2. **Roll call:** ✓ Mayor Ghalib / ✗ Ahmad Al-Hasan / ✓ Milo Madole / ✓ Andrew Kopietz /
✓ Shamiran Golani / ✓ Joan Bittner / ✗ Anwar Hassan / ✓ Karen Majewski / ✗ Andrew Dow /
✗ Adam Alharbi

- **A quorum was met** — Andrew Dow, Ahmad Al-Hasan, and Adam Alharbi
(all have excused absences)

3. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag

- The pledge of allegiance was completed by all in attendance.

4. Public comment (3 minutes per person limited to DDA issues)

- **Lynn Blasey** — planter boxes throughout the downtown area are being kept and tended to; she is working with downtown volunteers to oversee a group flower planting in May, **Lynn** also met with the fish and wildlife department, and she has been asked to put together a wish list of native plants that they can donate to Lynn for further planting downtown.
 - Hamtramck mutual aid is planning a city-wide garage sale on May 20th
 - Grand opening for Hamtramck Area Disaster Recovery group will also be hosting an open house
- **Tim Price** — discusses the creation of 'Hamtronic' and the arts/culture programming surrounding the event; record swap meet with known DJs, film afternoon and book readings (BookSuey), community shuttle to transport people to and from venues in Hamtramck
- **Brian Hoekstra** — happy to be in attendance at today's DDA meeting. Brian introduces himself and requests a copy of our agenda to follow along with the meeting.
- **Nada Dalgamouni** — Discusses the formation of an International District (marketplace and cultural center) in Hamtramck and the values/benefits of this cultural institution. Turning Councilman, Alsoumiri's building (a floor of the building) into a dedicated space for the international district/cooperative's offices. Discussion of the building's use was halted. If the center does not happen in the councilman's building, this may continue to hurt Hamtramck's business district to continue to live in an underutilized/tended-to state.

5. Approval of agenda

- **Joan** motions to approve the agenda, **Andrew** seconds the motion, and the motion carries. the agenda is approved.

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6. Approval of minutes from the 3/16 meeting

- **Karolynn** — change 'agenda' to 'minutes' in the heading for future agendas/meetings
 - **Karen** introduces the motion to approve meeting minutes, Milo seconds the motion, and the motion carries. The minutes are approved.
-

SECTION I: AGENDA ITEMS – For Discussion/Action/Presentation

1. Presentation: Budget Report (Karolynn)

- a. **Karolynn** suggests talking about the DDA budget in January so that it is prepared for February's council meeting and approval;
 - Estimated tax collections; \$32,000 (estimate and not a guarantee)
 - Salaries; DDA hasn't been paying any of the CED manager's salary; Karolynn proposes a return to this payment approach
 - Special projects/beautification/community events; \$10,000, \$10,000, \$10,000
 - **Beautification** is flower plantings, lights, sidewalk sweeping, snowplowing
 - **Special projects** include things like paying for social media assistance, Facebook ads, JB Associations downtown survey, and outreach data collection
 - **Community events**; costs related to the merchant meeting or DDA-sponsored events and programming

2. Presentation: Social Media Metrics

- a. **Tim Price** — CED/DDA started to pay for social media management and promotion; subsidizes Tim to assist DDA with social media programming for DDA
 - **Tim** does at least 4 posts per day, built a DDA Instagram account, and has continued to update DDA's Facebook page; these activities have really spurred and raised online activity across all of these social media platforms and accounts.
 - Social media impact metrics; **Tim** discusses the tagging of businesses in DDA posts to activate engagement with small businesses and build awareness of DDA; Facebook stories and Instagram stories reach different audiences; Gen-Z vs. Millennials and boomers, DDA is also on LinkedIn and profile is growing
 - DDA is talking to VisitDetroit - **Tim** wants to remove the DowntownHamtramck.com, which is used on the VisitDetroit website, and he wants to update it to reflect the DDA's new URL and digital contact information

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- **Tim** has created a YouTube channel as a conduit to share video content with the DDA's extended audiences - he mentions the plethora of existing good video content on YouTube that depicts Hamtramck
- **Alessandro** — notes a marked increase in social media reach (engagement/traffic); since October 2022, 14K accounts have viewed DDA's Facebook posts which are up 183%
- Page likes went up 57.1% / Facebook DDA page visits went up 1.8% / post reach went up 75.6%, and engagement went up 75.9%
- Hamtramck DDA posts over 30 times (or more) per month, which raises its engagement relative to other municipalities (government agency-registered Facebook pages)
- **Milo** suggests using Hamtramck legacy Facebook and resident-run Facebook pages to reshare city/DDA-specific information, keeping content straightforward and as uncomplicated and controversial as possible

3. Discussion: Merchant Meeting Outreach

a. Flyer (Andrew)

- Flyer design for merchant meeting will be ready by or before this Monday and will be shared across various city channels; Alessandro will take the merchant meeting flyers to businesses, and next Tuesday, he will take it door-to-door
- Karolynn and Alessandro are planning the meeting's logistics and planning as well as the information for the flyer that will be distributed next Tuesday

b. Questions

- Merchant meeting is happening on May 11th, 2023; Alessandro discusses the planning of the event's run of show (speakers, food, location, door prizes, and event programming, confirmed members: access, Yemeni American Chamber of Commerce, prosperUS, global Detroit, MEDC)

4. Action: Cancel the DDA May meeting

- a. **Karen** - we're looking to cancel the main meeting since it intersects with the date we've chosen for the Merchant's Meeting (in May).
 - **Karen** motions to cancel the meeting: **Milo** acknowledges the motion, **Mayor Ghalib** seconds the motion, and cancellation of the main meeting carries

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SECTION II: OTHER ITEMS

1. Public comment (3 minutes per person limited to DDA issues)

- N/A

2. Chairman's Report (2 minutes)

- N/A

3. Member's Report (5 minutes)

- **Joan** reports that she is promoting the Polish/Hamtramck Strawberry Festival
- **Milo** acknowledges that Hamtramck has been a lot more alive lately, especially Downtown, and comments on the increase in activity
- **Karen** reports that the Hamtramck Queer Alliance and pride month is coming up; plans are coming together for an event every single weekend throughout the month of June, Queer Alliance will encourage businesses to stay open later into the evenings during this period of time
- **Ahmer Ghalib** — discusses people's happiness over free parking to promote shopping in the downtown district; the city government was honored recently to be invited to the white house (celebration of Hamtramck's diversity and inclusion), Mayor is traveling to the White House on May 1st, Mayor is also meeting with the CEO of American Axel sometime soon to talk about reinvesting its efforts in the city (American Axel may also ask for a tax abatement). Discussion ensues.

4. Staff Report (5 minutes)

- **EDA Grant and Approval (Karolynn)**
 - **Karolynn** — describes the EDA grant approval. Through this unique grant, the DDA was recently given the ability to cover the salary of a person who works with the city on a variety of projects; redeveloping brownfields, dealing with business vacancies, other strategic projects, tax growth projects, growing business retention, etc. This person would be employed by the city for 3 years.
- **Strawberry Festival (Alessandro)**
 - The festival is coming up on May 6-8, 2023, and there will be street closures along Poland Street.

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- **Juneteenth March and Cookout (Alessandro)**
 - Local resident Veronica Smith (3rd generation resident); is going to organize a Juneteenth march now that it's a federal holiday on June 19th, 2023. March from the north side of the city all the way down to Veterna's Park, guarded by police (who have agreed to assist with the march). There will be a cookout at the end of March at Veteran's Park. Event programming is very grassroots.

- **SEMCOG Video (Alessandro)**
 - SEMCOG reached out to DDA about a collection of videos they've been sponsoring to promote downtowns throughout Michigan. Offered their services to Hamtramck, and the DDA is pairing SEMCOG with businesses to be featured and promoted (businesses that represent the whole community). Videography will be high quality and free of charge.
 - Joan mentions that 'Live in D' will be visiting the Polish Art Center next Tuesday.

- **Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards (Alessandro)**
 - MCSBA is happening next week. They're an organization that awards the best and up-and-coming small businesses with recognition and celebratory awards. The event happens in East Lansing. The event is great because it will give Hamtramck substantial (free) publicity.

- **Other**
 - Discussion of recent business openings in Hamtramck; the number of new business openings has increased.

5. ADJOURNMENT

- **The meeting adjourns at 7:40 pm.**
 - Joan motions to adjourn with no objections from the board. Motion carries.

PLEASE NOTE: This notice is posted in compliance with PA 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act), MCLA 41.71 a (2)(3), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The city of Hamtramck will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audiotapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the Meeting or Public Hearing upon 10 days notice to the City Clerk's Office. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Hamtramck City Clerk by writing or calling the Clerk's Office at (313) 870-0343.